

THE TEMPLE ATTITUDES OF JOHN AND QUMRAN IN THE LIGHT OF HELLENISTIC JUDAISM

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, a good number of scholars have drawn attention to the similar attitudes toward the temple evinced in the Qumran literature and the Gospel of John.¹ In view of the corresponding experiences of the two communities, this essay will examine the similarities and differences between the way in which each responded to its own “loss” of the temple cult. **The primary argument is that, although they may have produced differing results, both the Qumran and Johannine communities drew upon a similar temple theology that was already in circulation in several sectors of early Judaism.** This theology allowed the communities (and others like them) to effectively respond to specific socio-religious and historical situations, particularly as it pertained to their relationship to the Jerusalem temple.² To test these assertions, I will seek to locate the temple attitudes of the Qumran and Johannine communities within the social, cultural, and historical context of their respective periods within late Second Temple Judaism. Two basic components of John and Qumran’s alternative temple ideologies will be identified and provide the essential structure for the comparative/contrastive analysis. These two components are: (1) an alternative temple sanctuary, and (2) an alternative religious authority.³ It will be suggested that these elements not only represent the core components of the communities’ alternative temple attitudes, but also constitute their positive *response* to a unique *sitz im leben*. (Note: Translation “place or setting in life” A term used mainly in biblical criticism, to signify the circumstances (often in the life of a community) in which a particular story, saying, etc., was either created or preserved and transmitted.)

To this end, comments will be offered on the socio-historical context of the Qumran community, paying particular attention to **how the dynamics surrounding the Hasmonean high priesthood influenced the flight of the community into the Qumran desert and gave rise to the priestly polemic found several Dead Sea texts.**⁴ An evaluation will then be given of the two components mentioned above concerning Qumran’s temple ideology. An analogous evaluation will then take place for the Gospel of John.

The Gospel of John: Is There a Connection?,” in Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans, eds., *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After* [RILP 3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997], 267–279). In my view, similarities that are established ultimately reveal only an overlap in theological reflection between the two communities. This may be due to the use of a shared tradition, but is in the end impossible to prove. Thus, discussing similarities (or “parallels”) in this manner, i.e., without the element of literary dependence, guards us from the potential fallacy of simply assuming a two-way interface between the Gospel writer(s) and the Qumran sectarian community. **At the same time, though, it allows their similarities of thought to contribute to our understanding of John’s Gospel as the postdated text. On the other hand, a two-way interface between John and Qumran can become a possibility if (1) the Essenes were indeed the sect responsible for writing many of the DSS, (2) John the Baptist was associated with the Essenes, and (3) the John behind the Johannine tradition was well acquainted with the Baptist and his teaching, perhaps**

¹ Examples are Alan Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John* (JSNTSup 220; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002); Paul M. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* (PBM; Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006); Stephen T. Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John’s Gospel* (LNTS 312; London: T&T Clark, 2006); Timothy Wardle, *The Jerusalem Temple and Early Christian Identity* (WUNT 291; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Nicolas Perrin, *Jesus the Temple* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010); Eyal Regev, “Temple and Righteousness in Qumran and Early Christianity: Tracing the Social Difference between Two Movements,” in Ruth A. Clements and Daniel R. Schwartz, eds., *Text, Thought, and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity: Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, Jointly Sponsored by the Hebrew University Center for the Study of Christianity, 11–13 January 2004* (STDJ 84; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 63–88; Noah Hacham, “Exile and Self-Identity in the Qumran Sect and in Hellenistic Judaism,” in Esther G. Chazon and Betsy Halpern-Amaru, eds., *New Perspectives on Old Texts: Proceedings of the Tenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 9–11 January 2005* (STDJ 88; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 3–22.

² Referring to similarities between John and Qumran does not necessitate a literary dependency between the two, which has been suggested in past scholarship (see Raymond Brown, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament,” in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *John and Qumran* [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1972], 1–8; Richard Bauckham, “Qumran and

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even being one of his disciples (was the Evangelist one of the two disciples mentioned in John 1:35–40?). For further discussion, see James H. Charlesworth, “A Study in Shared Symbolism and Language: The Qumran Community and the Johannine Community,” in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (3 vols.; Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2006), 3:97–152; James H. Charlesworth, “John the Baptizer and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Bible and the Dead*

³ This terminology is borrowed from Hacham, “Exile and Self-Identity.”

⁴ This study allows room for the possibility that (1) the temple attitudes found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) does not represent only one community, and (2) that the Scrolls evince a developing temple ideology, rather than static one. I should add here that the source texts I will consider the most are Rule of the Community (1QS), Peshar Habakkuk (1QpHab) and the Damascus Document (CD).

THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY AS A RESPONSE TO THE HASMONEAN TEMPLE AND HIGH PRIESTHOOD

THE ZADOKITE PRIESTHOOD (ESSENES) GET REPLACED BY MENELAUS

The Qumranic polemic against the Hasmonean priesthood as reflected in the DSS seems to revolve primarily around two issues. The first concerns the non-Zadokite lineage of the Hasmonean high priests. **The drift away from a Zadokite high priestly service evidently began when Menelaus, a Benjamite whose service was from ca. 172–162bce,³⁴ outbid Jason (a Zadokite, ca. 175–172bce) by paying the Seleucid king three hundred talents of silver more for the office (2Macc 4:24–25).⁶ The priesthood of Menelaus thus sparked a trend in non-Zadokite high priests that were appointed by foreign rulers—a trend that perhaps lasted until the destruction of the Second Temple in 70ce.⁵**

For the Qumranites, the non-Zadokite, foreign appointment of high priests was a direct assault not only on the biblical tradition of their Israelite ancestors (1Kgs 1:39; Ezek 44:15; 48:11), but also on the very nature of Jewish identity.⁸ **The Zadokite line was regarded as the only lawful ancestry for high priests, and their foreign appointment was seen to advance the corrupting influences of Hellenism.** This is most likely the reason why we see the permeation of the phrase *ἑδά τᾶσδ* in the Scrolls (e.g., 1QS V, 2;⁶⁷ 1QSa II, 24; 1Qsb III, 22; CD III, 21–IV, 4).¹⁰ The phrase is used

³ See the discussions in James C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 203–226 and Deborah W. Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient Israel* (OTM; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 255–256.

⁴ 2 Macc 4:24–25: ὁ δὲ συσταθεὶς τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ δοξάσας αὐτὸν τῷ προσώπῳ τῆς ἐξουσίας εἰς ἑαυτὸν κατήντησεν τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην ὑπερβαλὼν τὸν Ἰάσονα τάλαντα ἀργυρίου τριακόσια. λαβὼν δὲ τὰς βασιλικὰς ἐντολὰς παρεγένετο τῆς μὲν ἀρχιερωσύνης οὐδὲν ἄξιον φέρων, θυμοὺς δὲ ὡμοῦ τυράννου καὶ θηρὸς βαρβάρου ὀργὰς ἔχων.

⁵ On the lineage of the Maccabees, see Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*, 280–281. She says, “Matthias and his sons were therefore of the line of Aaron in post-exilic terms, although they were not of the line of Zadok which had been the traditional line of descent for the high priests.” ⁸ Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*, 256.

⁶ This text is particularly interesting because it highlights the obedient character of the “sons of Zadok, the priests, who keep the covenant,” which is probably means that the sons of Zadok are the only priests who are faithful to God and his rules (James H. Charlesworth and E. Qimron, “Introduction to 1QS,” in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Rule of the Community and Related Documents* [10 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994], 1:19 n. 84).

