

Research Space

Journal article

Men of perfect holiness: Essene religious virtuosity in Jerusalem and the crowd converted at Pentecost (Acts 2)

Capper, B.

BRIAN J. CAPPER

Canterbury Christ Church University, UK.

MEN OF PERFECT HOLINESS: ESSENE RELIGIOUS VIRTUOSITY IN JERUSALEM AND THE CROWD CONVERTED AT PENTECOST (ACTS 2)

Claus-Hunno Hunzinger made an early study¹ of the development of the *Rule of the Community*, commenting on the role of the group of exceptional holiness of 1QS VIII within the *yachadh*. I am pleased to contribute to his memorial volume this study of the gathering for celebration of the Essene Covenant renewal festival at Pentecost of the Jerusalem settlement of the intensely communal Essene religious virtuosi, Jesus' establishment of his founding group of Twelve and others amongst their number, and the conversion of many from this influential Jerusalem community to Jesus' post-Easter community of disciples on the occasion of Peter's Pentecost sermon (Acts 2).

The coordinated and widespread presence of the Essene reform movement in the villages and towns of ancient Judaea included its establishment of an influential centre in the southwest of Jerusalem, adjacent to a gate named after the Essenes. This centre enjoyed influential connections with royal power during Herod the Great's reign. Patristic sources point to the location of the 'upper room' (Mark 14:14; Luke 22:12; Acts 1:13, cf. 2:1–2), the centre of growth of the movement of believers in Jerusalem after his arrest, trial, death, resurrection and ascension, in this area of the holy city, perhaps a little less than two hundred metres from the "Gate of the Essenes". Large numbers of Essenes celebrated their movement's annual Covenant renewal festival in Jerusalem at Pentecost. The local proximity of the traditions of these two religious centres raises the possibility that Essenes numbered amongst the three thousand souls baptised on the day at the first Christian Pentecost (Acts 2:1–41; v. 41, *ebaptisthēsan... psychai hōsei trischiliai*).

John the Baptist led a successful repentance and baptising movement until his arrest and murder by Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee, during the course of Jesus' public activity. According to Josephus, John called the people to unite in baptism:

'For Herod had killed him, though he was a good man, and had commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, to practice justice towards one another and piety towards God, and so doing to unite in baptism (*baptismō, synienai*).'¹ (*Antiquities*, 18.5.2 §117)

Exhortation to repentance necessarily issues in the questions of social relations amongst the responding group, and the relation of their community to those rejecting the call. John's power to call people to unity around himself was understood and feared by Herod Antipas, who saw in John's influence over the people a challenge to his monarchy with potential for sedition. Hence, Josephus explains, he killed John. Josephus clearly uses the Greek verb *syneimi*, 'to be with', 'to be joined or united with', or 'to be conversant with', with the sense of social union, though his employment of the verb in the context of describing John's preaching has proved opaque to translators. Josephus' expression is, however, comparable with the expression of the unity of the repentant community with the distinctive language of the *yachadh*, 'the Unity', in the Essene *Rule of the Community* (1QS):

'This is the rule for the men of the Unity who freely volunteer to repent from all evil and to keep themselves steadfast in all that he commanded according to His will. They shall separate from the congregation of the men of injustice and shall become a Unity in law and in possessions under the authority of the sons of Zadok, the priests who keep the covenant, and of the multitude of the men of the Unity who hold fast to the Covenant' (1QS V:1–3)

¹ Claus-Hunno Hunzinger 'Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung der Disziplinarordnung der Gemeinde von Qumrān', in Hans Bardtke (ed.), *Qumran-Probleme: Vorträge des Leipziger Symposions über Qumran-Probleme vom 9. bis 14. Oktober 1961* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1963), pp. 231–247.

Those not heeding the Essene call to repentance constitute a ‘congregation’, *‘adhāh*. This term expresses a lesser social unity; the unrepentant constitute a *massa perditionis*, a unity of the wicked. Those who repented formed the *yachadh*, the Unity. Their true unity is created by their uniting in obedience to God’s Law, in property, and in worship. The adverbial use of *yachadh* draws attention to the corporate character of true repentance. The repentant one ‘shall swear with a binding oath to turn to the Law of Moses’ as revealed ‘to the multitude of the men of their Covenant who freely volunteer *together* (or ‘in unity’) for this truth and to walk according to his will’, IQS V:8–10. IQS VI:2–5 expresses the required high degree of social and legal integration at the local level of the villages and towns of Judaea emphatically by repeated adverbial use of *yachadh*:

‘They shall eat *together*, *together* shall they bless, and *together* they shall take counsel. Wherever there are ten men of the Council of the Unity, there should not be missing among them a priest. And every one shall sit according to his rank before him, and in this way they shall be asked for their counsel in every matter.’²

The unity of God’s truth issues in the unity of the repentant community, whose meticulous obedient behaviour, regulated by common understanding, means they will be ‘in a unity of truth,’ *b^eyachadh ^emeth*, united socially in ‘goodly meekness and compassionate love and upright thought towards each other in a holy council as sons of the eternal assembly’ (IQS II:24–25). This distinctly Essene understanding of the association of repentance with social unity accounts for Josephus’ language about the social unity intended amongst the repentant by John’s baptism and is suggestive of the proximity of John’s theological understanding to the milieu of Essenism.

The question of the extent of necessary social integration amongst the community of believers and the concomitant necessary degree of social separation from the surrounding world has yielded a variety of answers in Christian history, from state churches which embrace all, to ‘gathered’ communities of believers expressing varying degrees of social separation. There are also the ‘monk communities’ of ‘virtuoso religion,’ a sociological category established by Max Weber.³ ‘Virtuoso religion’ or ‘religious virtuosity’, a type of piety general to religions,⁴ characteristically issues in the paradoxically liminal social position occupied by religious

² In very similar fashion, Philo expresses the intensity of Essene social integration with double use of the *homo*-prefix followed up with *koinē* in his description of the local Essene groups: ‘Daily they share a common way of life (*homodiaitōi*), a common table (*homotrapedzoi*)...not only do they have a common (*koinē*) table, but also food...’, *Hypothetica*, 11–12.

³ ‘Introduced in the work of Max Weber, the concept of the religious virtuoso is that of someone who strives for perfection *within* an existing religious tradition. The virtuoso strives to fulfill to the utmost the demands of his or her religion.’ William H. Swatos Jr., in idem (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira, 1998). Max Weber wrote: ‘The empirical fact, important for us, that human beings are *differently qualified* in a religious way stands at the beginning of the history of religion... The sacred values that have been most cherished, the ecstatic and visionary capacities of shamans, sorcerers, ascetics, and pneumatics of all sorts, could not be attained by everyone. The possession of such faculties is a ‘charisma,’ which, to be sure, might be awakened in some but not in all. It follows from this that all intensive religiosity has a tendency toward a sort of *status stratification*, in accordance with differences in the charismatic qualifications. ‘Heroic’ or ‘virtuoso’ religiosity is opposed to mass religiosity. By ‘mass’ we understand those who are religiously ‘unmusical’; we do not, of course, mean those who occupy an inferior position in the secular status order. In this sense, the status carriers of virtuoso religion have been the leagues of sorcerers and sacred dancers; the religious status group of the Indian Sramana and of the early Christian ‘ascetics,’ who were expressly recognized in the congregation as a special ‘estate’; the Paulinian, and still more the Gnostic, ‘pneumatics,’ the pietist *ecclesiola*; all genuine ‘sects’ — that is, sociologically speaking, associations that accept only religiously qualified persons in their midst; and finally, monk communities all over the world.’ ‘Now, every hierocratic and official authority of a ‘church’ — that is, a community organized by officials into an institution which bestows gifts of grace — fights principally against all virtuoso-religion and against its autonomous development. For the church, being the holder of institutionalized grace, seeks to organize the religiosity of the masses and to put its own officially monopolized and mediated sacred values in the place of the autonomous and religious status qualifications of the religious virtuosi.’ ‘The Social Psychology of the World’s Religions’ (1915), in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1948), pp. 267–301, see 287–291.

⁴ Cf. Stephen Sharot, *A Comparative Sociology of World Religions: Virtuosos, Priests and Popular Religion* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001).

orders, which succeed long-term in combining permanent, sect-like, separative anti-structure with constitutive legal ties to the wider religious community.⁵

The conversion of the first large group of Jews from the observant crowd to the message of the apostles at Pentecost issued in a remarkable social unity which appears to be that of a religious order, with the sharing of property (Acts 2:44–45, 4:32, 34) including daily meals together (2:46). On the one hand, Peter's concluding tone as he urged separation from the surrounding community upon his hearers is extreme and urgent. He 'exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."' (2:41). Yet it is also striking that the creation of the new community amongst Peter's hearers Luke's employs Greek phrases which echo the distinctive vocabulary of social unity in the *Rule of the Community*. In Luke's first summary on the life of the early community, he writes that those who believed 'were together' (*ēsan epi to auto*), a precise equivalent of the Hebrew usage idiom *lihyōth l'yachadh* or *lihyōth layyachadh*, meaning 'to belong to the Unity' or 'to constitute a Unity' in 1QS V:2, VI:22–23, VIII:12; cf. II:24 with the preposition *b^e*. His succeeding remark that all these converted ones 'had all things in common' (*kai eichen hapanta koina*) of course reminds us immediately of the community of property practiced by the Essene *yachadh*. At 2:47b the summary concludes with a note on the continuing expansion of the community with the elliptical *ho de kyrios prosetitheī tous sōdzomenous kath' hēmeran epi to auto*, literally 'The Lord added those who were being saved daily together'. The awkward *prostithenai epi to auto* has its exact equivalent in the Hebrew idiom of 1QS *l'hosiph l'yachadh / layyachadh*, 'to add to (the) Unity' (1QS V:7; VIII:19; cf. VI:14 [*'al "tsath hayyachadh*], and CD XIII:11 [*la^adhāthō*]).

So we find ourselves, immediately following the conversion of three thousand to the community of Jesus' post-Easter followers at their first Pentecost after his trial, execution and resurrection, within a language world which includes resonances of the language of the Essene *Rule of the Community*. This phenomenon is reminiscent of how the conclusion of Josephus' description of John the Baptist's call for unity in repentance resonates with the language of the Unity to which the repentant convert and fully belong in 1QS. Such resonances call for explanation. Scholars have at best discovered only limited evidence of possible connections between John the Baptist and the milieu of Essenism. Evidence points more firmly to similarities with Essene structures of thought than demonstrable social connections.

In this paper I seek to answer the question of a possible conduit of Essene influence into the first expanded community of Jesus' followers in Acts 2. I will argue that matters here can be taken on the basis of sound evidence much further than they can in the question of John the Baptist's possible association with the Essene movement. I will seek to show that there was a conversion to the developing Jesus movement of many drawn from a large crowd of Essenes gathered at their Jerusalem centre for their annual covenant renewal festival. I will argue that this large entry of Essenes into the early community as we learn about it from Acts 2 helps account for various features of the chapter, including some which have long troubled scholars. The following points depict the picture of events that emerges:

1) First, the proposal that the Pentecost events recounted in Acts 2 occurred within the Essene residential settlement in Jerusalem or its associated guest facility offers a good explanation for the presence of a large crowd of accessible and interested hearers in the immediate environs of the upper room where Jesus' disciples were gathered. What seems to be an event within an enclosed and private (albeit large) room seems able easily to draw an interested crowd and to transition unproblematically into an occasion of public preaching. Some interpreters express this as a problem of impossibly dissolving walls in the Acts account of the first Pentecost amongst the community of believers in Jesus.⁶ The proposal that these events occurred within, in the

⁵ On the typology of 'virtuoso religion' or 'religious virtuosity' and the possibility of social transitions between reform movements, sects and religious orders in various directions see Brian J. Capper, 'The Essene Religious Order of Ancient Judaea and the Origins of Johannine Christianity', *Qumran Chronicle* 22 (2014), pp. 39–71, see 43–49, employing the work of Ilana F. Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order: A Comparative Sociological Study of Monasticism in Theravada Buddhism and Medieval Catholicism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) and Michael Hill, *The Religious Order: A Study of the Religious Order and its Legitimation in Nineteenth Century England* (London: Heinemann, 1973).

⁶ Jürgen Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), p. 43: "Die Erzählung wendet sich nun der Wirkung des Geschehens zu. Dabei erzieht sich ein abrupter Szenenwechsel zu, der alle jene Ausleger in Schwierigkeiten bringt, die konkrete Anschaulichkeit erwarten. Die Wände des „Hauses“, in dem die Jünger versammelt waren, lösen sich gleichsam auf, und ganz Jerusalem wird nunmehr zum Schauplatz der Handlung." Roloff's claim that 'all Jerusalem' appear as spectators is of course exaggeration. However, to concede his essential observation, the immediate involvement of a large crowd with events demands plausible historical explanation. Another author who employs, in my view, excessive rhetoric, undermining the concrete data given in the text rather than seeking the correct explanation for it, is Bill Wylie-Kellermann, who writes: 'The story in Acts 2 begins presumably in the upper room and ends in the streets of Jerusalem. How did they get

immediate proximity of, or on the boundary of an Essene fraternal building complex, as might occur with a guest facility available to visitors, of the Essene settlement in Jerusalem, solves the problem of the ‘dissolving walls’ of the Pentecost account in Acts 2:1–11.

2) Second, the place where Jesus’ disciples had obtained lodging was at Pentecost the gathering place for a large number of Essenes gathered for their Covenant renewal festival.

3) Third, the association of many in the gathered group at Pentecost arose not only on the basis of Peter’s preaching as recounted in Acts 2:12–40, but also because of Jesus’ prior associations with this centre. Jesus’ prior associations with this centre facilitated his permanent introduction of his own largely Galilean disciple-group into the largely Judaeian social environment of the Essene settlement of Jerusalem. These earlier associations point also to a serious prior interest of at least elements within the Judaeian Essene movement in the public activity of Jesus and thus also their predisposal to take seriously Peter’s explanation of the demise and claimed resurrection reappearance and vindication of the respected teacher, exorcist and thaumaturge Jesus.