⁷ 1QS, 1QSa and 1Qsb should probably be read in light of one another. First, all three documents were found as part of a single scroll, and with extant manuscripts being discovered in Caves 1, 4, and 5 at Qumran. 1QS is the first, followed by 1QSa and 1Qsb. **This, coupled with an identical date based on paleographic evidence, suggests that the documents were produced within the same Community.** However, at the same time the manuscript evidence from the caves suggests that each document underwent its own process of organic development with its content evolving as the needs of the Community evolved along with it. Second is the

to designate the only legitimate priestly lineage, often being modified by the appositive *יעֹזָבֵד*. **The use of the self-identifying slogan, “sons of Zadok, the priests,” then, was the most powerful and efficient way that the Qumranites criticized and protested the non-Zadokite lineage of the Jerusalem priesthood.** That is, it functioned as a self-label in their literature, **identifying themselves as the true heirs of the high priestly line that was ordained by God.**

CHARACTER OF THE HASMONEAN PRIESTLY SERVICES

The second facet of the Qumranic polemic deals more directly with the character of the Hasmonean priestly service itself. **The community accused the Jerusalem priesthood of polluting the temple sanctuary, claiming its service was marked by various sorts of immorality.** For example, CD IV, 1–10 describes the priestly ministry of the sons of Zadok as those chosen by God to keep watch over his sanctuary. **However, in contrast, the text goes on to describe those excluded from the community (i.e., the Jerusalem priesthood) as those who have been enslaved by Belial and who are guilty of “unchastity, arrogance, and defilement of the sanctuary” (CD IV, 11–18).**¹¹ **To the Qumran community, the Jerusalem priests had “continuously polluted the sanctuary” because they had broken and disregarded the teaching of Torah (cf. CD V, 6–VI, 2).**¹²

FINANCIAL INFLUENCE ON THE PRIESTHOOD

Furthermore, 1QpHab VIII, 8–13 and CD VI, 11–17¹³ highlight the Qumran critique of the financial and political motivations underlying the Hasmonean high priesthood.¹⁴ During this period, the high priesthood had reached unprecedented political power, and so became an even greater matter of contestation,¹⁵ **frequently being attained by the one willing to pay the most. The two texts mentioned above criticize and condemn the Hasmonean High Priest specifically (i.e., “the Wicked Priest”) and the Jerusalem priesthood generally (called “the sons of the pit) because they are (1) arrogant, (2) acquiring wealth for themselves, and (3) oppressing helpless people, such as orphans and widows.** It is not unlikely that the monies procured by the Jerusalem priests were used, at least in part, for the **retention of their power.** Nevertheless, from the perspective of the Qumranites, the priesthood had become **simply a political bargaining chip, which de-sacralized the office and made it spiritually ineffective.**¹⁶ As Collins notes, “If CD looks forward to a messiah of Aaron who will atone for iniquity (cf. CD 14:19), the implication is that the current Temple cult is ineffective **and that a new, messianic priest is needed to restore it.**”¹⁷

THOUGHTS ON WHY THE ESSENES LEFT JERUSALEM

While such a serious ideological conflict is likely the reason why the community lost its ability to participate in the temple cult, it is also **possible that the community itself was forced militarily to flee Jerusalem and give up its priestly authority.** VanderKam mentions several scholars who have suggested that during the period of the intersacerdotium,¹⁸ the Teacher of Righteousness (the community’s supposed founder), held the (Note: The position of...) high priesthood, **but was driven out of Jerusalem by Jonathan’s armies in 152bce.**¹⁹ This would indicate that the community that eventually formed around the Teacher at Qumran had direct oppositional ties to the Jerusalem priesthood. In other words, it suggests that the community was not driven away from Jerusalem simply because of ideological differences, but because it had been physically forced to flee. As VanderKam notes, this proposal is left on quite speculative grounds. Nevertheless, it remains the case that, at the very least, **extreme dissatisfaction with the non-Zadokite priesthood and its immorality caused the Qumran community to withdraw and establish its own temple system as an alternative to the one in Jerusalem.**

¹¹ The text arrives at these three “evils” by quoting and interpreting Isa 24:17—*אִתְּכֶם וְאִתְּכֶם וְאִתְּכֶם וְאִתְּכֶם וְאִתְּכֶם* (“Dread and a pit and a snare are upon you, inhabitants of the earth!” Translation is mine).

¹² See Hacham, “Exile and Self-Identity,” 5; Regev, “Temple and Righteousness,” 64–65.

¹³ 1QpHab VIII, 8–13 reads: “Its interpretation concerns the Wicked Priest, who is called by the name of loyalty at the start of his office. However, when he ruled over Israel his heart became conceited, he deserted God and betrayed the laws for the sake

similarity of content that binds the documents together. For example 1QSa II, 11–22, is a mirror representation of 1QS VI, 4–9 (see James H. Charlesworth, “1QS,” in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Rule of the Community and Related Documents* [10 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994], 1:27 n. 145). **The scenario of both texts is a congregational meal, where it is the priest who must first bless the new wine and the bread before any of the congregation is able to eat or drink.** According to Charlesworth and Qimron, the only marked difference between them is that 1QSa II, 11–22 is a messianic text that takes place “at the final session of the Endtime,” while 1QS VI, 4–9 takes place “in the present eschatological, but pre-messianic age” (Charlesworth and Qimron, “Introduction to 1QS,” 2).

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of riches. And he stole and hoarded wealth from the brutal men who had rebelled against God. And he seized public money, incurring additional serious sin. And he performed repulsive acts of every type of filthy licentiousness.” CD VI, 11–19 reads: “But all those who have been brought into the covenant shall not enter the temple to kindle his altar in vain. They will be the ones who close the door, as God said: ‘Whoever amongst you will close its door so that you do not kindle my altar in vain!’ Unless they are careful to act in accordance with the exact interpretation of the law for the age of wickedness: to separate themselves from the sons of the pit; to abstain from wicked wealth which defiles, either by promise or vow, and from the wealth of the temple and from stealing from the poor of the people, from making their widows their spoils and from murdering orphans; to separate unclean from clean and differentiate between the holy and the common; to keep the sabbath day according to the exact interpretation, and the festivals and the day of fasting, according to what they had discovered, those who entered the new covenant in the land of Damascus ...” (translations are from Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English* [trans. Wilfred G.E. Watson; Leiden: Brill, 1994], 36–37, 200).

¹⁴ That the office of high priest was influenced by money and political power, even before the Hasmonean era, is seen from the examples of Jason and Menelaus (cf. 2Macc 4).

¹⁵ Lee I. Levine, *Jerusalem: Portrait of the City in the Second Temple Period, 538 B.C.E.–70 C.E.* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2002), 95.

¹⁶ Rooke, *Zadok’s Heirs*, 256 and John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 92.

¹⁷ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 92.

¹⁸ That is, the seven year gap between the high priestly reign of Alcimus (159bce) and that of Jonathan (152bce).

QUMRAN’S ALTERNATIVE SANCTUARY

That the Qumran community saw itself as a new temple sanctuary in which God’s presence dwelt does not appear to be strongly debated among scholars.²⁰ However, two points seem to be underdeveloped in most studies. The first is that the community’s self-understanding as a new temple was far from simplistic. That is, the community did not view itself monolithically as a uniform divine dwelling.

- Rather, it saw itself as being composed of structured levels of “holy places,” similar to the way the Jerusalem temple itself had “layers” of sacred space (i.e., “the Holy Place” and “the Holy of Holies”).
- The second point is that the community’s theology of a de-centralized substitute for the Jerusalem temple has parallels in the broader scope of Hellenistic Judaism.

ESSENES CIRCUMCISED THE HEART

The community’s multilayered sacral structure can be seen in several passages in 1QS. For example, 1QS V, 5c–6a describes the entire community as those **who “lay a foundation of truth for Israel, for the Community of an eternal covenant. They shall atone for all those who devote themselves, for a sanctuary in Aaron and for a house of truth in Israel, and for those who join them for a Community.”** Worth pointing out is that the context (vv. 4–5) suggests that in order for the community to exist as a spiritual sanctuary it must first be spiritually circumcised. 1QS V, 5b, which most likely alludes to the spiritual interpretation of the law of circumcision given in Deut 10:16, reads, **“[They] shall rather circumcise in the community the foreskin of the inclination (and) a stiff neck.”** Thus, as Swarp notes:

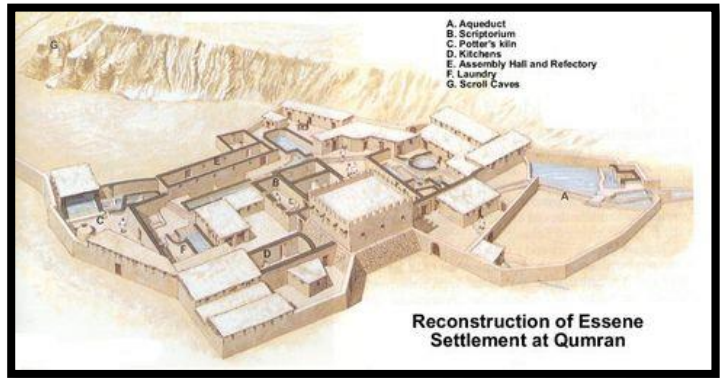
Lines 6–7 show that by doing this they would indeed be a community based on truth and would become partakers of an eternal covenant. They would also function as the spiritual sanctuary making expiation for all those joining the community and would judge those who transgressed the covenant.



At the level of the entire community, then, it could be said that the community saw itself as a spiritual sanctuary in which **atonement could be made not only for the community, but for anyone who would seek to join the community in the future.** In the light of this, it is important to note the community’s spiritualized understanding of atonement sacrifices. 1QS IX, 3–6 is perhaps the most explicit on this issue.²⁴ The text communicates that as a **substitute for animal sacrifices the community would embrace “the offerings of lips for judgment” and perfect obedience to the law as the means of atonement for one’s sins.**

A HIGHER COMMUNITY STANDARD

However, 1QS VIII gives us the more contoured portrait of the community's **experience as a new temple sanctuary**. Here, rules are prescribed for the special "council of the community," which was apparently composed of just fifteen people—**twelve laymen and three priests** (v. 1). **These men were to be "perfect in everything which has been revealed from the whole Torah" (vv. 1–2), and were entrusted "to pay for iniquity by works of judgment and suffering affliction" (vv. 3–4).** In 8:5–6, this Council is called **"an eternal plant, a house of holiness consisting of Israel and an intimate Holy of Holies consisting of Aaron."**



Interestingly, the text seems to distinguish between the phrase **"house of holiness consisting of Israel"** and **"an intimate Holy of Holies consisting of Aaron."** As seen in other texts (e.g., 1QS V, 6; IX, 6), the title "house of holiness/sanctuary for Aaron" **can in fact be used to identify the whole community as God's temple**. However, here, a distinction is made between the sacred space comprised of "Israel" and that which is comprised of "Aaron." The most likely explanation for this distinction is that the author has linked **the twelve laymen to the "house of holiness consisting of Israel"** and **the three priests to the "intimate Holy of Holies consisting of Aaron."** That is, the laymen represent the community (i.e., "Israel") as the "Holy Place" within the spiritualized temple, while the "inner community" of the three priests (i.e., "Aaron") represents the high priesthood serving in the "Holy of Holies." The author establishes the latter linkage by using the phrase $\text{הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַבְּרִיחַ}$, which is often used in the Hebrew Bible to denote the most holy inner room of the tabernacle (cf. Exod 26:33). **Consequently, it is in this inner, spiritual "Holy of Holies" constructed of priests that atonement is made for the land via the sacrifice of lips and pure obedience to the Torah (8:2–3, 6).**



¹⁹ See VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas*, 246–250, although VanderKam himself rejects this idea.

²⁰ For example, see the works of Bertil Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (SNTSMS 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965); R.J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Robert A. Briggs, *Jewish Temple Imagery in the Book of Revelation* (St. BL 10; New York: Peter Lang, 1999); Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 32–33; Wardle, *The Jerusalem Temple*, 139–165; Paul Swarup, *The Self-Understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls Community: An Eternal Planting, A House of Holiness* (LSTS 59; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 165–177; and Hacham, "Exile and Self-Identity," 6–7.

Within the broader scope of Hellenistic Jewish literature, one does not find such a developed counter-sanctuary establishment as seen in the Scrolls, **especially concerning the spiritualization of sacrifices**.⁸ Nevertheless, one can detect in the literature a movement by at least some groups of Diaspora Jews towards the de-centralization of the Jerusalem temple. This movement would suggest that **(1) some Diaspora Jews attempted to mitigate the necessity of worship and sacrifice at the physical temple building,**⁹ and **(2) the Qumranites drew upon a theology that existed more broadly in early Judaism and gave precedent to the community's attitudes toward the temple. In**

⁸ However, as Hacham notes, we do see a growing tendency in Diaspora settings for "prayer" to act as a substitute for sacrifice, or at least to be emphasized more than sacrifice (Hacham, "Exile and Self-Identity," 12–13).

⁹ See Hacham, "Exile and Self-Identity," 6–10. This is not to suggest that Jews living in the Diaspora were disloyal or disparaging towards the temple. For example, in Acts 6:13 Hellenistic Jews accuse Stephen (although falsely) of speaking against "this holy place," and eventually stone him. It seems accurate to say, then, that Diaspora Jews still retained a great deal of zeal for the temple.

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this way the community is not as radically different or unique in their temple attitudes as is often thought. Two brief examples from Philo and Josephus on this point should suffice.

PHILO THOUGHTS ON THE TEMPLE

Philo, although offering support and affirmation of the Jerusalem temple in many of his writings, expresses at least three different ways that God and his people relate to it. First, he notes in *Spec. Laws* 1:66 that since God could never be limited to a physical temple building in the first place, “it is necessary to suppose that the entire world is the temple of God” (ἱερὸν θεοῦ νομίζειν τὸν σύμπαντα χρῆ κόσμον εἶναι). Secondly, Philo points to the personal dimension concerning God’s dwelling place: “Therefore, be zealous, O soul, to become the house of God, a holy sanctuary” (σπούδαζε οὖν, ὦ ψυχή, θεοῦ οἶκος γενέσθαι, ἱερὸν ἅγιον, *Somn.* 1:149). Thirdly, by drawing on the biblical tradition of Exod 19:6, Philo points to the communal aspect of God’s dwelling, as he notes in *Sobr.* ⁶⁶ that as king, God’s dwelling is supremely in and among his “kingdom,” that is, his believing people:

οὗτος τῶν δώδεκα κατάρχει φυλῶν, ἅς οἱ χρησιμοὶ “βασιλειον καὶ ἱεράτευμα θεοῦ”
φασινεῖναικατὰτὴνπρῶτονπρῶτονΣήμευλογίαν, οὗτοῖσοἴκοις ἦνευχῆτὸνθεὸν οἰκῆσαι· βασιλειον γὰρ ὁ βασιλέως δῆπουθεν
οἶκος, ἱερὸς ὄντως καὶ μόνος ἄσυλος.

Note that Philo never rejects or disparages the Jerusalem temple. Nevertheless, his life situation as a Diaspora Jew from Alexandria—and the likelihood that his readers were also Diaspora Jews unable to worship daily at Jerusalem—seem to have led to him to develop a somewhat de-centralized temple attitude in these texts.

JOSEPHUS STORY ABOUT ONIAS

Josephus, on the other hand, tells the story about Onias IV, son of the High Priest Onias III, who builds a temple in Egypt, in the name of Heliopolis (*Ant.* 13:62–73).³¹ He says that when the son Onias saw that Judea was being mistreated by the Macedonians and their kings—and because he was motivated by personal fame—he sent a letter to King Ptolemy and Queen Cleopatra requesting that he might build a temple in Egypt that would resemble the one in Jerusalem (13:62–63). Included in this letter was an additional request to establish his own Levitical priesthood. Josephus recounts that the main reason for Onias’s request was his interpretation of a prophecy in Isaiah that there would be a temple to the Most High God built in Egypt by a Jew (13:64). Therefore, Onias proposed to the King and Queen that he “cleanse” (ἀνακαθάραντι) one of the Egyptian temples and build his own, so that Egyptian Jews might worship God in harmony as well as serve the King and Queen’s needs (13:67–68). Onias is subsequently granted this request, and, according to Josephus, establishes a temple service in Heliopolis. (*Note: reuses an Egyptian Temple*)

³¹ For a discussion on the nature of this temple, see Anders Runesson, *The Origins of the Synagogue: A Socio-Historical Study* (ConBNTS 37; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2001), 429–436.