4) Fourth, numerous members of the gathered crowd anticipated and fully intended to undergo a ritual washing on this day, associated with closer incorporation into their chosen religious fellowship. Many Essenes gathered for the festivities were expecting, on the day of their Pentecost covenant renewal, to effect stage-of-membership transitions to higher grades within their fraternity. Some of those gathered were expecting to make their first commitment to follow God in perfect obedience to his laws as understood within the Essene school of interpretation and to mark this transition with an initial ritual washing, thereby entering upon what may be called postulancy. They had been expecting to begin entering what was in social terms a monk community. Others were about to renew their vows and to make the transition to the first or second years of the Essene novitiate, again marked by ritual bathing. Still others were about to renew their vows as they made the transition to full membership within the Essene monk community. Instead of undergoing a transition to their expected fuller membership of their own Essene monk fellowship, they were drawn to undergo baptism into the fellowship of those who accepted Jesus as newly resurrected Messiah.

The Essene Covenant Renewal Festival and the Feast of Weeks as the Feast of the Giving of the Law

Pentecost was and remains a Jewish feast. Pentecost or ‘Weeks’ originated as an agricultural festival. ‘Pentecost’ was the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew designation ‘Feast of Weeks’ (Exodus 34:22, ‘the festival of weeks, the first fruits of wheat harvest’; Deuteronomy 16:9–11). The name of the feast of ‘Pentecost’ derives from the Greek word for ‘fiftieth’ (*pentēkostē*). The feast fell on the fiftieth day after Passover, or, more precisely, on the fiftieth day after the ceremony of the barley sheaf (the waving of an offering of ripe grain) during the Passover observances (Leviticus 23:9–11, 15). Barley and wheat were sown in the Autumn; since barley matured quicker, its harvesting began the grain harvest; the firstfruits offered during the feast of unleavened bread (Passover) were therefore barley. Pentecost occurred around the completion of the grain harvest and included offering of grain and loaves. It was also called the ‘Feast of Harvest’ (Exodus 23:16). The time of harvesting counted off until the feast was seven weeks; hence its Hebrew name *Shabbū’ōt*, ‘[Feast of] Weeks’.

Although Pentecost or ‘Weeks’ began as and was an agricultural festival, however, in Rabbinic literature there is an understanding of Pentecost as the feast of the giving of the Law at Sinai.⁷ The celebration by the turn of the eras of the agricultural Feast of Weeks as the feast of the giving of the Law in Judaism has been extensively demonstrated, so I will not repeat the evidence at length here.⁸ The observation that the gift of

there? Carried by the big wind? It’s as if the walls dissolve...’ *Seasons of Faith and Conscience: Explorations in Liturgical Direct Action* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2008), pp. 200–201. Purple passages such as these probably express despair of understanding the text’s account of events as grounded in a plausible historical life-setting. Unfortunately, they attack the text rather than seeking to understand its origin in a real historical context through reflection on the data it gives.

⁷ *Talmūdh babhlī P’sāchīm* 68b: ‘*Rabbī Elāzār* said: All agree in respect of the Feast of Weeks that we require [it to be] ‘for you’ too. What is the reason? It is the day on which the Torah was given.’ This is *Rabbī Elāzār ben Shammū’a*, of the third or fourth generation of the *Tannā’im*, active c. 130/135–160/170 (a later student of ‘*Aqībha*’). In the *Mishnāh* and in the *Bārāithā*’ he is always referred to simply as *Rabbī Elāzār*; see H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991), p. 85.

⁸ See James C. VanderKam’s comprehensive ‘Covenant and Pentecost’, *Calvin Theological Journal* 37 (2002), pp. 239–254; further Sejin Park, *Pentecost and Sinai: The Festival Of Weeks As A Celebration Of The Sinai Event*, (London: T&T Clark, 2008) and *The Festival of Weeks and Sinai* (PhD, University of Notre Dame, April 2006); James C. VanderKam, ‘The Festival of Weeks and the Story of Pentecost in Acts 2’, in Craig A. Evans (ed.) *From Prophecy to Testament: The Function of the Old Testament in the New* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2004), pp. 185–205; M. Wenk, *Community-Forming Power: The Socio-Ethic Role of the Spirit in*

the Holy Spirit at Pentecost initiated for Christian believers the new covenant, and was therefore to be set over against the spectacle of the Jewish celebration of the initiation of the Mosaic old covenant with the Sinai lawgiving, is found as early as Jerome, who dwelt in Bethlehem in the holy land and well understood what Jews celebrated at Pentecost.⁹

Geza Vermes argued that for the community of the Dead Sea Scrolls, focused upon repentance and perfect obedience to the Law of Moses, ‘the most important of their festivals was the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Renewal of the Covenant’¹⁰ Amongst the covenanters of the Dead Sea Scrolls, who formed after some fashion a part (for some scholars a breakaway sector¹¹) of the reform movement attested by the name ‘Essenes’ in the Hellenistic Jewish writers Josephus and Philo, and also by Pliny the Elder, Pentecost was a feast at which new entrants to the community were admitted. In the initial period of Dead Sea Scroll research, Józef Tadeusz Milik depicted his certain perception of this link based on the evidence available to him, which included knowledge of Cave 4 fragments.¹²

The *Damascus Document* (4QD^a, CD XIV: 3–18a and 4QD^e) legislates for an assembly of all the Essene camps. Annual renewal of the Mosaic covenant is associated with the Feast of Weeks in these cave 4 fragments from Qumran. The timing of the assembly of all the Essene camps is given in 4Q266 (4QD^a) fragment 11 column lines 16–19, the text of which may be filled out and extended from 4Q270 fragment 7 column II lines 11–15:

‘And all [those who dwell in] the camps will assemble in the third month and will curse whoever tends to the right [or to the left of the] law. This is the exact interpretation of the regulations which they are to observe in the whole age of [visitation, with which they shall be visi]ted (?) [in all] the ages of wrath and their routes, to all

Luke-Acts (JPTSup 19; Sheffield: SAP, 2000), pp. 232–73; W. H. Harris, *The Descent of Christ: Ephesians 4:7-11 and Traditional Hebrew Imagery* (Biblical Studies Library; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996), pp. 143–70; Mathias Delcor, ‘A propos de l’emplacement de la porte des Esséniens, in Zdzislaw J. Kapera (ed.), *Intertestamental Essays in honour of Józef Tadeusz Milik, Vol I, (Qumranica Mogilanensia 6.* Kraków: Enigma Press, 1992), pp. 25–44; Christian Grappe, ‘A la junction entre Inter et Nouveau Testament: le récit de la Pentecôte’, *Foi et Vie* 89 (1990), pp. 19–27; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, ‘The Ascension of Christ and Pentecost’, *Theological studies* 45 (1984), pp. 409–40; Jaques Dupont, ‘The First Christian Pentecost’, in his *The Salvation of the Gentiles* (Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979), pp. 35–59; James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism Today* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), pp. 38–54; Georg Kretschmar, ‘Himmelfahrt und Pfingsten: Die Ersten Christengemeinden’, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 66 (1954–55), pp. 209–53; Moshe Weinfeld, ‘Pentecost as Festival of the Giving of the Law’, *Immanuel* 8 (Spring 1978), pp. 7–18; Bent Noack, ‘The Day of Pentecost in Jubilees, Qumran, and Acts’, *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 1 (1962), pp. 73–95. The older rejection of the view that the connection between Pentecost and the giving of the Law was as early as the turn of the eras by scholars such as Ernst Lohse, art. *Pentēkostē*, TDNT, Vol VI (1968) and C. K. Barrett; *Acts*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994), p. 111, is to be abandoned.

⁹ Epistle 78 ‘ad Fabiolam’.

¹⁰ Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (1962) p. 44; cf. *idem*, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Harmondsworth: Allen Lane, 1997), pp. 44, 79–80.

¹¹ For weighty studies confirming connections of the Scrolls and the Qumran site with the Essenes in classical sources, see Joan E. Taylor’s ‘Philo of Alexandria on the Essenes: A Case Study on the use of Classical Sources in Discussions of the Qumran-Essene Hypothesis’, *Studia Philonica Annual* 19 (2007), pp. 1–28, ‘On Pliny, the Essene Location and Kh. Qumran’, *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19 (2009), pp. 3–24, and ‘The Classical Sources on the Essenes and the Scrolls Communities’, in Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 173–199, where she concludes ‘In summary, the hierarchy, rules, pure meal, purity, regulations, communality, and sharing of possessions found in the *Serekh* documents are highly comparable to features described in the classical sources on the Essenes... only the Essenes... demonstrate the kind of concerns and lifestyle appropriate to the *Serekh* texts. This is not to say that all the distinctive texts of the scrolls are Essene, only that a core text appears to be so, and it is found in an area apparently occupied by the Essenes in the second Temple Period’ (p. 193). On the ‘Groningen hypothesis’ that the Qumran group were dissenters from the Essene movement, and similar theories, see her comments *ibidem*. See also her *The Essenes, The Scrolls, and the Dead Sea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 3–21 and 244–303. Jonathan Campbell’s earlier comment that none of the revisionist theories distancing Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls from the movement of the Essenes was ‘likely to persuade most scholars’ has proved correct: *Deciphering the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Blackwell, second edition 2002), p. 100.

¹² Józef Tadeusz Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (London: SCM, 1959), pp. 107–113.

those who dwell in their [c]amps and all [who dwell] in their [cities.] And so, then, all this is w[ritten] with regard to the last interpretation of [the] law.¹³

Beyond its indication of the timing of the festival of the renewal of the Covenant at Pentecost, this text shows that the inhabitants of the Essene communities distributed across Judaea will have gathered in a single place. This raises the question of where that place of regular assembly was. Since the Law instructs all Israelite men to present themselves before the Lord at the three pilgrimage feasts (Deuteronomy 16:16), the required place of assembly was clearly in Jerusalem, so long as there existed no prohibiting tension with the Jerusalem authorities.

At the Feast of Weeks, the Essenes celebrated the giving of the Law and the Covenant at Sinai. New members were admitted to the prolonged Essene entrance procedure, while others proceeded from lower grades to higher grades in the community, or attained full membership. On the occasion of Pentecost, solemn vows were taken by new members, who were admitted for the first time to the ritual baths, while others reaffirmed their commitment. Concerning the administration of purifying waters, as took place at the Essene annual covenant renewal festival, the *Rule of the Community* speaks at length of the purifying waters as effective only if accompanied with the purification of the heart by repentance and the washing of God's Holy Spirit (1QS II:25–III:12 and V:13–14).¹⁴ As Hermann Lichtenberger writes 'Repentance is the precondition for entry into the community and the effectiveness of the water rites.'¹⁵ James C. VanderKam concludes: 'John's baptism for the purpose of repentance parallels the Qumran teaching about washing in water for cleansing and sanctification'.¹⁶ Although the taking of purifying baths was a regular (in fact daily) exercise within the Essene community, the ritual baths taken at Pentecost necessarily remained special, since every repeated Pentecost washing was associated with covenant-renewing reaffirmation of the original commitment made on first entry into the Covenant.

Here we observe a constellation of features parallel to the events narrated in Acts 2, where the portrayal begins with a story of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and ends with a demand by Peter for repentance and the promise of the Holy Spirit to those who repent (2:37–39). Those who respond undergo baptism, a ritual washing. The baptism offered by Peter is generally assumed to be already a one-off event (rather than an introduction to repeated ritual washings¹⁷ since it may be assumed to be continuous with John the Baptist's activity of a general call to single baptism.¹⁸ In Essene practice, therefore, there existed the nexus:–

Pentecost – Stress on Repentance and cleansing by the Holy Spirit – Ritual Washing – admission to membership in a highly integrated social group.

¹³ 4QDamascus Document^a, see Florentino Garcia Martinez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition*, Vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 599 and 617. Cf. Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, p. 153.

¹⁴ See the insightful early treatment of Otto Betz, 'Die Proselytentaufe der Qumransekte und die Taufe im Neuen Testament', *Revue de Qumran* 1 (1958–1959), pp. 213–234; also Hermann Lichtenberger, art. 'Baths and Baptism' in Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Vol. 1, pp. 85–89.

¹⁵ Lichtenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁶ James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans / London: SPCK, 1994), p. 170.

¹⁷ We should note, however, that the later Jewish Christian (Ebionite) Pseudo-Clementines claim that Peter undertook a ritual washing each day before meals: *Recognitions* 4.3.1, parallel to *Homilies* 8.2.5, and *Recognitions* 5.36.3, parallel to *Homilies* 10.26.2 (as in 1QS VI:2–5, arrangement was in order of rank); and before prayer: *Recognitions* 1.1.1 and 8.2.1, parallel to *Homilies* 12.1.2 and 14.3.1. See the analysis of F. Stanley Jones, art. 'Pseudo-Clementine Literature' in Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Vol. 2, pp. 717–719, see 719. Hermann Lichtenberger, *op. cit.*, employs the distinction between '(1) the concept of a repeatable rite for the achievement of cultic purity and (2) the concept of a one-time baptism for forgiveness of sins' in his analysis of such between Essene practice, John the Baptist and other baptising groups. While this alternative is exegetically founded, it predisposes the results of historical investigation to alignment with later Christian practice and dogma. It may underestimate the complexity of interaction between groups and historical changes. We may ask how clearly this distinction was established and maintained in earliest times, and subsequently, especially if converts from a variety of backgrounds, including some who had practiced daily ritual washings after the pattern of Essene washing, entered the circle of Jesus' followers from the time of the Pentecost events of Acts 2 onwards. The character and persistence of Ebionism may evidence the early influence of Essenism in a sector of Jewish Christianity.