This passage from *Antiquities* illustrates that even the son of the nation’s high priest understood that while the Jerusalem temple certainly held a special place in Jewish theology and identity, there was a flexibility involved in the geographic locale of Jewish worship. Although the text gives no indication as to how widespread Onias’s attitude was among popular Judaism, the fact that Onias took his cue from an interpretation of biblical prophecy and found other Jews, priests, and Levites to minister in this temple (13:73), suggests that a good portion of Egyptian Jews must have shared a similar perspective concerning their relationship to the Jerusalem temple. That we read elsewhere in Josephus that a good many Jews from Jerusalem voluntarily came to Alexandria to settle under Ptolemy’s rule (*Ant.* 12:9)—even a Jewish High Priest named Hzekiah (*Ag. Ap.* 1:186–187)—demonstrates a willingness on the part of Jews to

detach themselves from daily involvement with the temple cult.¹⁰ This point, of course, must be balanced with texts that imply Egyptian Jews still held the Jerusalem temple in the highest regard.¹¹

Judging particularly from the Philo texts, but also from Josephus's account of Onias, the concept that God did not dwell solely in the confines of the Jerusalem temple likely provided great reinforcement to Jewish identity in the Diaspora.¹² Thus, both the alternative establishment of Qumran and the **de-centralizing temple attitudes of Philo and Onias (as portrayed by Josephus) comprise specific responses to certain life situations that inhibited their respective communities from participating in the Jerusalem temple cult.**

QUMRAN'S ALTERNATIVE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

We have noted the Qumran community's protest against the non-Zadokite lineage and the immoral behavior that marked the Hasmonean priesthood.¹³ What is of further importance to us, however, is the specific notion that this counter-priestly establishment at Qumran also symbolized the community's resistance to Jewish religious authority. This resistance can be seen rather clearly in two ways. **First, as briefly noted already, during the Hasmonean era the high priest had essentially rose to the level of ruler over the Jewish nation.** For example, Josephus says of John Hyrcanus, τριῶν τῶν μεγίστων ἄξιος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κριθεῖς, ἀρχῆς τοῦ ἔθνους καὶ τῆς ἀρχιερατικῆς τιμῆς καὶ προφητείας (Ant. 13:299; cf. 1Macc 4:46; 14:41).¹⁴ First Maccabees 9:28–30 tells of how after Judas Maccabaeus had died, the Jews appointed his brother Jonathan, who later became high priest, to be their "ruler and governor" (ἄρχοντα καὶ ἡγούμενον). Thus, Qumran's break from participation in the Jerusalem temple and its priestly service did not only involve religious ideology, but also involved a separation from, **perhaps even a rebellion against, those who ruled over the Jewish population in religious matters as well as political and civic ones.**

IN QUMRAN THE HIGH PRIEST BECAME A RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

In view of this separation, the establishment of an alternative religious authority at Qumran primarily came by **attributing communal authority to those who functioned as priests within the community's social structure.** 1QS and 1QSa are excellent textual witnesses to this. Judging from these texts, there existed a hierarchy of status that acted as a guide for the **social structure of the community, and it appears to have revolved around matters such as age and gender (1QSa I, 4–9), ritual purity and physical well-being (1QSa II, 3–9), as well as individual rank**

¹⁰ Admittedly, the term "willingness" is a bit misleading, since the movement of Jews away from Jerusalem to Alexandria cited in the texts from Josephus was a result of war (i.e. the battle of Gaza). In this way, moving to Alexandria was the response of some Jews to a certain life situation. Nevertheless, this is precisely what is being argued in this paper: inherent in the broader scope of Jewish temple theology was the understanding that while worship at the Jerusalem temple was ideal, there was the ability to worship God genuinely apart from Jerusalem, particularly in the light of certain inhibiting life situations.

¹¹ For example, Ant. 12:10 says that Jews from Jerusalem living in Alexandria were still so committed to the Jerusalem temple that they required sacrifices to be sent there instead of offering them in Jewish temples in Egypt.

¹² For other Hellenistic Jewish texts see 2Macc 5:19; 3Macc; and the Letter of Aristeas, the last of which seeks to identify the temple with the Jews of the Egyptian Diaspora rather than Jerusalem Jews (see Hacham, "Exile and Self-Identity," 6–7).

¹³ There has been some debate as to whether or not the Qumran community was, right from the start, a movement concerned with the issue of the non-Zadokite priestly lineage of the Jerusalem priesthood. Scholars such as Philip Davies, *Behind the Essenes: History and Ideology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (BJS 94; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 51–72, Robert Kugler, "Priesthood at Qumran," in Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2:93–94, 113–114, and John C. Collins, "The Origin of the Qumran Community: A Review of the Evidence," in Seers, Sibyls, and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 162–167; repr. from Paul J. Kobelski and Maurya P. Horgan, eds., *To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J.* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 159–178, have suggested that the references to the "sons of Zadok" found in 1QS were later redactions made by later members of the community with priestly concerns. However, Wardle, *The Jerusalem Temple*, 145, argues convincingly that such contentions are overstated. He says that the community did indeed have priestly motivations from its inception, basing this assertion on four pieces of evidence. First, the paleographic data suggests that 1QS is earlier than the texts from Cave 4 (texts which have been especially used to argue against the community's early priestly concerns). The priestly material of 1QS thus provides early evidence for the priestly origins of the sect. Second, the pervasiveness of references to the priesthood throughout the Scrolls suggests that priests not only influenced the sect's continuation but its formation as well. Third, the notion that the Scrolls do not specifically denounce the illegitimate genealogy of the Hasmoneans does not mean that the issue of priestly lineage was not a concern of the community. Fourth, 4QMMT dates also from the very early days of the sect and is primarily concerned with the purity of priests and the temple. Thus, it also provides early evidence for the priestly concerns of the community.

¹⁴ This is also implied a few sections earlier in Ant. 13:291–293, where a certain Pharisee says to Hyrcanus, ἐπεὶ, φησὶν, ἡζῖωσας γνῶναι τὴν ἀλήθειαν, θέλεις δὲ εἶναι δίκαιος, τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην ἀπόθου, καὶ μόνον ἀρκεῖτω σοὶ τὸ ἄρχειν τοῦ λαοῦ. The exhortation is given to Hyrcanus to give up the high priesthood and "let only the ruling over the people be sufficient for you."

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within the community itself (1QS VI, 4).¹⁵ However, the **“sons of Zadok, the priests” are those at the top of this hierarchy, especially with regard to the Law.** 1QS V in particular provides support for this assertion.

At a thematic break in 1QS, column five begins a new section concerned with the conduct of the Men of the Community, “who are devoted to turn from all evil and to grasp to all which he (God) commanded in order for his acceptance.”¹⁶ Here, issues of Torah, wealth and judgment (יָאֵלֶּיךָ עֲוֹנוֹתָ אֲפֹאֲרִי) are at hand, as the Men are commanded not to wander from the statutes of the community in stubbornness of heart (וְאִשְׁרֵיבָהּ אֵלַי). **Rather, they are to be committed to the practice of truth** (וְאִשְׁרֵיבָהּ אֵלַי). What is important to note in this Law scenario is the functional role that the sons of Zadok play. Following Charlesworth’s translation of יֵצְאוּנָהּ יוֹ עֹב in V, 2 (lit. “those who turn at the mouth”), **the Men of the Community are ultimately “answerable to the Sons of Zadok, the priests who keep the covenant.”** (*Note: I think in this regard keeping the covenant refers to them guarding the covenant by maintaining it’s integrity. How would they do they do that? By upholding it’s every jot and tittle*) The key Hebrew phrase is יוֹ עֹב, used elsewhere in the document to establish one’s authority (cf. V, 21). It identifies the priests, specifically the Zadokites, as the authoritative figures among the community in matters of Torah, as well as daily obedience to it. **As the community adheres to the Law under priestly direction, they are said to lay “a foundation of truth for Israel” (V, 5) and become “a sanctuary in Aaron” and “a house of truth in Israel” (V, 6).**⁴² Furthermore, when the “Men of the Community” seek after obedience to the Torah of Moses, they do so **“in accordance with all which has been revealed from it [the Torah] to the sons of Zadok, the priests who keep the covenant” (V, 9).** From this passage alone, then, we see **the authority of the Zadokite priests being established on the basis of divine revelation and their own obedience** (i.e., covenant-keeping; cf. V, 1 and 1QSb V, 22–26).⁴³ The Zadokites evidently held a special place in the community as those to whom God had revealed the divine truth of his Law. **Because of the this, their instruction was endowed with authority and so binding on the rest of the community.**⁴⁴