¹⁸ Jesus' disciple-group started, according to John's Gospel (1:35–42), as an offshoot of John the Baptist's movement.

In the account of Acts 2 there exists the similar nexus:–

Pentecost — Stress on Repentance and the Gift of Holy Spirit – Ritual Washing – admission to membership in a highly integrated social group.

It may certainly be argued that any first century Palestinian-Jewish religious grouping which saw itself as especially fulfilling God's requirements would stress the necessity of repentance and the gracious working of God's Holy Spirit. Yet it is a notable coincidence that the account of Acts locates the birth of the Christian community at the calendrical date when another first-century group, the Essenes, would regularly reconstitute themselves, would reaffirm their absolute commitment of obedience to the Torah of Sinai, would promote members to higher grades, and would admit new members. It is unlikely that this coincidence occurs only because of the influence of the exegetical tradition concerning the giving of the law at Sinai on the Acts account. It is more plausible that there was some historical link between structures of organisation and belief in first-century Palestinian-Jewish religious culture which located admission to religious groupings around the date of Pentecost, such as are elsewhere attested amongst the Essenes, and the admission at Pentecost of a large body of believers to the first Jerusalem community of Jesus' post-Easter followers. We must therefore take seriously evidence in Acts 2 that the earliest Christians may have employed organisational forms akin to the *Rule of the Community*.

We must also ask how it came about that facilities for rituals of lustration were readily available for the baptism of three thousand indicated in 2:41. Did the first disciples have access to facilities designed for the administration of ritual washings on a very large scale? To whom might such facilities have belonged?

Who witnessed the events of Pentecost?

The Acts narrative of Pentecost takes a fresh turn when at 2:5 an audience to these events, previously not hinted at, is described: 'Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven', The scene of the outpouring of the Spirit in 2:1–4 was the confines of a house (2:1–2). Commentators have often found the appearance of this audience abrupt. Does this transition suggest legendary accretion? If the believers were gathered in a private house, how could so great a group (three thousand will be converted, 2:41) have been attracted by events, so easily becoming spectators? We noted near the beginning of this piece Roloff's observation of the (strange) phenomenon of 'dissolving' walls. Has Luke, or tradition on which he is dependent, created this international audience from the distribution of the law to the seventy nations of the world which was a part of the exegetical tradition on Sinai attested in Philo and afterwards in the Rabbinic Literature?¹⁹ There, certainly, the international element in the story is created from the pious imagination. We may argue that this international symbolism was theologically important for Luke or his predecessors. Luke, with earlier tradition was probably interested to stress that the birth of the church by the coming of the Spirit was a parallel yet superior event to the giving of the law at Sinai. Luke himself might be interested to stress that from the very beginnings of the church its international mission to the gentiles was foretold by the presence of an audience drawn from far-flung places across the world. For some scholars this possibly potent theological motive and the case of the strangely 'dissolving walls' combine together to give grounds for dismissing the international audience as historical fact.

The textual problem of 'Jews' in Acts 2.5

Disagreement in the manuscript tradition of Acts may suggest that the word 'Jews' does not belong to the original text of Acts 2:5. While the first subject the sentence, *Ioudaioi*, is present in the *Textus Receptus* and the early uncial Codex Vaticanus (B), it is absent from Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲡ). In other manuscripts this word is found in various other positions in the verse (Codex Ephraemi [C] between 'men' and 'devout'; Codex Basilensis [E] before 'dwelling' rather than after). One difficulty is that these Jews are said to be 'from every nation' rather than from every land, strictly a contradiction in terms, 'since Jews were already an *ethnos*'.²⁰ This may have caused the textual confusion. Good reasons for a scribe to add the difficult phrase are hard to find. On the principle of accepting the more difficult reading which accounts for the others, we may accept that 'Jews' belonged to the original text.

Are these Jews temporary or permanent residents, or a mixture?

¹⁹ Philo, *On the Decalogue*, 9, 11; *Talmūdh babhli Shabbāth* 88b; *Midrāsh Tanchūmā'* 26c

²⁰ B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (United Bible Societies, third edition 1975), p. 290.

We can take the description of Jews of diverse geographical origin ‘dwelling in Jerusalem’ in Acts 2:5 in two ways. Some interpreters take it to indicate a group of temporary Jewish visitors to Jerusalem from the diaspora, who would then most likely be pilgrims to the Holy City, and perhaps specifically pilgrims for the feast of Pentecost, one of the three pilgrimage feasts of the Jewish calendar (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles). The alternative is to view the crowd as comprising Jews who had moved from the diaspora to take up residence permanently in Jerusalem. Religious motivations for the permanent immigration of diaspora Jews can easily be imagined, including desire for greater participation in the worship of the Temple, the desire of some to function in the priestly courses and hierarchy, and the desire to live out one’s days in the city and to be buried there. Jerusalem was a treasured final resting-place for Jews; it remained such even after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.²¹ Martin Hengel noted: ‘The Theodotus inscription [discussed below] . . . , various family tombs in Jerusalem or even the high-priestly family of Boethus summoned from Alexandria by Herod, show that individuals who returned from the diaspora settled firmly again in Jerusalem and that their descendants remained there.’²² The Cypriot Levite Barnabas (4:36–37), may have taken up residence in Jerusalem out of religious motivations. Howard Marshall commented that the verb *katoikountes* in Acts 2:5, ‘dwelling’, need not necessarily imply permanent residence,²³ cf. NIV ‘staying.’ Ernst Haenchen was confident that Luke ‘is speaking of diaspora Jews who have taken up residence in Jerusalem’ (cf. NRSV ‘living’), since this is the crowd which will yield three thousand converts (2:41) and must remain to form new community.²⁴ Rudolf Pesch commented: ‘wohl kaum nur zum Pfingstfest, dem beliebtesten Wallfahrtsfest, anwesende’.²⁵ The same verb is used in 2:9, when the international audience seem to inform us that they usually reside abroad. Alexander Wedderburn commented: ‘On the one hand, Acts 2:5 tells us that there were devout Jews dwelling in Jerusalem, but when they come to speak they identify themselves as living in Mesopotamia and other places (2:9–10); in other words, they seem to live in two places, for the Greek word used is the same in both cases, even when translations often get round this problem by so rendering them that v. 5 refers to a temporary visit and vv. 9 and 10 to the countries where they are permanently settled.’²⁶ Wedderburn went on to express doubt that Luke ‘means that, since the converts from this event are to provide the nucleus of the new church of Jerusalem and are not meant to scatter in all directions after the festival is over.’

Yet, I would argue, we should not think in terms of such strict alternatives.²⁷ The feasts drew huge numbers to Jerusalem, creating considerable demand for accommodation. Jews from the diaspora already resident in Jerusalem would probably play their part in offering accommodation to diaspora pilgrims to the feast. Certainly, they would best understand the endurance of such much-travelled visitors. At a feast time, a concentration of permanent returnees from the diaspora would naturally be swelled by visitors from abroad, and, vice versa, visitors from abroad would often be found where permanent returnees could offer them lodging. We should also bear in mind the likelihood that some older diaspora Jews may have elected late in life to retire to Jerusalem to spend their last days in the Holy City, close to the beloved Temple, where they might often pray.

The international crowd and religious virtuosity

The international audience are called ‘devout men’ (*andres eulabeis*, 2:5). This description reminds us of the unusually pious, elderly Simeon, whom Luke calls a ‘righteous and devout’ man (*dikaios kai eulabēs*, Luke 2:25), a prophetic figure whom Luke tells us is so sensitive to the leading of God that he is moved by the Spirit to visit the Temple at the moment Mary and Joseph are presenting Jesus to God there (Luke 2:26–27). After Simeon’s appearance and prophesying Luke tells us that Anna, whom he explicitly calls a ‘prophetess’, came up ‘at that moment’ (NRSV; *tē hōra epistasa*, Luke 2:38). Luke emphasises her age and her permanent devotion to religious exercises within the confines of the Temple: ‘She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day.’ Together, Simeon and Anna attest a form of Temple-centred devotion to which Jewish elderly might devote themselves in Jerusalem.

²¹ Cf. Adolph Büchler, *The Economic Conditions of Judaea after the Destruction of the Second Temple*, (London: Jew’s College, 1912), pp. 15–16.

²² Martin Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul* (London: SCM, 1983), p.12.

²³ I. Howard Marshall, *Acts* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press / Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 70.

²⁴ Ernst Haenchen, *Acts* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), p. 175.

²⁵ Rudolf Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte*, (Zürich: Benziger, 1986), p. 104

²⁶ Alexander J. M. Wedderburn, *A History of the First Christians* (London: T. & T. Clark / Continuum, 2004), p. 27 and p. 205 note 40, where he instances the Revised English Bible’s contrasting ‘staying’ — ‘inhabitants’ and Joseph A. Fitzmyer’s ‘sojourning’ — ‘inhabitants’, *The Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), p. 4.

²⁷ Keener, *Acts*, Vol. 1, pp. 833–834, surveys the evidence and finds that its ambiguity may suggest that ‘some Diaspora Jews present fell into either category, and Luke simply does not sacrifice space to explain this detail’ (834).

It is likely that the piety of overseas Jews who undertook long journeys to Jerusalem to attend at the pilgrimage feasts would transmute for some into permanent residence there as retirees. Pious elderly retirees would thereby also seek to enjoy treasured burial in the environs of Jerusalem. We may assume many would seek final resting places on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, the expected place of resurrection, facing the Temple.²⁸ I would therefore suggest that, all things taken together, the devout character of the international crowd at the Pentecost events of Acts 2, the attested reality of the agglutination of pious elderly to the Temple of Jerusalem, and the common desire of pious Jews for burial in the environs of Jerusalem, imply that many within the crowd may have been diaspora Jews normally resident abroad, but who were in various stages of planning and preparing to move their place of residence to Jerusalem, in order to pursue an intensely devout lifestyle. Some will have only recently taken up residence in Jerusalem or Judaea with this goal;²⁹ some will have travelled from abroad to Jerusalem with the intent of taking up permanent residence in intense devotion in the Holy City from the occasion of this Feast onwards.

The existence of larger guest facilities for pilgrims in Jerusalem

The demand for accommodation could probably not be provided in private homes alone. While individual hosts could play their part, the regular arrival of large numbers would tend to generate common facilities of some size. An inscription from first-century Jerusalem, known as the Theodotus-inscription, proves the existence of this kind of institution in the city:–

‘Theodotus, Son of Vettenus, priest and *archisynagogos*, son of an *archisynagogos*, grandson of an *archisynagogos*, built the synagogue for the reading of the law and instruction in the commandments; also the guest-room/house, the rooms and the water system as a lodging for those in need coming from abroad. The foundation stone was laid by his fathers, the elders and Simonides’.³⁰

The guest-chamber, or possibly guesthouse, *xenōn*, and further rooms (or houses? *dōmata*) together with provision of water for drinking and bathing constitute a ‘guest facility’, *katalyma*.³¹ The same word is used by Jesus when he seeks ‘my lodging’ (*to katalyma mou*) at Mk 14:14 for the celebration of his last supper with the disciples. Here a Greek synagogue most likely provided lodging for pilgrims at the feasts. The synagogue in question has even been thought to be that of the Freedmen of Acts 6:9, since Theodotus has taken a Roman surname (Vettenus); this unusual combination of Greek and Latin names was wont to arise when a freed slave took the name of his former master. Since in Acts 6 there is a strong possibility that we are dealing with a group of Christians with strong links to the diaspora (the ‘Hellenists’) the inscription might attest a doubly diaspora-related phenomenon – a synagogue including returnees from the diaspora who undertook to provide lodging for diaspora Jews when they visited Jerusalem. The common motivations of permanent and temporary returnees contributed to residents’ philanthropic care for pilgrims.

The size of the Pentecost audience plausible

The inscription shows the plausibility of the suggestion that the Pentecost audience of Acts 2:5 comprised a concentrated group of pilgrims gathered for the pilgrimage feast of Pentecost. While we have no evidence that the guest institution which the Theodotus inscription celebrates was of any considerable size, the numbers which massed to the feasts alone suggest that large institutions for the housing of guests may have existed, and that those institutions which did exist were probably crammed at festival times.

A large concentration of visitors to the feasts at a location not within the expanse of the Temple, as Acts 2:1–11 suggests, is therefore conceivable. Such a facility may have included multiple *oikoi*, like the houses in which believers gathered for daily meals while also daily attending worship at the Temple (Acts 2:46). If we are to attempt to take our source with some historical seriousness, we need to hypothesise circumstances which might reasonably have led to the gathering of a very large number of pilgrims in the same locality as the post-Easter group of Jesus’ disciples, perhaps even in the same connected complex of buildings. A fact concerning the group of early disciples is pertinent to this question: Jesus arrived in Jerusalem with a group of early disciples who formed a travelling entourage — they were not Jerusalem residents. We know from the Gospel tradition that Jesus had gained access to *guest facility* in Jerusalem, the guest room (*katalyma*) of Mk

²⁸ Note the comments of Büchler, *op. cit.*, *ibidem*.

²⁹ E.g. some having first taken up residence since their arrival for the recent Passover festival.

³⁰ Cf. Martin Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul*, (London: SCM, 1983), pp. 17–18; Frederick John Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. IV (London: Macmillan, 1933), pp. 67–68.

³¹ Cf. Lake and Cadbury in *Beginnings*, Vol. IV, p. 68.

14:14 (cf. Mk 14:12–16 on the seeking out of this room by the disciples). Mark 14:15 calls this guest room a ‘large upper room’ (*anagaion mega*); in Acts, this room is referred to also as the ‘upper room’ but with a different Greek word (1:13, *hyperōon*); however, since Luke uses the Marcan *anagaion mega* at Lk 22:12, there is no serious doubt that the same location is meant. At Acts 2:1–2 the ‘sound of a violent wind’ of the coming of the Holy Spirit fills ‘the whole house where they were sitting’. Two fascinating phenomena now emerge to view. First, the disciples who arrived in Jerusalem as visitors for Passover nevertheless seem to take up virtually permanent residence in the guest facility which Jesus acquired for their celebration of Passover together. If they were scattered from Jerusalem at the time of the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus, they at least seem by Pentecost to have returned to their previous place of lodging. We may in this circumstance detect an intention of Jesus. He had gained access for his largely Galilean group of disciples to a facility in Jerusalem, previously unknown to them, where they might not only find temporary lodging, but also long-term residence and support. Through his action and connections in Jerusalem, Jesus himself had established his founding group in a permanent residence in the Holy City. The support they received here helps to account for the fact that his Galilean group, despite persecution, were able to survive long term in Jerusalem. Second, the narrative of Pentecost presents us with one group of *visitors* to Jerusalem – the disciples from Galilee – being observed by *another group of visitors* to Jerusalem – the international audience at Pentecost.

Life-setting: Jesus’ disciples and other pilgrims lodging close by each other in a large complex, probably around a courtyard, with ritual baths

The Theodotus inscription shows us that Jerusalem Jews were concerned to create lodging facilities for pilgrims. However, it is unlikely that Jesus would specifically have found accommodation in an institution run by a Greek-speaking synagogue. It seems that only at a later stage in the development of his disciple-group did contacts with the Greek-speaking synagogues of Jerusalem occur, around the point of Acts 6, where a group called the ‘Hellenists’ (6:1) appear, and Greek-speaking synagogues are mentioned in the same context (6:9). The Acts 2 Pentecost event is likely to have occurred in a place where guest houses accommodated local Jewish pilgrims from Judaea as well as many from further afield, including from abroad. As we have seen, in view of the claimed phenomenon of ‘dissolving walls’ this was likely a complex of connected buildings. Here local residents offered facilities to pilgrims from both home and abroad. Jesus himself had prior connections to this guest-facility. The interest of international pilgrims in the activities of Jesus’ disciples and their easy access to observe the happenings demand a setting in which all had found lodgings in connected buildings. Common arrangement around a large courtyard, which was often used for communal gatherings, would well fit the realities of Peter’s preaching to a large crowd. Ample facilities for guests to bathe ritually, as are probably implied in the Theodotus inscription, would allow for the many baptisms of those who responded to Peter’s urgings. The most plausible historical setting for Acts 2 is a complex of buildings which included dwellings for local residents and guest facilities and ritual baths available for pilgrims from home (Galilee and Judaea) and abroad, arranged around a large courtyard.

The possible association of elderly, Temple-attending pious with the lodging-complex where Jesus and his disciples had found accommodation.

The notice that those Jews who witnessed the events of Acts 2:1–11 were *devout* (v. 5) may hint at these events’ location in premises belonging to a disciplined religious group. The Greek *eulabēs* is used in the LXX at to translate the Hebrew word *chāsīd* at Micah 7:2³². The Hebrew *chāsīd*, ‘pious one’, is a possible root behind the term Essene.³³ Essenes, of course, were members of an acetic Jewish religious movement which organised its ranks of members in settlements of varying degrees of social integration. There is nothing inherently implausible in the idea of a concentration of pious diaspora Jews in a corporate, religiously oriented dwelling place if they took up residence in Jerusalem out of common religious motivation. If their common religious motivation included intent to pursue an ‘Hasidic’ life of prayer, study, and worship, mutual connection is some form of common daily rule and communal discipline is also plausible. Forms of common daily rule are attested in the *Rule of the Community* from Qumran, in the Greco-Roman sources on the Essenes, and of the later ‘Holy

³² In A (Codex Alexandrinus) and B². The original reading of B (Codex Vaticanus) had *eusebēs*.

³³ Cf. Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (London: SCM, 1974), Vol. 1, p. 175 and Vol. 2, p. 116, notes 455 and 456. For many scholars the question remains unsettled; see J. Kampen, ‘A Reconsideration of the name “Essene” in Greco-Roman Literature in Light of Recent Perceptions of the Qumran Sect’, *Hebrew Union College Annual* 57 (1986), pp. 61–81 and Geza Vermes, ‘The Etymology of “Essenes”’, *Revue de Qumran* (1960), pp. 427–443. For the etymology from ‘*ōsey hatōrah*, ‘doers of the Law’ see James C. VanderKam, ‘Identity and History of the Community’, in Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), Vol 2, pp. 487–533

Congregation of Jerusalem', a group known to have existed in the second half the second century but which may have had earlier origins.³⁴ Diaspora Jews seeking to retire to Jerusalem later in life might be especially likely to seek residence in locations where special care for the elderly was available when needed. The Essene movement, according to Philo, had a reputation for providing exemplary care for the elderly. Support for the 'elder who is bowed down' (CD XIV.14–15) in the local Essene settlements of the villages and towns of Judaea corresponds with Philo's description of the support offered within the Essene movement for the elderly:

'The old too, even if childless are treated as parents of a not merely numerous but very loving family and regularly end their days in an exceedingly happy and comfortable old age, honoured with privileges and with the esteem of so many children who care for them...' (*Apology for the Jews*, 11.13)

'To the elderly is given the respect and care which natural children give to their parents, and they receive from numerous hands and minds full and generous maintenance for their latter years.' (*That Every Good Man is Free*, §87)

The penal code of the *Damascus Rule* defines groups called the 'mothers' and 'fathers' of the community (4Q270 fragment 7 column I lines 13–14). These appear to be esteemed older figures given special authority and status in the Essene settlements in the villages and towns of Judaea. Many of their number may have become fully dependent for their welfare on the communities which cared for them. They are likely to have been afforded the privilege of receiving full care in later life from their communities because of their respected, long proven piety. It is possible that they received this right only as members who had fully surrendered their assets to the community, after the fashion of the perfect Essene devotion of the standard and type regulated in the *Rule of the Community*. It is clear from the requirement of a standard quorum (*minyān*) of ten 'in all their camps' (i.e. places of residence; 1QS VI:1c–8a) that there were in many locations in Judaea communities of Essenes living together in a highly communal social life regulated by the *Rule of the Community*.³⁵ Devotion of assets to the community may have formed a stage-of-life expectation for members of the Essene movement who had already fully reared their children and were showing signs of frailty. In this case, local Essene communities of the villages and towns of Judaea may have comprised both a larger population of families who lived according to the *Damascus Rule* and smaller connected groups, perhaps located in households of ten or more residents, living according to the *Rule of the Community*.³⁶

***Eulabēs* as descriptor of 'virtuoso religion'**

Where the term *eulabēs* elsewhere appears in the New Testament, there seems on each occasion a hint not merely of personal piety but of concentrated religious devotion and discipline. We have already seen that the prophetic Simeon, who was a resident of Jerusalem, is described as *eulabēs* ('a man in Jerusalem... a righteous and devout man' Lk 2:25). He is paired in the Lucan birth narrative with Anna, whose life of constant Temple devotion we have also noted; she 'did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day (Lk 2:37). Simeon is clearly elderly, since he 'looks for the consolation of Israel' (Lk 2:25) and prays that he may now 'depart in peace' (Lk 2:29, the *Nunc dimittis*). Like Anna, he appears to be spending his last days in prayer, religious discipline, and worship at the Temple. Both represent a type of piety and religious behaviour which seems to have been current in first-century Judaism. At Acts 8:2 'devout (*eulabēs*) men' bury Stephen, the context suggests that they may be able to remain in Jerusalem, perhaps because of their special religious standing, while vehement persecution rages against the 'Hellenists' (Acts 6:1, cf. 11:19). At Acts 22:12 Ananias, 'a devout (*eulabēs*) man according to the law' seems to be a prophetic figure; at Acts 9:10 he is called a 'disciple', and in the ensuing passage converses with the Lord in a vision. He conducts a ritual laying on of hands for Paul in the sequel to Paul's vision (9:17).³⁷ As a recipient of a vision and one who proffers a healing procedure, one who is termed *eulabēs* seems again not merely an ordinary believer but one of particular sanctity and, conceivably, one of regular and strict religious discipline.

³⁴ Cf. Brian J. Capper, 'The Holy Congregation in Jerusalem,' in Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Vol. 1, pp. 369–370.

³⁵ Cf. John J. Collins: 'The provision that members could meet in small groups with a quorum of ten is never contravened in the *Serek*, and there is no reason to regard it as anachronistic', 'Beyond the Qumran Community: Social Organisation in the Dead Sea Scrolls', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 16 (2009), pp. 351–369, 359; see also 353, 360.

³⁶ Cf. Brian J. Capper, 'The Judaean Cultural Context of Community of Goods in the Early Jesus Movement, Part III, The Distribution of Essene Community of Goods in Southern Palestine and its Poverty-relieving Macroeconomic Significance at the Time of Jesus', *Qumran Chronicle*, 25 (2017), pp. 29–49.

³⁷ His laying on of hands is not mentioned as Acts 22:13.

If we allow the *type* which the term *eulabēs* seems to imply to inform our reading of Acts 2:5, taking it as an indication of ‘virtuoso religion’, as defined near the opening of this piece, we may find in Luke’s use of this term a hint of the gathering of a religious grouping of specialist type, rather than simply a gathering of Pentecost pilgrims. Weber hypothesized that because of its peculiar and highly concrete forms, ‘virtuoso’ religiosity has often been ‘of decisive importance for the development of the way of life of the masses. This virtuoso religiosity has therefore also often been important for the economic ethic of the respective religion. The religion of the virtuoso has been the genuinely ‘exemplary’ and practical religion.’³⁸ Weber’s category of virtuoso religiosity may therefore be useful as an heuristic device for understanding how the Pentecost events of Acts 2 issue in a form of highly integrated social and economic life amongst the converted (Acts 2:42–47, cf. 4:32–5:11), and what the social and economic life of the first formal expansion of the Jerusalem group of believers in Jesus has to tell us about the character and practices of the large group who were converted at Pentecost in Acts 2:5–11.

Under what conditions is the mass-conversion of Pentecost plausible?

It may be stressed that events of religious pilgrimage generate huge congregations. Concentrations of large numbers at a pilgrimage feasts such as Pentecost are entirely to be expected. Interpreters sceptical of the mass conversion which Luke records might seek to imagine the response a powerful preacher might precipitate at large religious festivals in the present day from crowds, gathered solely out of religious motivation, and eager for greater contact with, if not the invasion of, the divine. If Jesus’ disciples found lodging in a guest complex where large groups of a particular religious order or type gathered at the Jewish pilgrimage feasts, at Pentecost undergoing admission and rank enhancing rituals, such a religious group and context may easily have provided a curious audience for Peter’s preaching. In such circumstances the mass conversion of three thousand (Acts 2:41) is plausible. Such an occasion and audience may merely have been, in a sense, hi-jacked by the group of Jesus’ post-Easter disciples.

The audience at Pentecost were gathered for the Essene Covenant Renewal Festival in the Essene Quarter of Jerusalem.

I have argued in other contexts that the community of goods attested in Acts 2:44–45 and 4:32–5:11 of those converted following Peter’s Pentecost speech (cf. 2:41–47) reveals the influence of Essene social forms, including employment of the staged Essene entrance procedure.³⁹ The historical value of Luke’s statements in Acts 2:44–45 that the those who responded to Peter’s Pentecost day sermon (cf. 2:41) held property in common and sold property to meet all members’ needs is shown by their ultimate dependence on a statement in a semitic language source which stated that the community had organized itself as a *yachadh*. The *Rule of the Community*

³⁸ Max Weber, ‘Social Psychology of the World’s Religions’ in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1948), pp. 267–301, p. 289.

³⁹ See Brian J. Capper, ‘The Judaean Cultural Context of Community of Goods in the Early Jesus Movement’, Parts I–V, *Qumran Chronicle* 24 (2016), pp. 29–49; 25 (2017), pp. 29–49; (2018), pp. 39–75; 26 (2018), pp. 17–40; 27 (2019), pp. 53–82; ‘The Essene Religious Order of Ancient Judaea and the Origins of Johannine Christianity’, *Qumran Chronicle* 22 (2014), pp. 39–71; ‘Community of Goods in the *Rule of the Community* (1QS) and Comparative Analysis of the Advanced Probationer’s Renunciation of Administration of his Property in other Fully Property-Sharing Communities’, *Qumran Chronicle* 20 (2012), pp. 89–150; ‘Essene Community Houses and Jesus’ Early Community’, in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Jesus and Archaeology*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), pp. 472–502; ‘Jesus, Biblical Covenant, and The Essene New Covenant of Ancient Judaea: On the Origins of the Early Christian Familial Economic Covenant’, *Qumran Chronicle* 19 (2011) pp. 1–30; ‘The New Covenant in Southern Palestine at the Arrest of Jesus’ in James R. Davila, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Post-Biblical Judaism and Early Christianity (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah XLVI*, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2003), pp. 90–116; art. ‘Wealth’ in J. Leslie Houlden, ed., *Jesus in History, Culture and Thought: An Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC–Clio, 2003), Vol. 2, pp. 864–869; ‘“With the Oldest Monks...” Light from Essene History on the Career of the Beloved Disciple?’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, new series, 49 (1998), pp. 1–55; ‘The Palestinian Cultural Context of Earliest Christian Community of Goods,’ in ed. Richard J. Bauckham (ed.), *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), , pp. 323–356; ‘Community of Goods in the Early Jerusalem Church,’ in H. Temporini & W. Haase, eds., *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, series II, volume 26, part 2 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995), pp. 1730–1774; ‘“In der Hand des Ananias...” Erwägungen zu 1QS VI, 20 und der urchristlichen Gütergemeinschaft,’ *Revue de Qumran* 12 (1986), pp. 223–236; ‘The Interpretation of Acts 5.4,’ *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 19 (1983), pp. 117–131.