The second way that the Qumran community established its alternative religious authority was through the community’s intentional, geographical move away from Jerusalem to the Qumran desert. Richard Bauckham is right in noting the importance of Jerusalem as the literal and symbolic center of the Jewish world, both for Palestinian and Diaspora Jews. Thousands of Jewish pilgrims traveled (perhaps only once in a lifetime) to Jerusalem to celebrate feasts and worship at the temple (cf. Philo, Spec. Laws 1:66–77). As the biblical tradition attests, Jerusalem was God’s chosen city (e.g., 1Kgs 8:29) and the expected locus of the eschatological regathering of the people of Israel (Tob 14:5). Yet, evidently, the Qumran community **was willing to abandon Judaism’s beloved city. It chose rather to live on the margins of society as God’s “true” eschatological community, and to criticize those ruling in Jerusalem quite severely, as can be seen from 4QpIsb II, 6–8: “These are the arrogant men who are in Jerusalem. They are the ones who have rejected the Law of God and mocked the world of the Holy One of Israel.”**

The establishment of religious authority structures as alternatives to Jerusalem was also known more widely in early Judaism. While Jerusalem, its priests, and Torah are never disregarded or spoken against, there is a movement in the literature that suggests **Jerusalem and the Jewish scriptures in Hebrew were becoming less crucial to the lives of normal Jews, especially those in the Diaspora.** This is seen in two ways.

- First, Letter of Aristeas praises the Greek translation of the Torah as being so καλῶς καὶ ὀσίως (“good and hallowed”) that διαμεινῆ ταῦθ’ οὕτως ἔχοντα, καὶ μὴ γένηται μηδεμία διασκευή (“it should remain as it is, and there should be not one alteration,” Let. Aris. 310–311). This elevation of the Jewish scriptures in Greek meant that Alexandrian Jews no longer had to travel to Jerusalem to receive Torah instruction in the Hebrew language.
- Second, the fact that synagogues and “houses of prayer” (οἴκοι προσευχῆς) were erected throughout the Diaspora suggests that, while Jews knew attendance in the Jerusalem temple would be ideal, they still possessed a legitimate way to worship and serve God.

¹⁵ On the role of age in the Community, see Lawrence Schiffman, *The Eschatological Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (SBLMS; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 13–26.

¹⁶ The phrase אַעֲבֵא עֲבִינָא עֲבֵאִי אֶצְעֵא (“And this is the rule for the men of the Community”) resembles other places in the document that signal transitions (e.g., I, 1–2; IX, 21).

⁴² See Hacham, “Exile and Self-Identity,” 10–11.

⁴³ IQSb III, 22–26 emphasizes the close connection between the priesthood and the renewal of God’s “eternal covenant.”

⁴⁴ IQSa proves further evidence for the authority of the priest at Qumran. At the beginning of the document, priests immediately take center stage. For example, in I, 1–2, the Community must walk “according to the authority of the judgment [i.e., regulation or instruction] of the Sons of Zadok, the priests.” A few lines later, the priests are called those who “instruct them [the people] in all their judgments.” And in I, 23–25, whenever the Community gathers as an assembly for “judgment,” it is under the leadership and authority of “the Sons of Aaron, the Sons of Levi, and the sons of Zadok,” all of which are priestly groups. As can be seen, then, a primary role of priests at Qumran was that of judging, understood as teaching or legal instruction. That is to say, when it came to matters of Torah and its application to the rules of the Community, it was the priests who possessed the authoritative word. Moreover, a good many Qumran scholars, such as Schiffman, have noticed this heavy emphasis on priestly legal authority in IQSa, particularly the authority of the Zadokite priesthood. Schiffman comments, “According to numerous sectarian texts they [the Zadokites] are the original leaders who organized the sect and who constituted the main authority figures in the early days of the sect” (*The Eschatological Community*, 35).

While the Qumran community certainly evinces a more vigorous and outright resistance to the authority of Jerusalem in its counter-establishments, it was not necessarily unique in its application of the **theological principle that God could be effectively worshiped and served outside of the Jerusalem temple and without its priesthood**. As we will see next, the Johannine community as represented by the Gospel of John evinces similar counter-establishments, which suggests that its attitude toward the temple cult indeed fits within the scope of early Judaism.

THE POST-70CE JOHANNINE COMMUNITY AND ITS RESPONSE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

The *Sitz im Leben* of the Gospel of John could provide an appropriate comparison to Qumran as a community that faced the “loss” of the Jerusalem temple in a couple of ways.

- First, the Gospel seems to reflect the situation of a **Christian Jewish community** in conflict with a religious authority that has control over the temple cult (cf. 2:18) and is putting believers in Jesus out of the synagogue (9:22; 12:42; 16:2). This is evidenced by the special role that the οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι play in the Gospel as the chief antagonists to Jesus (e.g., 2:18; 5:10; 6:41; 7:35; 8:48, 52; 9:22; 10:31), and who comprise a group often critically portrayed as unbelievers.¹⁷
- Second, and the point upon which this study will focus, the Gospel likely reflects a post-70ce community struggling to define what it means to be Jewish while the Jerusalem temple is no longer standing.¹⁸ Since this suggestion involves answering some important historical questions, brief comments are needed concerning the dating and provenance of John’s Gospel.

The dating of John’s Gospel has gone through various trends. Baur, Bultmann, and the Tübingen school opted for a late date (ca. 160ce). Robinson, on the other hand, dated the Gospel very early, to the sixties ce.¹⁹ In the light of the 1935 discovery of P²⁰ (ca. 125ce) and its linkage to P. Egerton 2 (ca. 150ce), both of which are witnesses to John,⁵² dating the Gospel anytime after 100ce has become more difficult to defend. Late second century citations of the Apostolic Fathers that reflect an awareness of John’s Gospel also put constraints on later dates (e.g., Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6:14). However, Robinson’s early, pre-70 position appears not to have taken hold in contemporary scholarship

¹⁷ Peter Hirschberg, “Jewish Believers in Asia Minor according to the Book of Revelation and the Gospel of John,” in *Jewish Believers in Jesus*, 230–237; Urban C. von Wahlde, “Literary Structure and Theological Argument in Three Discourses with the Jews in the Fourth Gospel,” *JBL* (1984): 575–584; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 1:214–222.

¹⁸ This is also the perspective of Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body*, 19.

¹⁹ John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2000), 254–311.

²⁰ See the helpful comments in Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (ed. Francis J. Moloney; ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 2003), 209–210.

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either.²¹ Thus, *the majority of scholars date the Gospel to the latter part of the first century, around 90ce.*²² This date, which I accept, fits nicely on three levels.

- ❖ First, it is able to take into account the witnesses of the early papyri documents noted above;²³
- ❖ second, as Keener notes, 90ce might best reflect the historical situation regarding the division between the Johannine community and the synagogue that is detectable in the Gospel (cf. John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2);²⁴ and
- ❖ third, it allows time for the author(s) of John to become acquainted well enough with the Synoptic material in circulation so as to presuppose its content in the writing of John's Gospel.²⁵

With regard to provenance, the geographic origins of John have traditionally been attributed to Asia Minor, specifically Ephesus. Current scholarship seems to favor this location as well, although several other options such as Egypt, Syria, and Palestine have been suggested.²⁶ Citations from the church fathers who report that John wrote from Ephesus is powerful evidence in favor of an Asia Minor provenance (Irenaeus, *Haer* 3:1:1; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3:23:6). I find Keener's more nuanced position to be persuasive.

He notes that the Gospel probably originated in Palestine, but was completed and began circulation at a later date in Asia Minor. Thus, the Gospel may have been intended for a chronologically and geographically removed Palestinian *Jewish audience*.²⁷

This view on the date and provenance of John provides an effective framework through which to view the Gospel as essentially answering the question, **how are Jews to be Jews, that is, how are they to worship and serve the one true God, in the wake of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple?** Although the Gospel likely began circulation within a Diaspora setting among Jews who had become familiar with daily life void of the Jerusalem temple, the basic question of how to define one's "Jewishness" remained a significant issue for *all* Jews, especially for those originally from Palestine. Thus, John functions, at least in part, as a response to this historical situation, one similar to Qumran's: the Gospel seeks to identify for its community **(1) an alternative temple sanctuary, and (2) an alternative religious authority**. However, according to the Gospel, **both counter-establishments are not built around a community of priests, but around the individual, Jesus.**

JOHN'S ALTERNATIVE SANCTUARY

The two primary passages in the Gospel that constitute the community's response to the destruction of the temple are 1:14 and 2:21. Whether or not these verses are later additions made by a final editor do not concern this study, since

²¹ See, for example, Kerr's arguments against Robinson in Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus' Body*, 23–25.