(very extensively) and other Dead Sea Scrolls documents unusually employ the Hebrew adverb *yachadh* ('together') as a terminus technicus to for the distinctive, property-sharing Essene community form.

'All...were together' (Acts 2:44) means 'all belonged to the *yachadh*'

This distinctive Essene terminology exactly parallels the difficult Greek phrases at Acts 2:44 and 47 which employ the adverbial phrase *epi to auto*, 'together'. Acts 2:44 begins 'All those who believed *were together* (*ēsan epi to auto*) and had all things in common (*kai eichon hapanta koina*).' The Dead Sea Scrolls employ the Hebrew adverb 'together' (*yachadh*) as a substantive to indicate 'the community'. Max Wilcox observed that *ēsan epi to auto* at Acts 2:44 reflects the semitic idiom 'to be to a/the together' (*lihyōth l'yachadh / layyachadh*) found in the *Rule of the Community* from Qumran.⁴⁰ The 'together' designated for the Essenes their *Community*. IQS VIII:12 concludes with the phrase concerning an apparently 'elite'⁴¹ group of the *yachadh*, 'And when these [men] have become a community in Israel', 'ūbhīyōth 'ēlleh layyachadh b'yisra'ēl.⁴² Vermes translated: 'And when these become members of the Community in Israel'.⁴³ The procedure for the entry of new members into the community is described in IQS V:1–VI:23. In Acts 2, as in this section of IQS, we see the combination of repentance, obedience, and becoming members of a new property-sharing community. The similarities of both content and language are indeed striking. At IQS V:2, near the beginning of the description of the administrative procedure towards new belonging, this distinctive Essene idiom designates the new member's coming to belong to the community in Law and in property, *lihyōth l'yachadh battōrah ūbhahōn*, following his repentance and full separation from the congregation of the wicked.⁴⁴ Lohse rendered this 'daß sie gehören zur Gemeinschaft im Gesetz und im Besitz'⁴⁵; Martinez and Tigchelaar translate: 'in order to constitute a Community in law and possessions'.⁴⁶ At IQS VI:22–23 the successful candidate's advice and judgment 'will belong to the Community' (*wīhī 'tsāthō layyachadh ūmišpātō*) at the conclusion of his completion of the community entrance procedure.

We are therefore correct to deduce that Luke or his source supplied the Greek phrase 'all things common' as an exegesis to explain the Greek phrase *ēsan epi to auto*, which could not carry the technical significance which its *Vorlage* carried in a semitic source — that all who believed belonged to a *yachadh*, a social grouping which included within its organisation formal community of goods arrangements. Literal Greek translation of this idiom, with *ēsan epi to auto* 'they were together', could not communicate the implication of community of goods expressed in the distinctive Essene Hebrew idiom. Luke or his source therefore added his immediately following *kai eichon hapanta koina*, 'and had all things in common' to bring out the property-sharing implications of the presently preceding statement. This exegesis made intelligible the transition from the opening statement in v.44 about all the believers having been 'together' to the statements in verse 45 about the sale and distribution of property. These depict the operation of the community of goods of this very early community of believers in Jesus through the believers selling property and making distribution to meet the needs of all: *kai ta ktēmata kai tas hyparxeis epipraskon kai diemeridzon auta pasin, kathoti an chreian eichen*, 'and they used to sell possessions and goods, and distribute them to all, as any had need.' Luke's statements about both the communal belonging of the believers ('they were all together') and their sale and distribution of property, therefore, clearly derive from a semitic source.

In this regard it is important to observe that John Chrysostom found the Greek phrase *ēsan epi to auto* at Acts 2:44 awkward. This shows that it was not natural Greek. Chrysostom deduced that it must refer on to the following phrase about community of goods, not simply to the gathering together or unity of the community.⁴⁷ Bruno W. W. Dombrowski demonstrated that the designation *yachadh* at Qumran probably began as an attempt to render into Hebrew the Greek term *to koinon*, a neuter singular form of the adjective *koinos*, meaning 'the

⁴⁰ Max Wilcox, *The Semitisms of Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), pp. 93–100.

⁴¹ Cf. John J. Collins, 'Beyond the Qumran Community: Social Organisation in the Dead Sea Scrolls', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 16 (2009), pp. 351–369, see 361–363; 'Forms of Community in the Dead Sea Scrolls', in Shalom M. Paul et al., *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (Leiden: Brill, 2003) pp. 97–111, see 105–107; E. F. Sutcliffe, 'The First Fifteen Members of the Qumran Community: A Note on IQS 8:1ff', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 4 (1959), pp. 134–138.

⁴² Cf. IQS VIII:4, *bihyōth 'ēlleh b'yisra'ēl* 'and when these [men] are in Israel'.

⁴³ Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, p. 109.

⁴⁴ = 4Q256 IX fragment 4 line 2, 4Q258 I fragments 1a, 1b, line 2.

⁴⁵ Eduard Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran: Hebräisch und Deutsch* (München: Kösel, 1971), p. 17.

⁴⁶ Florentino Garcia Martinez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition*, Vol. 1, p. 79.

⁴⁷ 'And they speedily came *epi to auto*, to the same thing in common, even to the imparting to all.' *John Chrysostom. Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles*, translated J. Walker and R. Sheppard, revised with notes on the text by H. Browne, Library of the Fathers (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1851), Homily VII on Acts 2:44, cf. Homily XI on Acts 4:32, pp. 101–102 and 155–156.

commonality', a word used in Greek legislation as a term for a club or association as a common body in matters of law, property, and so forth.⁴⁸ Hence in Acts 2:44 the idiom has almost come full circle, being explained with a phrase which included the adjective *koinos*, used in the plural in the phrase *hapanta koina* which describes the early post-Easter believers in Jesus having 'all things common' in Acts 2:44 and 4:32.

'Added together' in 2:47 means 'joined to the *yachadh*'

Wilcox also showed that the idiom 'to add together' which at Acts 2:47 designates the process of expansion of the community: *prosetitheî... epi to auto*, 'he (the Lord) added together', reflects the Essene idiom attested in the *Rule of the Community* from Qumran, *l'hosîph l'yachadh / layyachadh*, 'to add to (the) together' (1QS V:7; VIII:19; cf. VI:14 [*'al 'atsath hayyachadh*], and CD XIII:11 [*la "dhāthō*]). The distinguished semitist Matthew Black, Wilcox's doctoral supervisor, approved and cited his deduction.⁴⁹ The appearance of this obviously Semitic material, related elsewhere to the property-sharing Essenes, in a context in Acts related to community of goods strongly suggests the antiquity and historicity of the tradition of Acts 2:44 that the earliest post-Easter community of Jesus' followers Jerusalem practised community of goods. It is plain that Luke's summary on the life of the community in 2:42–47 is, in the main, assembled from elements drawn from reports of particular events found elsewhere in Acts.⁵⁰ It is still possible to discern the origin of this notice of new members joining the community as the original conclusion of a report of Peter's speech and the huge response to it. Luke uses *prostithemi* for the first time in Acts of the three thousand joining the community at 2:41. It appears their joining the community was originally described with the Essene idiom *l'hosîph layyachadh* now echoed at 2:47. The converts at Pentecost had joined the *yachadh*. Between the original position of this report at 2:41 and its more Semitic echo at 2:47 (*prosetitheî... epi to auto*) Luke inserted a good few snippets of information drawn from other reports of particular events to flesh out his first 'summary' in Acts.

Acts 4:32 substitutes stylizing after Greek philosophical ideals for the Semitic language of the *yachadh*

These Semitic idioms do not reappear in the second notice on community of goods in Acts 4:32 and 34, where stylizing in terms of the Greek commonplaces is stronger. Henry Joel Cadbury deduced from a comparison of 'summary' material in Luke's Gospel with its probable sources in Mark that Luke demonstrates a tendency to use summary-type material from his sources more than once, in order to give a more flowing narrative. Cadbury observed that when Luke does this, the first use of the material is closer to its original wording, but its second use, while varying wording for stylistic reasons, gives the original position in Luke's source.⁵¹ That Acts 2:44 and 47 give instances of more Semitic language, but Acts 4:32 and 34 a more stylised version of events, suggests that Luke has employed the same working method with his sources on the community of goods in Acts. From this we may deduce that the essential content of Acts 2:44–45, a statement about the *yachadh* and a note that many believers sold their possessions, are closest to the pre-Lucan tradition behind Acts 4:32 and 34 and probably originated 'in that position' with either the story of Barnabas' property-donation, or that of Ananias Sapphira, since these follow at 4:36–5:11; one or both of these stories (I would say certainly the story of Ananias and Sapphira) originated in a Semitic source. This story, in order for its content to be comprehensible, required introduction with general statements about both the general fact and the specific mode of operation of the property-sharing arrangements of the community. As it now stands in Acts 5:1–11, it is introduced by Luke's very similar, yet more expanded, secondary reformulation of the same content (the story's original introduction) in Acts 4:32 and 34–35, 'and the multitude of those who believed were one heart and soul, and not one said anything of that which he possessed was his own, but all things were to them common... for neither was there among them anyone needy, for as many as were owners of lands or houses, selling, used to bring the price of the things sold, and used to lay them at the feet of the apostles, and then distribution was made to anyone as had need.' While the idea of communal property had its ultimate origin with a formulation derived ultimately from a statement about the *yachadh* still detectable in the fragment which begins Acts 2:44, here Luke varies his phrasing for stylistic reasons. When he writes of the *plēthos*, 'multitude' or 'congregation', of believers in his second rendition, he uses a term which is a favourite of his own. On the New Testament uses of *plēthos*, eight are in Luke and sixteen in Acts, while there are only seven instances in the other New Testament books

⁴⁸ 'Hayyachadh in 1QS and to koinon: An instance of Early Greek and Jewish Synthesis', *Harvard Theological Review* 59 (1966), pp. 293–307; further Moshe Weinfeld, *The Organisational Pattern and the Penal Code of the Qumran Sect* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), pp. 13–14.

⁴⁹ Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, third edition, 1967), p. 10.

⁵⁰ Cf. the analysis of Gregory E. Stirling "'Athletes of Virtue": An Analysis of the Summaries in Acts (2:41–47; 4:32–35; 5:12–16)' *Journal of Biblical Literature* 113 (1994), pp. 679–696, see 680–681.

⁵¹ H. J. Cadbury, 'The summaries in Acts', in Foakes Jackson and Lake (eds.), *Beginnings*, Vol. V, pp. 392–402.

altogether.⁵² This is a first indication that Acts 4:32 and 34 show more of Luke's own hand at work than Acts 2:44–45. *Plēthos* indeed has an equivalent in Hebrew *rabbîm*, 'many', used as a technical term in IQS and other Qumran documents for the 'general assembly'. However, this term was not uniquely Essene parlance, unlike the highly distinctive *yachadh*, since *rabbîm* is also used to denote the assembly of the Pharisaic *Chabhûrâh*.⁵³

Moreover, as Millar Burrows pointed out, the exact equivalent of *rabbîm* in Greek is *polloi*. Burrows argued that, had the early Jerusalem believers in Jesus adopted the term *rabbîm* from Essene usage, understanding their general assembly to be the 'many', we should expect this to be translated *polloi*, which is also found in the New Testament, 'for example in Mark 10:45 and 14:24'. He found that the exact equivalent of the Greek *plēthos* in Hebrew is the substantive *rôbh/rôbh*, used at IQS at V:9, 22 and VI:19.⁵⁴

Although 1 QS V:2 combines the terms *rôbh* and *yachadh* in the phrase *rôbh 'ansê hayyachadh*, 'the multitude of the men of the Community who hold fast to the Covenant', this is not sufficient to suggest that Luke's original source had used a combination of *rôbh/rôbh*, and *yachadh* in the phrase *rôbh/rôbh hayyachadh*, which is not attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls, or similar. Nonetheless, Luke's *plēthos* at 4:32 does convey an indication of the body of full members, the legal body, those entitled to speak and to vote in the gathered assembly. Bruce observed 'in the LXX the word usually means 'multitude', but twice (Ex. xii.6; 2 Chr. xxxi.18) it represents Heb. *qāhāl*, normally rendered *ekklesia*.' Hence he translates 'congregation'. He comments further 'In Attic Gk. *plēthos* is used of the civic community. Cf. the cognate Latin *plebs*...' ⁵⁵ In Exodus 12:6 the Hebrew phrase is *kōl q'hal* 'dhath yisrāel, 'the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel'. C. K. Barrett pointed to the wide range of applications of *plēthos* in Greek. He held that it conveys the sense of 'the whole company of Christians' at Acts 4:32, and found that at Acts 6:2 *plēthos* conveys an element of the nuance of the language of the *rabbîm* indeed found in Qumran documents but also in general Jewish usage.⁵⁶

At Acts 4:32, therefore, Luke has varied his expression. He abandoned his use of the adverbial phrase *epi to auto* to render the substantive *yachadh* in his opaque verbal usage *einai epi to auto* (a literal rendering of the Essene idiom *lihyôth layachadh*) for the noun *plēthos*, which in view of its occasional constitutional usage could convey some sense of a legally constituted body, but could not convey the implication of community of property inherent in belonging to the *yachadh*. The stylizing of Acts 2:44 and 4:32 have often been held to reflect the language of Greek philosophising about the ideal society; this is certainly true of Acts 4:32, where the elaborate stylizing extends to several phrase, but much less so of 2:44, where only the necessary *eixon hapanta koina* appears. The usage 'all things common', *panta* (or *hapanta*) *koina* (cf. 2:44, *eichon hapanta koina*, and 4:32, *ên autois hapanta koina*) is found in Plato's *Republic*, a Utopian scheme⁵⁷, and in other literature which emphasises the philosophical ideal; it is found, for example, in praise of the tribal economy of the primitive Scythians or in connection with the renunciation of the ideal philosopher.⁵⁸ David L. Mealand notes that the phrase 'no one called anything... his own' at Acts 4:32, *oude heis ti... elegen idion einai*, recalls the usage 'to call nothing one's own', frequently found in Plato's *Republic* and other writings in conjunction with the 'all things common' *topos*.⁵⁹ A Greek proverb about friendship, 'friends have all things in common' *koina ta (tōn)*

⁵² Cf. C. K. Barrett, *Acts*, Vol. 1, p. 252.

⁵³ Joachim Jeremias, TWNT, VI, pp. 538–539.

⁵⁴ Millar Burrows, *More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1958), p. 114; cf. Herbert Braun, 'Qumran und das Neue Testament: Ein Bericht über 10 Jahre Forschung (Fortsetzung)' *Theologische Rundschau* 29 (1950–1959), pp. 142–176, see 160–161.

⁵⁵ F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Translation and Commentary* (London: Tyndale Press, 1951), p. 129, cf. pp. 135–136.

⁵⁶ C. K. Barrett, *Acts*, Vol. 1, p. 311.

⁵⁷ See the very careful and illuminating treatment of David L. Mealand, 'Community of Goods and Utopian Allusions in Acts II–IV' *Journal of Theological Studies* new series 28(1977), pp. 96–97; Rubén R. Dupertuis, 'The Summaries of Acts 2, 4 and 5', in Jo-Ann A. Brant (ed.) *Ancient Fiction: The Matrix of Early Jewish Christian and Jewish Narrative* (Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), pp. 275–295; Lucien Cerfaux, 'La première communauté chrétienne à Jérusalem (Act. II, 41–V, 42)', *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 16 (1939), pp. 5–31, see 26–28.

⁵⁸ E.g. Plato, *Critias*, §110D; *Republic*, 3.22 §416D; 5.10 §462C (also §463B–C, E); *Laws*, 5 §737C, *Republic*, 5 §464D; Philo, *Counsels (Hypothetica)*, 11.4 on the property-sharing Essenes; Arrian, *Discourses of Epicetus*, 3.24 §68; Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, 18 §30, 30 §167; Aristophanes, *Assemblywomen*, §§590–595; Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos*, 24; Lucian, *On Salaried Posts in Great Houses*, §§19–20.

⁵⁹ *Op. cit.*, 97. Mealand cites Plato, *Critias* §110D; *Rep.* 3.22 §416D, 5 §464D, 8 §543B; *Tim.*, §18B. Also Euripides, *Andromachē*, 376; Euhemerus in Diodorus Siculus 5.45.5; Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, 30 §168.

philōn, is preserved from antiquity with extraordinary frequency.⁶⁰ It is found in conjunction with another proverb, ‘friends are one soul’ (*mia psychē*) in a line of Aristotle’s *Nikomachian Ethics*.⁶¹ The combination of the phrases ‘all things common’ and ‘one heart and soul’ at Acts 4:32 is remarkably similar. With his mention of ‘heart’ Luke brings in a biblical colouring.⁶² Yet while Luke was intent in Acts 4:32 to suggest that the life of the earliest community of believers in Jesus in Jerusalem realised the vaunted Greek ideal of friendship,⁶³ and presents them in the dress of Greek thinking about ideal political organization and a state of detachment from possessions realised by the ideally pious, we are able to discern that these motifs are secondary embellishment of a source which employed the technical language of the Essene *yachadh*.⁶⁴

The presence of Essenes in Jerusalem

How is it that terminology known to us from IQS seem to illuminate the Acts account of earliest Christian community of goods? Can we identify a conduit of direct Essene influence on the nascent Christian church? Some evidence in fact suggest that a group formerly linked with the Qumran Essenes may have lived in closest proximity to the first community of Jesus’ disciples in Jerusalem and entered the community in significant numbers. Bargil Pixner argued that in New Testament times there was an ‘Essene Quarter’ in Jerusalem, on the southwest hill, known since the first century AD as ‘Zion’.⁶⁵ The site which he sought to delineate for this Essene settlement is immediately adjacent to the Cenacle church, the traditional site of the ‘upper room’, where the events of Pentecost and the community of goods which immediately followed apparently took place.

Both Josephus and Philo imply that the Essenes had settlements in every significant centre of population in Palestine. Josephus writes that ‘Their city (*polis*) is not one, but many settle in each’. This is evidence that Essenes most likely dwelt in Jerusalem.⁶⁶ The sanctity of the holy city, too, certainly suggests that,

⁶⁰ Euripides, *Andromachē*, 377; *Phoenician Women*, 244; *Orestes*, 735; Plato, *Phaedros*; 279C; *Lysis*; 207C; *Republic*, 424A, 449C; *Laws*, 5.739C; Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1263A; *Eudemian Ethics*, 1237B, 1238A; *Nikomachian Ethics*, 8.9.1159B, 9.8.1168B; Diogenes Laertius, 4.53, 6.37, 6.72, 8:10, 10:11; Libanius, *Letters*, 327.3.2, 1209.4.4, 1236.3.4, 1504.1.6, 1537.5.2; Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, 6 §32, 19 §92; Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras*, 33; Lucian, *On Salaried Posts in Great Houses*, §§24–25; Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos*, 24; Menander, *Sentences*, ed. Siegfried Jaekel (*Menandri Sententiae Comparatio Menandri et Philistionis*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1964), 534, in *Menandri quae supersunt*, ed. Alfredus Koerte and Andreas Thierfelder (Leipzig: Teubner, 1959), 10.1; Terence, *The Brothers*, 803–804; Plutarch, *Morals, On Brotherly Love*, 20.490E; Philo, *On Abraham*, 235; *Life of Moses*, 1.156–159, cf. *On Sobriety*, 56–57; Seneca, *On the Award and Reception of Favours*, 7.4.1; *Moral Letters to Lucilius*, 6.2–3; Martial, *Epigrams*, 2.43.1, 16; Dio Chrysostom, *Orations*, 3.104–111, 37.7; Plutarch, *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*, 65A, *Convivial Questions*, 644C, 743E, *Morals. The Dialogue on Love*, 767D; *Precepts of Statecraft*, 807B, *It is Impossible to Live Pleasantly in the Manner of Epicurus*, 1102F; Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 5.3.19; Sextus, *Sentences*, edited by Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), Nr. 228; Athenaeus, *The Dinner-table Philosophers*, 1.14.10 (=1.8A); Eustathius, *Commentaries on Homer*, II. 2.184.12, 2.817.13, 3.456.17, 3.465.29, 3.473.8, 3.566.14; Clement of Alexandria, *Exhortation to the Greeks*, 12.122.3; Cicero, *On Duties*, 1.16.51, *Laws* 1.12.34; Scholia to Plato’s *Phaedros*, 297C; Photius, *Lexicon*, *koinoō*.

⁶¹ 9.8.2 §1168B.

⁶² Cf. C. K. Barrett, *Acts*, Vol. 1, pp. 252–253, who cites Jeremiah 32:39 (Hebrew: ‘I will give them one heart and one way’), 1 Chronicles 12:38 and 2 Chronicles 30:12.

⁶³ Cf. Alan C. Mitchell, ‘The Social Function of Friendship in Acts 2:44–47 and 4:32–37’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992), pp. 255–272.

⁶⁴ Gregory E. Stirling does not consider the connection of *ēsan epi to auto* in 2:44 and *prosetitheī... epi to auto* 2:47 with the language of IQS, but concentrates only on the Luke’s apologetic motive: ‘“Athletes of Virtue”: An Analysis of the Summaries in Acts (2:41–47; 4:32–35; 5:12–16)’ *Journal of Biblical Literature* 113 (1994), pp. 679–696.

⁶⁵ Bargil Pixner, *An Essene Quarter on Mount Zion? Studia Hierosolymitana I, Collectio Major 22*, (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1976), pp. 245–284, also reprinted separately; ‘The History of the “Essene Gate” Area, ZDPV 105 (1989), pp. 96–104; *Wege des Messias und Stätten der Urkirche*, (ed. Rainer Riesner, Gießen/Basel: Brunnen, second edition 1994), pp. 180–207, 327–334, also in English translation, Bargil Pixner, *Paths of the Messiah and Sites of the Early Church from Galilee to Jerusalem*, ed. Rainer Riesner (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010), pp. 192–219; Rainer Riesner ‘Das Jerusalemer Essenerquartier und die Urgemeinde’, in Hildegard Temporini & Wolfgang Haase, eds., *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, series II, volume 26, part 2 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995), pp. 1175–1922; *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem: Neue Funde und Quellen* (Gießen and Basel: Brunnen Verlag, second edition 1998).

⁶⁶ Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.8.13 §124; Philo, *Counsels (Hypothetica)*, 11.1; *That Every good man is free* 12 §76. Philo has the Essenes living in villages but avoiding the towns (=cities), but he is here imposing the literary

unless extreme tensions with the royal and Temple establishments arose, we should expect to find Essenes there. The *Damascus Document* prescribes chastity for the male Essene while in the city.⁶⁷ Essene converts to the cause of Jesus in Jerusalem are the likely source of the language of the *yachadh* in Acts 2:44 and 47.

The ‘Gate of the Essenes’ in southwest Jerusalem

Josephus refers to a ‘gate of the Essenes’ in Jerusalem, in the southwestern corner of the city wall on the southwest hill.⁶⁸ Rainer Riesner has noted that Joseph Barber Lightfoot was the first scholar in the modern era to detect that the name of this gate pointed to a community of Essenes in its vicinity.⁶⁹ Emil Schürer⁷⁰ wrote ‘There were certainly Essenes in Jerusalem, where they frequently make an appearance in history, and where a gate was named after them, probably because the house of the order was near it.’⁷¹ The line of the first century southern wall of Jerusalem was traced by Frederick Jones Bliss in 1894. In the section of the wall which ran northwest—southeast across the southwest extremity of the hill, as the wall turned the corner of the city, Bliss uncovered the successively-laid thresholds of an ancient gate.⁷² The location corresponds to Josephus’ description. Bargil Pixner, Doron Chen, and Shlomo Margalit uncovered afresh these thresholds. A variety of dating techniques show that they are a later addition to a Hasmonean wall, and date from the early Herodian period.⁷³

topos of flight from cities as evil places, cf. Plato, *Laws* 677B, no cities in the primeval age; Dio Chrysostom, 7.7, 59; Tibullus, *Elegies* 1.51ff. Cf. Philo, *On the Contemplative Life*, 19; *On Abraham*, 23; *On the Decalogue*, 2; *On Providence* in Eusebius, *Preparation of the Gospel*, 8.14.12.

⁶⁷ CD XII.1, cf. Rainer Riesner, ‘Essener und Urkirche in Jerusalem’ *Bibel und Kirche* 40 (1985), pp. 64–74, see p. 73; *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem*, pp. 40, 128.

⁶⁸ *Jewish War*, 5.4.2 §145. Cf. Brian J. Capper, art. ‘Essene Gate’ in Katherine Doob Sakenfeld et al., eds., *New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, Volume 2 (D-H) (Nashville, TN: United Methodist Publishing, Abingdon Press, 2007), pp. 314–315.

⁶⁹ Cf. Rainer Riesner, *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem: Neue Funde und Quellen* (Gießen and Basel: Brunnen Verlag, second edition 1998), pp. VIII, 27; Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *Colossians and Philemon* (London: Macmillan, ninth edition 1890), p. 92 note 2: ‘The name of the ‘Essene Gate’ at Jerusalem (B. J. v. 4. 2) seems to point to some establishment of the order close to the walls of the city.’ This comment is found in the original 1875 edition.

⁷⁰ Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901) II.2, p. 215 note 16.

⁷¹ Cf. Rainer Riesner, *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem*, pp. 14–28 and ‘Das Jerusalemer Essenerviertel. Antwort auf einige Einwände’, *Intertestamental Essays in honour of Józef Tadeusz Milik*, ed. Zdzisław J. Kapera (Kraków: Enigma Press, 1992), pp. 179–186, see 179, and 180–182 against other explanations of the gate’s name. The naming of the gates of Jerusalem after groups which live in the immediate vicinity of the gate within the wall is attested in other periods of the city’s history. Until 1967 the nearby gate into the old city was known since the nineteenth century as *Bab el Maghreb* because of a settlement of Muslims from the Maghreb (i.e. northwest Africa), who established themselves just inside the wall, cf. Barnabas Meistermann, *New Guide to the Holy Land* (London: Burns & Oats, 1923), p. 213. At the time of the crusades, David’s Gate (i.e. the Zion Gate) in the south-west corner of the city became known as the ‘Pisans’ Gate’, named after the twelfth century crusaders from Pisa who later established their settlement behind it, cf. the woodcut of Jerusalem in 1492 reproduced in Michael Avi-Yonah, *A History of the Holy Land* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), p. 231.

⁷² Cf. Frederick Jones Bliss and Archibald Campbell Dickie, *Excavations at Jerusalem 1894–1897* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1898), pp. 16–20, 26–28.

⁷³ On the dating of the remains of the Essene gate see Bargil Pixner, Doron Chen and Shlomo Margalit, ‘Mount Zion: The “Gate of the Essenes” Re-excavated’, *ZDPV* 105 (1989), pp. 85–95; metrological researches are helpful in dating the lowermost threshold; it measures 2.66 metres wide, nine standard Roman feet (of 0.2957 metres), or six standard Roman cubits, showing that the gate cannot have been an original part of the Hasmonean wall (p. 87); pottery below the paving slabs within the gate is ‘first century’, Herodian in character, not later than 70 A.D. (p. 87). Bargil Pixner, ‘The History of the Essene Gate Area’, *ZDPV* 105 (1989), pp. 96–104, notes that Professor Benjamin Mazar observed that the excellent workmanship of limestone slabs which line a channel which passes below the gate points to the workmen of Herod the Great (p. 97). Pixner also points out (p. 98) that the pottery below the paving slabs may be later than the gate itself, since Agrippa II undertook street paving operations to employ the workmen left jobless by completion of work on the Temple, Josephus *Antiquities* 20 §22. On the identification of Josephus’ “Gate of the Essenes” with the recently re-excavated gate see Rainer Riesner, ‘Josephus’ “Gate of the Essenes” in Modern Discussion’ *ZDPV* 105 (1989), pp. 105–109.