²² E.g., B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John: The Authorized Version with Introduction and Notes*, xxviii; C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), 128; D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 5–6; Brown, *Introduction*, 215; Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus' Body*, 19–25; Keener, *John*, 1:140–142; D.A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 82–86; Ben Witherington, III, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 38; George Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC 36; 2nd ed.; Nashville: Nelson, 1999), lxxviii. However, one should not forget the more complex dating system for John found in Urban von Wahlde's recent commentary. He dates the first edition of the Gospel to 55–65ce, the second edition to 60–65ce, and the third edition to 90–95ce. (*The Gospel and Letters of John* [ECC; 3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010], 1:50–55).

²³ Additional documents could include Bodmer Papyri II and XV (P66 and P75), which are ca. 175–225ce.

²⁴ Keener, *John*, 1:42.

²⁵ So Barrett, *John*, 127–128.

²⁶ Stephen Smalley, *John: Evangelist and Interpreter* (Nashville: Nelson, 1978), 148–149; John Fenton, *The Gospel according to St. John* (NCB; Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), 16; Keener, *John*, 1:149.

²⁷ This position helps to explain why John's Gospel seems to evince a detailed familiarity with the geography and topography of Palestine (Richard Bauckham, "Historiographical Characteristics of the Gospel of John," *NTS* 53.1 [2007]: 20) and seems to reflect Jewish expectations of eschatological figures that were common in Palestine at the time (Richard Bauckham, "Messianism according to the Gospel of John," in John Lierman, ed., *Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John* [WUNT 2.219; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006], 67–68). For more discussion, see Keener, *John*, 1:144.

they nevertheless seem to reflect the reactionary temple ideology of a community seeking to address issues surrounding a templeless Judaism.

*John 1:14- 14 The Word became a human being and lived with us,
and we saw his Sh'khinah,
the Sh'khinah of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.*

John 2:21- 21 But the "temple" he had spoken of was his body

JOHN 1:14 AND THE ΣΚΗΝΗ OF JESUS

The Gospel's alternative attitude toward the dwelling place of God is displayed at its outset. Yet it begins developing this attitude not by directly referencing the temple, as is seen in 2:21, but by alluding to what many have said is the **Old Testament tabernacle**.²⁸ However, while the use of the verb σκηνώω ("to pitch a tent, live temporarily") in 1:14 may allude to the institution of the tabernacle (e.g., Exod 25:8–9), it very well may be an allusion specifically to the σκηνή μαρτυρίου of LXX Exod 33:7.

*Exodus 25:8 "They are to make me a sanctuary, so that I may live among them.
9 You are to make it according to everything I show you — the design of the tabernacle and the design of its furnishings. This is how you are to make it.*

*Exodus 33:7 Moshe would take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far away from the camp.
He called it the tent of meeting. Everyone who wanted to consult Adonai would go out to the tent of meeting, outside the camp.*

There are two points of evidence for this.

- First, the lexical item σκηνή ("tent") is used eleven times in a span of only five verses in Exod 33:7–11, the first of which is modified by the genitive μαρτυρίου ("testimony"). Since the concept of "testimony" is a significant theme in the Prologue (the μαρτυρ- root occurring four times in John 1:7–15), there is good possibility that σκηνώω in 1:14 is meant to be read against this σκηνή μαρτυρίου backdrop.^{29,30}
- Secondly, understanding σκηνώω as a reference to the Tent of Testimony seems to better reflect Johannine theology. That is, the Tent of Testimony was set up outside of the camp of Israel, so that any Israelite wanting to seek the LORD could do so. But it was primarily the place where the LORD would speak to Moses "face to face, as if someone would speak to his own friend" (Exod 33:11).

²⁸ For example, E. Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (trans. R.W. Funk; ed. R.W. Funk and U. Busse; 2 vols.; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 1:119; Morna Hooker, "John's Prologue and the Messianic Secret," *NTS* 21 (1974): 53; J. Palmer, "Exodus and the Biblical Theology of the Tabernacle," in T. Desmond Alexander and Simon Gathercole, eds., *Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Theology* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 19; Carson, *John*, 127–128; and Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to John* (BNTC; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2005), 104; Anthony T. Hanson, "John 1.14–18 and Exodus 34," *NTS* 23 (1976): 91. The argument in favor of an allusion to the tabernacle typically begins first with the use of the verb σκηνώω in 1:14. In the LXX, the nominal form σκηνή is used 97 times in Exodus, and nearly 99% of these usages appear in the Tabernacle narratives of chs. 25–40. That this word is thematically connected to the tabernacle is strengthened in light of other lexical choices the Gospel author could have made (e.g., [συ]ζάω "to live, live with," κατοικέω "to inhabit, dwell," περιπατέω "to walk, live"). Second, the two-fold use of the term δόξα echoes the notion of the "glory of God" that descended into the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle as a visible representation of the divine presence. The combinational use of σκηνώω and δόξα could have texts like Exod 40:34–35 as a background. Third, John's mention of the λόγος being πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας ("full of grace and truth") most likely represents the Hebrew phrase אֶבֶר-אֱמֶת וְיִשְׁרָאֵל ("abounding in steadfast love and truth/faithfulness"), which God declared to Moses when he revealed his glory in Exod 34:6. In light of this, John does indeed seem to be drawing on the tabernacle tradition in Exodus and applying it to the λόγος.

²⁹ See Henry Mowley, "John 1:14–18 in the Light of Exodus 33:7–34:35," *ExpTim* 95 (1984):

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In this light, the Gospel of John presents Jesus as new Tent of Testimony, so that if one wishes to seek and know the LORD they must seek him in the person of Jesus (1:18; 2:18–21; 4:19–26; 14:6, 9; 17:3). At the same time, these verses designate Jesus as the locale of God’s special revelation, that is, as the one who had a unique relationship with God, similar to the way Moses did with the LORD via the Tent of Testimony.³¹

The Prologue’s allusion to the σκηνή μαρτυρίου of Exodus and its reorientation toward Jesus suggests that the Gospel is responding to the concern that God’s dwelling place had been destroyed when the Romans razed the temple in 70ce. While Hellenistic Jews may have been better prepared to cope with this concern, **since they lived daily life without personal involvement in the temple cult, the fact that the Jerusalem temple symbolized God’s personal dwelling among his chosen people likely caused Jews to wonder if God had abandoned them as a nation.** The writer(s) of the Fourth Gospel answers by alluding to the Exodus tradition, and by affirming that God had not abandoned his people and had even visited them via his special agent, Jesus, the Messiah of Israel.

JOHN 2:13–22: JESUS AS THE SANCTUARY OF GOD

John 2:13 It was almost time for the festival of Pesach in Y’hudah, so Yeshua went up to Yerushalayim. 14 In the Temple grounds he found those who were selling cattle, sheep and pigeons, and others who were sitting at tables exchanging money. 15 He made a whip from cords and drove them all out of the Temple grounds, the sheep and cattle as well. He knocked over the money-changers’ tables, scattering their coins; 16 and to the pigeon-sellers he said, “Get these things out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market?” 17 (His talmidim later recalled that the Tanakh says, “Zeal for your house will devour me.”) [a] 18 So the Judeans confronted him by asking him, “What miraculous sign can you show us to prove you have the right to do all this?” 19 Yeshua answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.” 20 The Judeans said, “It took 46 years to build this Temple, and you’re going to raise it in three days?” 21 But the “temple” he had spoken of was his body. 22 Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his talmidim remembered that he had said this, and they trusted in the Tanakh and in what Yeshua had said.

John 2:13–22 gives perhaps a clearer glimpse into the Johannine community’s attitude toward the temple cult. It was seen in 1QS VIII that **the Qumran community understood itself as a spiritual temple that offered spiritual sacrifices to God, being composed of “councils” of twelve laymen and three priests, the former symbolizing “the Holy Place,” and the latter symbolizing “the Holy of Holies.”** This ideology arose out of a dissatisfaction with the Jerusalem priesthood at the time, and **functioned as an expression of the community’s anticipation of a restored and purified temple system, which was to be carried out by a messianic high priestly figure.**⁶³ This ideology of a spiritualized temple cult is likewise reflected in John 2:13–22. In 2:14–17, Jesus is portrayed as the refiner of Israel’s corrupted temple, a scene which perhaps alludes to LXX Mal 3:1–4 (cf. *PssSol* 17:30–32). Malachi, reflecting on the permanent priesthood of Levi (2:4–7), anticipates a day when an ideal, eschatological priestly figure will be sent by God to turn the way of the people back to the Lord and refine the temple cult and its sacrifices, so that the proper worship of God might once again take place (3:1–4).³² In John 2, the Johannine community may be expressing its understanding of Jesus as God’s eschatological Priest, restoring and refining his temple.⁶⁵ However, John takes Jesus’s priesthood to a higher level in 2:21. That is, Jesus is not simply God’s priestly messenger sent to clean out the temple. Rather, Jesus is the ὁ ναός, that is, **the inner dwelling place of God himself, perhaps even understood as the new ὕψιστος ἱεὺς.** **The spiritualizing of God’s sanctuary is reflective of the priestly centered temple ideology of the Qumran community, as well as Philo’s emphasis on the personal dimension of God’s dwelling in *Somn.* 1:149.**

YESHUA IS THE DWELLING PLACE

The Fourth Gospel not only spiritualizes the temple as God’s dwelling place, but also appears to spiritualize temple sacrifice by noting the sacrificial nature of Jesus’ priestly ministry.⁶⁶ The narrative comment in 2:13 (“And the

³¹ Mowvley, “John 1:14–18,” 136. Additionally, the early Jewish texts *Sirach* and *Wisdom of Solomon* also reflect σκηνή-language in relation to their theme of “wisdom.” However, while these texts are illuminating, it is unlikely that they have in mind the Tent of Testimony specifically. Their use of σκηνή-language seems thoroughly concerned with the institution of the Tabernacle (e.g., *Sir* 24:8, 10, 15; *Wis* 9:7–8). ⁶³ Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 115.

³² Three points of evidence are: (1) Mal 2:4–7 is likely Malachi’s reflection on God’s

Passover of the Jews was near,” cf. 19:14) is probably meant to draw a connection between the slaughtering of the passover lambs in the temple with Jesus’s crucifixion.⁶⁷ **In 1:29, and again 1:36, John the Baptizer calls Jesus ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἀΐρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, and in 11:50–51, the high priest, Caiaphas, prophesies that Jesus would die sacrificially, that is, in behalf of the Jewish nation.**⁶⁸ However one may wish to nuance John’s theology of covenant made to Phinehas, Aaron’s grandson, in Num 25:11–13. Evidence for this is in the presence of a *úεθά* (“covenant”) that brings *íαιÖ* (“peace”), and the idea that Levi (i.e., a priest) *άέÖä* (“turned”) and atoned for the sins of many Israelites.

- (2) Mal 2:7 calls the priest *úáááö êàîî áääé* (“the messenger of the LORD of Hosts”).
- (3) It is thus likely that the messenger of Mal 3:1–4 is a priestly figure sent to purify the temple cult. This leads Bauckham to conclude that the expectation of an eschatological High Priest was understood as a “Phinehas-Elijah” figure, which seems to appear in subsequent Jewish literature, such as Pseudo Philo’s *Biblical Antiquities* (Bauckham, “Messianism according to the Gospel of John,” 37–38). Schuchard draws attention to the possible parallel between the LXX of Mal 3:3 “and he will pour them out as gold and silver” (departing from the MT) and John 2:15 “and he poured out the money of the money-changers” (B.G. Schuchard, *Scripture within Scripture: The Interrelationship of Form and Function in the Explicit Old Testament Citations in the Gospel of John* [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991], 25 n. 40).

⁶⁵ *On the eschatological nature of John 2:13–22, see Kerr, The Temple of Jesus’ Body, 67–101.*

⁶⁶ *Cf. 1QS VIII, 2–3, 6.*

⁶⁷ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John* (trans. G.R. Beasley-Murray; Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1971), 664, 667; Keener, *John, 2:1129–1131. The theme of “sacrifice,” appearing at various points in the Gospel, provides evidence for reading the banquet scene in John 2:1–11 along the lines of a sacral meal that replaces temple sacrifices, similar to what is found in Qumran literature. For a discussion on Jesus and the notion of sacrifice in John from a narrative-critical perspective, see John P. Heil, “Jesus as the Unique High Priest in the Gospel of John,” *CBQ* 57 (1995): 735–737.*

⁶⁸ Additionally, there is a possibility that the Gospel writer(s) have purposely structured ch. 2 with the wedding episode placed directly before the cleansing of the temple. That is, the wedding banquet could find its background in the Qumran communal meal. Some atonement, there is certainly a reorienting (spiritualizing) of animal sacrifices to Jesus’ death at his crucifixion. Thus, 2:13–22 may be seen to paint a priestly portrait of Jesus, and acts as a powerful response to the question of how Judaism was to operate without both a temple sanctuary and a priesthood to carry out temple sacrifices on behalf of the people. That is, in these verses, Jesus is not only presented as a messianic priest, who offers sacrifice for God’s people, he himself is the Holy of Holies in which the priestly service is carried out, and the sacrifice that is offered. In this way, John’s messianic eschatology reflects the priestly ideology of Qumran, and also resembles other early Jewish sources, which move the worship and service of God away from the Jerusalem temple building.

JOHN’S ALTERNATIVE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

Also similar to the Qumran community’s response to the Hasmonean priesthood is the manner in which John establishes an alternative religious authority. This is seen in two ways:

- (1) **the Gospel’s own movement of the worship and service of God away from the Jerusalem religious center, and**
- (2) **its portrayal of Jesus as an authoritative teacher of Torah.**

JOHN 4:19–26 AND THE LOCATION OF TRUE WORSHIP

That the Jerusalem temple functioned as the authoritative center for Jewish worship is expressed in Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman in John 4:19–26.

¹⁹ “Sir, I can see that you are a prophet,” the woman replied. ²⁰ “Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you people say that the place where one has to worship is in Yerushalayim.” ²¹ Yeshua said, “Lady, believe me, the time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Yerushalayim. ²² You people don’t know what you are worshipping; we worship what we do know, because salvation comes from the Jews. ²³ But the time is coming — indeed, it’s here now — when the true worshippers will worship the Father spiritually and truly, for these are the kind of people the Father wants worshipping him. ²⁴ God is spirit; and worshippers must worship him spiritually and truly.”

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²⁵ *The woman replied, "I know that Mashiach is coming" (that is, "the one who has been anointed"). "When he comes, he will tell us everything."* ²⁶ *Yeshua said to her, "I, the person speaking to you, am he."* John 4:19-26

⁶⁹ But whereas the woman is primarily concerned with the location of worship, the Gospel undercuts this concern by emphasizing not the place, but the manner in which the true worship of God is carried out. Jesus pushes the concept of worship beyond the Jerusalem temple confines, as he says that true worship of God is done ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ (v. 24), not in Jerusalem or on Mt. Gerizim. The reason why Jesus can say this becomes obvious to the reader in light of the Gospel's earlier portrayals of him in 1:14 and 2:13–22, and because of Jesus' messianic self-identification in 4:26. **That is, authentic and authoritative worship of the God of Israel it is no longer tied to geography, but rather to a person, Jesus the Messiah.** This movement from place to person de-centralizes the authority of the Jerusalem center, and provides a theologically effective response for a community of Jews faced with the historical inability to worship at the Jerusalem temple due to its destruction.

The story of Onias in Josephus's *Antiquities*, then, becomes intensely relevant as a theological background to Jesus' sayings in John 4. While Jerusalem never lost its value as God's holy city (cf. Ant. 12:10), legitimate Jewish worship and sacrifice could take place outside Jerusalem in, for example, Egypt, which provided a better home for Jews during times of war.