The Essenes of Jerusalem resided in the vicinity of the ‘Gate of the Essenes’

Confirmation that the Essene Gate was related to a community of Jerusalem Essenes comes from Josephus’ information that, starting from Herod’s tower Hippicus to the north, the wall first ran south, and ‘descended through the place called *Bēthsō* to the gate of the Essenes’, before turning east. Bargil Pixner pointed out that Joseph Schwarz (1804–1865) had long ago deduced that Josephus’ Greek word *Bēthsō* reflects the Aramaic *beth tsō’āh*, ‘house of goings forth’, indicating a sanitary facility,⁷⁴ an interpretation followed by Gustaf Hermann Dalman.⁷⁵ Bargil Pixner noted that the interpretation of Schwarz is strongly supported by a passage of the Temple Scroll from Qumran. Yigael Yadin argued for a connection with a prescription relating to the plan for the ideal organisation of the Temple and Jerusalem.⁷⁶ The passage, 11Q Temple 46:13–16 (= 11Q20 XII:24–XIII:1), prescribes the construction of a ‘place of the hand outside the city’ consisting of ‘buildings’ (*bothīm*) for the disposal of waste (*hatstsō’āh*).⁷⁷ Josephus’ phrase evokes a picture of an Essene community intensely concerned for the sanctity of the Holy City, who dwell within the walls but attend to sanitary requirements outside the boundary of the city. We are of course reminded of Josephus’ description of the Essenes’ scrupulous sanitary procedures.⁷⁸ A terrace lies outside the wall, a little back along the wall to the northwest from the gate, below the scarp on which the wall rests at this point. In 1875 Captain Claude Reignier Conder took various cuttings in the rock of the scarp above the terrace to indicate a roofed construction outside the wall, built on the terrace.⁷⁹ He suggested that the construction had been a stable. It is possible that this roofed

⁷⁴ Bargil Pixner, *An Essene Quarter on Mount Zion*, p. 256; see also Bargil Pixner, *Paths of the Messiah and Sites of the Early Church from Galilee to Jerusalem*, ed. Rainer Riesner (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010), p. 213; both of these sources cite Joseph Schwartz (spelling with ‘t’), *Crops of the Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Luntz, 1900), p. 335. Rabbi Joseph Schwarz published his *T’bhū’ōth hā’ārets* (‘Crops of the Land’) in Hebrew in 1845. Rainer Riesner, *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem* (second edition 1998), p. 71, points also to this work in the German translation, Joseph Schwarz *Das Heilige Land nach seiner ehemaligen und jetzigen geographischen Beschaffenheit*, ed. I. Schwarz (Frankfurt am Main, 1852), p. 206, and the Hebrew original text, *T’bhū’ōth hā’ārets* (Jerusalem, 1845), p. 334.

⁷⁵ Gustaf Hermann Dalman, *Jerusalem und Sein Gelände* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1930), p. 307.

⁷⁶ Yigael Yadin, ‘The Gate of the Essenes and the Temple Scroll’, in his *Jerusalem Revealed. Archaeology in the Holy City 1968–1974* (London / New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press and Israel Exploration Society, 1976), pp. 90–91. For Yadin’s proposed location of the Essene gate, a few hundred metres to the north of that of the excavations of Bliss and later Pixner, Chen and Margalit, cf. *The Temple Scroll: The Hidden Law of the Dead Sea Sect* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985), pp. 181–182. Shimon Gibson identifies excavations in the same location as the Essene gate, ‘The Trial of Jesus at the Jerusalem Praetorium: New Archaeological Evidence’ in Craig A. Evans (ed.) *The World of Jesus and the Early Church* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2011), pp. 97–118. Gibson’s view is based on an understanding that this gate was named after the Essenes because ‘its primary function’ was to provide the Essenes, who had an encampment ‘outside the palace gate’ city nearby, with ‘direct access to Herod’s palace and the later praetorium’ (112, 115). Gibson associates Josephus’ *Bēthsō* with underground piping which passed through the city wall in this location and emptied at some distance into the Hinnon valley further south, see Magen Broshi and Shimon Gibson, ‘Excavations Along the Western and Southern Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem’ in Hillel Geva (ed.) *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994), pp. 147–155. The location of the Essene Gate as far north as Herod’s Palace/ the Praetorium is incorrect, however, because Josephus writes that the city wall turned direction at the Gate of the Essenes, which corresponds precisely with the location of the gate in the angled section of wall on the southwest hill. The wall ran southwards from Herod’s tower Hippicus, turning at the southwest corner of the city. Key to understanding Josephus’ description is that his directions (*pros dysin*, *noton*) describe not the direction of the line of the wall but speak of the direction of the outer, defensive face of the wall: ‘Beginning at the same point [Hippicus] facing in the other direction, westwards (*pros dysin*), it descended past the place called *Bēthsō* to the gate of the Essenes (*katateinon epi tēn Essēnōn pylēn*), then (*kapeita*) turned facing southwards (*pros noton*), ran to beyond the fountain of Siloam (*hyper tēn Silōan epistrophepon pēgēn*)...’, *Jewish War*, 5.4.2 §145; cf. Rainer Riesner, *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem* (second edition 1998), p. 15: ‘Das Essenerort muß dort gelegen haben, wo die „erste Mauer“... ihren Verlauf aus einer Nord-Süd- in eine West-Ost-Richtung änderte... Das weist allgemein auf den Südwesthügel der neutestamentlichen Stadt.’

⁷⁷ On the interpretation of this passage see Rainer Riesner, ANRW, II, 26.2, pp. 1806–1811, = *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem* (second edition 1998), pp. 30–35.

⁷⁸ Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.8.9 §§147–149.

⁷⁹ Claude Reignier Conder, ‘The Rock Scarp of Zion.’, *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statements* (1875), pp. 81–89, see map on p. 83, and 84. Conder’s map, with the added marking ‘Essene Bethso?’, is reproduced in Bargil Pixner, *Paths of the Messiah* (2010), p. 200, see also p. 199; cf. Rainer Riesner, ANRW, II, 26.2, pp. 1794–1795, = *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem* (second edition 1998), pp. 18–19.

establishment may have been the *Bethso* of the Essenes of Jerusalem. Pixner notes a number of cisterns and ritual baths hewn in the rock within the city wall, which he suggests define the perimeter of the area of the Essene Quarter.⁸⁰

Essene-type Graves discovered near Jerusalem

At Qumran, 'En el-Ghuweir and Chiam el-Sagha, the Essene cemeteries evidence an unusual and highly characteristic form of burial, in parallel rows of deep graves in the earth marked with oval circles of stone, with north-south orientation of the body (head to the south), without grave-goods of any kind. Graves of the same type in Jericho are probably also Essene in view of the mention of Jericho in the Copper Scroll.⁸¹ In Jerusalem, burials in the earth almost always contained grave-goods and have no particular orientation. In East Talpiot, the Jerusalem suburb about 2km to the south of Mount Zion, the southwest hill of the old city, graves of the Essene type have been discovered.⁸² In nearby Beit Safafa, about 4km southwest of Mount Zion, a row of fifty *rock-cut* graves have discovered with, otherwise, the same features. The absence of grave goods is extremely unusual in Jerusalem; Rock-cut tombs excavated in and around Jerusalem have previously always proven to be family graves, and to contain both ossuaries and grave goods. The contents of a nearby cistern (especially ceramic fragments) show that these graves date from the second century BC to the first century AD.⁸³ A grave of Essene type of particular interest for this study because of its proximity to the "Gate of the Essenes" is Grave 1 at Mamilla, less than a kilometre to the north-east of Mount Zion, is also of the Essene type.⁸⁴ Overall, these graves were certainly linked with Essene settlements in villages nearby to Jerusalem; perhaps some were the final resting places of Essenes who had lived in Jerusalem itself.⁸⁵

The Essene settlement of Jerusalem and Herod the Great

Herod the Great seems to have turned to the prestigious Essenes as a bulwark against popular support for the Hasmoneans, exploiting inner-Jewish rivalries to his own advantage. The wily Herod had to assert himself against the Hasmonean dynasty, which he had deposed. By turning to the Essenes, he placed his finger on the Hasmoneans' point of weakness: as non-Zadokites, they had no traditional right to occupy the high priesthood. While 4QS^e evidences an early recension⁸⁶ of the *Rule of the Community* with no mention of the "sons of Zadok", (4QS^b and 4QS^d omit key phrases concerning their position),⁸⁷ 1QS is typical of the later recession that made "the sons of Zadok, the priests" authoritative members.⁸⁸ According to Josephus, Herod 'held the Essenes

⁸⁰ Bargil Pixner, *Paths of the Messiah* (2010), see the map on p. 199 and pp. 209–213; Rainer Riesner, ANRW, II, 26.2, p. 1795 (map) and pp. 1811–1816, = *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem* (second edition 1998), pp. 19 (map) and pp. 35–40. See also Bargil Pixner, 'Unravelling the Copper Scroll Code. A Study of the Topography of 3Q15', *Revue de Qumran* 11 (1983–86), pp. 323–367.

⁸¹ Cf. H. Eshel and Z. Greenhut, 'Hiam el-Sagha, a Cemetery of the Qumran Type', *Revue Biblique* 100 (1993), pp. 252–259; C. M. Bennett, 'Tombs of the Roman Period,' in K. M. Kenyon, *Excavations at Jericho*, 11, *The Tombs Excavated in 1955-58* (London: The British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, 1965), p. 537.

⁸² A. Kloner and J. Gat, 'Burial Caves in East Talpiot,' *Atiqot* (Hebrew series) 8 (1982), pp. 74–76.

⁸³ Boaz Zissu, "'Qumran Type" Graves in Jerusalem: Archaeological Evidence of an Essene Community?', *Dead Sea Discoveries*, 5 (1998), pp. 158–171; 'Odd Tomb Out: Has Jerusalem's Essene Cemetery been Found?', *Biblical Archaeology Review* 25 (1999), pp. 50–55, 62.

⁸⁴ R. Reich, 'The Ancient Burial Ground in the Mamilla Neighborhood, Jerusalem,' in Hillel Geva (ed.), *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed* (1994), p. 117; R. Reich and E. Shukron, 'Jerusalem, Mamilla,' *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 14 (1994), pp. 93–94.

⁸⁵ Alison Schofield, *From Qumran to the Yahad* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 240–249, and Joan E. Taylor, 'The Cemeteries of Khirbet Qumran and Women's Presence at the Site,' *Dead Sea Discoveries*, 6 (1999), pp. 285–323, see 311–312, are unnecessarily cautious in their assessments.

⁸⁶ Cf. Charlotte Hempel, 'Emerging Communal Life and Ideology in the S Tradition' in Florentino Garcia Martinez and Mladen Popović, *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 43–61 and 'The Community and Its Rivals According to the Community Rule from Caves 1 and 4', *Revue de Qumran* 21 (2003) 47–81; also Sarianna Metso, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) and 'The Primary Results of the Reconstruction of 4QSe', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 44 (1993), pp. 303–308.

⁸⁷ Cf. A. I. Baumgarten, 'The Zadokite Priests at Qumran: A Reconsideration', *Dead Sea Discoveries* 4 (1997), pp. 137–156; Robert Kugler, 'A Note on 1QS IX:14: The Sons of Righteousness or the Sons of Zadok?', *Dead Sea Discoveries*, 3 (1996), pp. 315–320; Geza Vermes, 'Preliminary Remarks on Unpublished Fragments of the Community Rule from Qumran Cave 4', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 42 (1991), pp. 250–255.

⁸⁸ 1QS V: 2, 9 and IX:14; cf. 1QSa [1Q28a] I:2, 24 and II:3.

in great honour, and thought higher of them than their mortal nature required'. The reason was supposedly the prophecy, by an Essene prophet called Menahem, of Herod's future rise to power, while the king was yet a boy. When Herod was 'at the height of his power' he called Menahem for an audience to thank him, and 'held, from that time on, the Essenes in high esteem'.⁸⁹ Distaste amongst elements of the Essene movement for the Hasmoneans may have given them common cause with Herod.⁹⁰ We can also surmise, on the basis of the Temple Scroll from Qumran, that the possibility of gaining influence in Herod's greatest project, his marvelous reconstruction of the Temple, would prove extremely attractive to the Essene movement. Some Essenes may have considered it the Temple hoped for in the *Temple Scroll*.⁹¹ It is therefore likely that the Essene settlement on the southwest hill originated or underwent expansion in the reign of Herod the Great, when Essene access to royal power buoyed the movement. This would account for the letting of the "Gate of the Essenes" into the earlier, Hasmonean wall on the southwest hill. It is possible that Herod cultivated his alliance with the Essenes, and allowed them their prestigious settlement on the highest hill of Jerusalem, as part of his preparations for reconstructing the Temple. In view of their peerless reputation for sanctity, Herod may have employed many Essenes for the delicate work of reconstruction, wont to raise popular scruples. The alliance of the Essenes with Herod's house seems to have broken down under his son Archelaus. According to Josephus, the Essene prophet Simon interpreted a dream of Archelaus as pointing to his limited reign and final downfall.⁹² The story points to the passing of Essene favour from the Herodian dynasty.⁹³ It is hardly surprising that the Essenes did not succeed in sustaining an alliance with Archelaus, the most brutal and unloved of the Herods.⁹⁴ Indeed, Essene discontent with Archelaus may have contributed to his downfall and the installation of Roman procurators over Judaea. Josephus' testimony to the name of the "Gate of the Essenes" in the late first century suggests that Essene settlement on the southwest hill continued through the birth of the Christian Church and to revolt the revolt of AD 66–70.