*scholars have suggested that the communal meal practiced at Qumran was sacral in nature, and functioned as a substitute for the temple cult and its sacrifices. For example, Gärtner says, "The Qumran sacral meal may have been intended to replace the custom of the temple priests' eating the flesh of the sacrificial animals: the holy oblation must be eaten by the sanctified in the consecrated room—a situation emphasized by the rites of purification in connection with the meal. The rites may also have included the taking of a ritual bath, a condition likewise imposed on the temple priests" (Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community*, 10–13). If this is an accurate assessment of the relationship to the communal meal and the Qumran perception of the temple system, then it may help conceptually to elucidate the connection that seems to exist between John 2:1–11 (meal) and vv. 13–22 (temple). But see Schiffman, *The Eschatological Community*, 59–67, who disagrees strongly with the Gärtner's conclusions. However, if John 2:1–11 is read with this background, it could be seen to anticipate Jesus' cleansing of the temple, which is performed in the context of Passover. Thus both episodes could be understood as ways the Johannine community spiritualized temple sacrifices.*

⁶⁹ *The προσκυν- root is used ten times in John 4:20–24.*

JESUS AS AUTHORITATIVE TORAH TEACHER

In his introduction to Jewish influences on early Christianity, Skarsaune notes that when the temple was destroyed in 70ce, not only did the **Romans knock the entire building down, they also massacred the priests:** "[The priests] did not escape; they perished, and so did the priesthood and its temple service. The high priest and the Sadducees also disappeared with the temple; they lost everything that gave them power."⁷²

While post-70ce Judaism did eventually reorganize itself under the teaching of the rabbis, the extermination of a large portion of priests and the leveling of the Jerusalem temple likely presented Jews with the challenge of redefining that class of people who would be entrusted with the authoritative teaching of Torah. It has already been noted that with the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures, non-**Palestinian Jews could learn and hear Torah in a more accessible language without needing to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem** (cf. *Let.Aris.* 309–322). Yet this did not nullify the significance that Jerusalem still held as the geographical home base for Torah instruction. With this in mind, it is plausible that a major question the Fourth Gospel seeks to address is,

"To whom should Jews turn in order to receive authoritative instruction in the Law now that the temple and the priesthood have been devastated?" The Gospel, of course, answers this question christologically. The Mosaic Law figures prominently in John as a whole.³³ For example, as early as 1:17, "the Law which was given through Moses," is contrasted with "the grace and truth that came through Jesus Christ."³⁴ In 5:1–45, the author records an extended interaction between Jesus

³³ See, for example, 1:45; 5:45–46; 7:19, 22; 9:28; 10:34; 12:34; 15:25; 19:7.

³⁴ John 1:17 should probably be understood in view of the phrase χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος in 1:16. For more on these verses see Ruth Edwards, "XAPIN ANTI XAPITOS (John 1.16): Grace and Law in the Johannine Prologue," *JSNT* 32 (1988): 3–15.

and the οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. Here, the primary reason for the conflict revolved around Torah interpretation, particularly the keeping of Sabbath, and Jesus's authority over it in light of his relationship to God (cf. 5:17–18). However, the passage in which Jesus' Torah authority is seen most clearly is 8:12–29.³⁵

The setting of the passage is in the temple **“on the last great day of the Festival”** (7:37).³⁶ In 8:20, the author specifically tells us what Jesus was doing the temple: ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ.

17 And even in your Torah it is written that the testimony of two people is valid. 18 I myself testify on my own behalf, and so does the Father who sent me.” 19 They said to him, “Where is this ‘father’ of yours?” Yeshua answered, “You know neither me nor my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father too.” 20 He said these things when he was teaching in the Temple treasury room; yet no one arrested him, because his time had not yet come. 21 Again he told them, “I am going away, and you will look for me, but you will die in your sin — where I am going, you cannot come.” 22 The Judeans said, “Is he going to commit suicide? Is that what he means when he says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come’?” 23 Yeshua said to them, “You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. 24 This is why I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not trust that I AM [who I say I am], you will die in your sins.” 25 At this, they said to him, “You? Who are you?” Yeshua answered, “Just what I’ve been telling you from the start. 26 There are many things I could say about you, and many judgments I could make. However, the One who sent me is true; so I say in the world only what I have heard from him.” 27 They did not understand that he was talking to them about the Father. 28 So Yeshua said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM [who I say I am], and that of myself I do nothing, but say only what the Father has taught me. 29 Also, the One who sent me is still with me; he did not leave me to myself, because I always do what pleases him.”

In the midst of the events of the last day of the Festival of Tabernacles, Jesus is teaching in the temple, with the Law being of central importance to his discussion with the Pharisees (8:17). However, in contrast to the Qumran priests, who seem to have had uncontested authority with regard to the Law (1QS V, 9), the authority of Jesus' teaching is the very thing under examination. This is expressed in the Pharisees' statement to Jesus in 8:13, σὺ περὶ σεαυτοῦ μαρτυρεῖς, ἢ μαρτυρία σου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθής. Interestingly, John defends Jesus' teaching in a similar way that 1QS establishes the Torah authority of the Zadokite priests, that is, **by identifying divine revelation as the source of Jesus' teaching, and by highlighting Jesus' own complete obedience to God**. In 8:16, Jesus says that he is not alone in his judgment but rather it is ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ. Two verses later, Jesus adds that the Father μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ. Even more explicit, however, is Jesus' saying in 8:28, καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ. It is evident here that Jesus is claiming a divine origin for his teaching. Further, in 8:29, Jesus gives the basis for his unique relationship with the Father: ὅτι ἐγὼ τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε. The concept of Jesus's obedience to God arises elsewhere in the Gospel (e.g., 4:34; esp. 8:46), but only here in ch. 8 is it used to specifically to authenticate his teaching. With this presentation of Jesus, then, **the Gospel has given Torah-observant Jews a new locus for authoritative Torah teaching**. The Gospel represents a community that had found a new “Teacher of Israel” (cf. 3:9) in the wake of the extermination of the priesthood and the temple's destruction. This not only resembles the way the Qumran community formed around its Teacher of Righteousness, but also the alternative priesthood established by Onias in Egypt.

³⁵ I am assuming the inauthenticity of 7:53–8:11. For a helpful survey of the differing positions, see Keener, John, 1:735–738.

³⁶ See Keener, John, 1:722, 739. The last day of the festival featured water-drawing and torch-lighting ceremonies in which the priesthood held an important role. Priests were responsible for pouring out libations of water at the foot of the altar in the temple and for the lighting of torches. Jesus' pronouncement in 8:12 of being the “light of the world” and of his followers possessing “the light of life” occur within this social-religious context. The concept of “light,” and specifically “the light of life,” finds close parallels in 1QS III, 6–7: “By the spirit of true counsel of God the ways of a man will all his iniquities be atoned for, so that he can behold the light of life (ḥāāā tēēcā).”

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CONCLUSION

Two major similarities have been highlighted between the counter-temple establishments of John and Qumran.

- The first is the construction of spiritual sanctuaries as the divine dwelling place in which spiritual sacrifices were offered.
- The second is the establishment of alternative religious authorities, which included a geographical shift away from Jerusalem as the religious center and different sources for authoritative instruction in Torah.
- Further, it was argued that the theological foundation for these sorts of alternative attitudes was already in circulation throughout early Judaism, which indicates that John and Qumran were not necessarily unique in their temple ideologies.

This was especially seen in writers like the author of *Aristeas*, Philo, and Josephus. Moreover, it was suggested that **each of these counter-temple attitudes constituted a response to a specific life situation.** *Aristeas*, Philo, and Josephus reflect the perspective of Jews living in the broader Hellenistic world, and express how they dealt with their Jewish identity while being geographically removed from Jerusalem, whether because of war or the desire of a better life. **John and Qumran, on the other hand, likely reflect the attitudes of two communities struggling to deal with barred access to the Jerusalem temple, whether on an ideological level (Qumran) or because it had been destroyed (John).**

- Thus, in the end, what binds all of these differing perspectives together are the needs for a legitimate temple sanctuary and an alternative religious authority. In this way Hellenistic Judaism, or at least sections of it, provide an illuminating context for the temple theology of Qumran and the theological origins of John's Gospel.