The site of the 'Upper Room' on the southwest hill of Jerusalem

The so-called 'David's Tomb', the oldest part of the Cenacle church, traditional site of the 'upper room' (Mk 14:15, Luke 22:12, *anagaion mega*, 'a large upper room'; Acts 1:13 *to hyperōon*, 'the upper room'; Acts 2:2 *ho oikos*, 'the house', 'the building', 'the dwelling place'), lies about two hundred metres to the north of the Essene gate, and has been thought to represent part of a pre-AD 70 Jewish-Christian synagogue.⁹⁵ It is, however, more likely to represent a corner-fragment of the 'Church of Holy Sion' (*Hagia Sion*), constructed around AD 340.⁹⁶ This Church extended eastward from 'David's Tomb' some fifty metres, into the area which Bargil Pixner suggests was occupied by the Essene Quarter. The centre of Hagia Sion lies roughly on the perimeter of this area. William Sanday⁹⁷ judged the patristic tradition of the site very positively:

'...I believe that of all the most sacred sites it is the one that has the strongest evidence in its favour. Indeed, the evidence for it appears to me so strong that, for my own part, I think that I should be prepared to give in an unqualified adhesion.'

The most important patristic testimony to the site comes from Epiphanius of Salamis, who came from Palestine, and who wrote (c. AD 392) that Hadrian found a small Jewish-Christian church on the site on his tour of the East in AD 130:⁹⁸

⁸⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 15.10.4–5 §§372–379.

⁹⁰ Cf. Ernst Bammel, 'Sadduzäer und Sadokiden', *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 55 (1979), pp. 107–115.

⁹¹ Rainer Riesner, 'Das Jerusalemer Essenerviertel. Antwort auf einige Einwände', *Intertestamental Essays in honour of Józef Tadeusz Milik*, ed. Zdzislaw J. Kapera (Kraków: Enigma Press, 1992), pp. 179–186, points to the theory of M. Delcor, 'Is the Temple Scroll Source of the Herodian Temple?', in George J. Brooke, *Temple Scroll Studies* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), pp. 67–90, that the Temple Scroll influenced the design of the Herodian Temple.

⁹² Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.7.3 §113; *Antiquities*, 17.8.3 §§345–348.

⁹³ Cf. Otto Betz, *Offenbarung und Schrifterforschung in der Qumransekte* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1960), pp. 99–109.

⁹⁴ Cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17.13.2 §342; *Jewish War* 2.7.3 §111.

⁹⁵ J. W. Hirschberg, 'The Remains of an Ancient Synagogue on Mount Zion', in Yigael Yadin (ed.) *Jerusalem Revealed* (1976), pp. 116–117.

⁹⁶ Cf. John Wilkerson, *Jerusalem as Jesus Knew It: Archaeology as Evidence* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), pp. 170–171.

⁹⁷ William Sanday *Sacred Sites of The Gospels* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1903), pp. 77–78.

⁹⁸ Epiphanius, *On Weights and Measures*, 14. The Bordeaux Pilgrim gives a picture of the southwest hill in AD 333, prior to the construction of Hagia Sion, largely confirming Epiphanius, though he identifies the sole

‘He found the whole city razed to the ground and the Temple of God trodden under foot, with the exception of a few buildings and of the little church of God, on the site where the disciples returning after the ascension of the Saviour from Olivet, had gone up to the upper room, for there it had been built, that is to say in the quarter of Zion...’

Epiphanius’ reference to the church is incidental to the context, which speaks for its authenticity; the purpose of the passage is to introduce Aquila as a translator of the scriptures. Hadrian undertook a tour of the East as a result of illness, which led to the foundation of Aelia Capitolina, with which Aquila was involved, on the razed site of Jerusalem. Any writer who sought to give an account of Aquila would have to turn to ancient tradition; Epiphanius’ long and rambling account, typical of his style, appears to excerpt an earlier work which is recognisably a church-historical chronicle. The source appears to have centred on events in Jerusalem, so it is most likely a Palestinian chronicle. Epiphanius is known to cite Hegesippus elsewhere.⁹⁹ Hegesippus’ anti-heretical chronicle represented virtually the standard work on the Jerusalem church, as can be seen from Eusebius’ frequent dependence on him for information about Jerusalem Christianity.¹⁰⁰

Hegesippus had dedicated his life to the refutation of heresy by an investigation of the traditions of the church in each of its major centres, as preserved by the established episcopate in each place,¹⁰¹ compiling a succession list of bishops for Rome,¹⁰² and certainly making the succession in Jerusalem clear in his history of the Jerusalem church, a record which Epiphanius uses.¹⁰³ Epiphanius’ portrayal of Aquila in the present passage seems to echo his approach. The discipline of the church is the guiding principle. Aquila, an apostate from the Jerusalem community, went astray because of a perverse interest in astrology. Though the ‘teachers’ rebuked him for his error, eventually he had to be expelled.¹⁰⁴ This approach is certainly not unique to Hegesippus, but the account of Hadrian’s arrival in Jerusalem most likely stems from his work, the *vade mecum* on heresy and the Jerusalem church. Hegesippus lived c. AD 115–185, and was a youth in Palestine at the time of Hadrian’s visit.¹⁰⁵ After his travels he maintained intimate contact with the Jerusalem Church,¹⁰⁶ collecting the local tradition,¹⁰⁷ and even using Jewish oral tradition.¹⁰⁸ Hegesippus would be a reliable witness for local tradition concerning the site of the upper room around AD 130.

The annalist Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria in the tenth century, claims that Jewish Christians returned to Jerusalem in the fourth year of Vespasian (AD 72–73) following the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Rainer Riesner pointed out that the date of this apparent return makes some sense, suggesting as it does normalisation of relations after the last resistance of the Zealots, at Masada, was put down in this year.¹⁰⁹ Eutychius associates the return with the building of a church, and the election of Simon bar-Clopas.¹¹⁰ Eutychius at least gives a plausible explanation of the origin of the church that was to be found on the site in AD 130. Joan E. Taylor objected that the early Christians, in her view of low social level, were unlikely to have had a centre

building as one of the seven synagogues which tradition held once existed on the site, a tradition which Epiphanius also mentions in this context. Cf. e.g. Herbert Donner, *Pilgerfahrt ins Heilige Land* (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 57–58.

⁹⁹ Theodor Zahn *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, Vol. VI (Leipzig, 1900), pp. 258, 261–262.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Eusebius, *Church History*, 2.23.4–19; 3.11–12; 3.20.1–2; 3.32; 4.22.

¹⁰¹ Eusebius, *Church History*, 4.22.1–3.

¹⁰² Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 4.22.3. Epiphanius found his Roman bishop-list in ‘certain memoirs’ (*Panarion*, 27.6) which are certainly those of Hegesippus, cf. Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, I, *S. Clement of Rome*, I (London: Macmillan, 1890), pp. 328–332, and Zahn, *Forschungen*, VI, pp. 258–261.

¹⁰³ Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 66.20, cf. Zahn, *Forschungen*, VI, p. 290.

¹⁰⁴ Epiphanius, *On Weights and Measures*, 15.

¹⁰⁵ He had experienced the catastrophe of the Bar-Kokhba revolt personally, cf. Eusebius, *Church History*, 4.8.1–4 and Zahn, *Forschungen*, VI, pp. 250–254.

¹⁰⁶ He refers to it as *the church*; Eusebius, *Church History*, 4.22.4–5.

¹⁰⁷ Eusebius, *Church History*, 4.22.8.

¹⁰⁸ Hegesippus brought the name of Panther — unwittingly, from Jewish polemic against the virgin birth — into association with the family of Jesus, thus becoming an undesirable author, cf. Zahn, *Forschungen*, VI, p. 262, further pp. 266–269. Epiphanius may intentionally avoid naming his source.

¹⁰⁹ Rainer Riesner, ANRW, II, 26.2, pp. 1842–1843, = *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem* (second edition 1998), pp. 66–67.

¹¹⁰ ‘Then the Christians, fleeing from the Jews, crossed the Jordan, and there established their seat. When they heard that Titus had destroyed the rebellious Jews, they returned to Jerusalem, building there a church for themselves and nominating their second bishop Simon bar-Clopas. Clopas was the brother of Joseph who brought up our Lord Jesus Christ. This happened in the fourth year of Vespasian’, Eutychius, *Annals*, 343.

on the southwest hill, adjacent to the ‘Belgravia’ of the prestigious high priestly houses.¹¹¹ However, the Fourth Gospel witnesses that the unnamed ‘disciple whom Jesus loved’, probably the host at the last supper,¹¹² and therefore probably the individual in whose house the ‘Upper Room’ was located, was ‘known (*gnōstos*) to the high priest’ (18:15, 16); *gnōstos* has occasionally been taken to imply that the disciple was a kinsman of the high priest, a meaning which the adjective can definitely carry.¹¹³ Bargil Pixner pointed out in objection to Taylor that as well as a region of grand housing, there was an area of poorer dwellings on the southwest hill.¹¹⁴ All evidence combined suggests that the Jerusalem Christians, only some of whom were drawn from the wealthier classes in Jerusalem, nevertheless gained a foothold on the hill (and indeed survived in the city generally) through the support of some wealthier patrons. The patristic tradition of the site is remarkably consistent with the New testament and archaeological evidence.

The early Christian historians assume that from Simon’s time onwards until the founding of Aelia Capitolina there was a Jewish-Christian presence in Jerusalem. Eusebius says that it was recorded ‘that there was a very important Christian church in Jerusalem, administered by Jews, which existed until the siege of the city under Hadrian’.¹¹⁵ Elsewhere he appears to know of the resettlement of Jews in Jerusalem by the time of Bar-Kokhba.¹¹⁶ Adolf Schlatter argued the case for a resettlement of Jerusalem between the two wars with Rome, though his evidence, mainly Rabbinic, is not always convincing.¹¹⁷ Baruch Lifshitz assumed with older opinion that Jerusalem lay in ruins till the foundation of Aelia Capitolina.¹¹⁸ However, there are a number of entirely credible Rabbinic references to pilgrim-visits of scholars to Jerusalem, to mourn the Temple, during the period.¹¹⁹ The environs of the city also remained a treasured final resting place for Jews.¹²⁰ For the reliability of local memory we need not think of wholesale resettlement, merely of an ongoing attachment to the Holy City amongst Jewish Christians, which led to continuous contact with the city area, the erection of makeshift shelters, and some commemorative salvage of important sites. This is very much the picture which Epiphanius gives us, and makes his notice that the site of the Upper Room was remembered credible. As the probable site of the central premises of the Christian community in Jerusalem throughout the period c. AD 33–67, the Upper Room is the most likely pre-AD 70 Christian site of all to have been remembered. Jewish Christians, mourning the destruction of the city with their fellow-Jews, probably preserved the knowledge of the former site of their own centre, replete as it must have been with many important memories.

Conclusions

We may conclude that Jesus introduced his founding group of Twelve, with others of his Galilean associates, to the private campus of the Essene settlement of Jerusalem on the southwest hill. The ‘Upper Room’ was close to the ‘Gate of the Essenes’, which had received its name from this adjacent community of Essenes within the city walls. Here Jesus’ group occupied a substantial part of the guest facilities. They numbered 120 (Acts 1:15),

¹¹¹ Joan E. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), pp. 208, 218, 219.

¹¹² Dennis E. H. Whiteley, ‘Was John written by a Sadducee?’ ANRW II, 25.3, pp. 2481–2505, see 2494. The argument of Whiteley’s whole piece suggests that this Jerusalem disciple had close connections with the high priestly aristocracy.

¹¹³ Cf. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: SPCK, second edition 1978), p. 526.

¹¹⁴ Bargil Pixner, *Wege des Messias und Stätten der Urkirche*, ed. R. Riesner, (Gießen/Basel: Brunnen Verlag, second edition 1994), pp. 402–407; also in English translation, Bargil Pixner, *Paths of the Messiah and Sites of the Early Church from Galilee to Jerusalem*, ed. Rainer Riesner (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010), pp. 369–374.

¹¹⁵ Eusebius, *Demonstration of the Gospel*, 3.5 §124d. He probably has writers like Hegesippus and Julius Africanus in mind.

¹¹⁶ Eusebius, *Demonstration of the Gospel*, 6.18 §§285–296.

¹¹⁷ Adolf Schlatter, *Synagoge und Kirche bis zum Barkochba-Aufstand: Vier Studien zur Geschichte des Rabbinats und der Jüdischen Christenheit in den ersten zwei Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1966), pp. 69–86.

¹¹⁸ Baruch Lifshitz, ‘Jérusalem sous la Domination Romaine. Histoire de la ville depuis la conquête de Pompée jusqu’à Constantin (63 a. C. – 325 p. C.)’, ANRW II, 8, pp. 444–489.

¹¹⁹ *Talmûdh babhlî Makkôth* 24b; *babhlî B^erâkhôth* 3a; *y^rûshalmî Chagîgâh* 2:77b (59), cf. *Qôheleth Rabbâh* 7:8. Further Schlatter, *op. cit.*, pp. 73–78. Commenting on the phrase ‘deeds of loving-kindness’ in Mishnah *’Abhôth* 1:2, *Rabbî Nâthân* (‘*Abhôth de-Rabbî Nâthân*, version A chapter 4) says: “‘Woe to us!’ *Rabbî Y^ehôshua*’ cried, “that this, the place where the iniquities of Israel were atoned for, is laid waste!” “My son,” *Rabbân Yôchânân* said to him, “be not grieved; we have another atonement as effective at this. And what is it? It is acts of loving-kindness, as it is said, For I desire mercy and not sacrifice.””

¹²⁰ *S^machôth* 10, cf. Adolph Büchler, *The Economic Conditions of Judaea after the Destruction of the Second Temple* (London: Jews’ College, 1912), pp. 15–16.

testimony to the large scale of the guest facilities of the 'Upper Room.' Here they had lodged, assembled regularly for prayer, and elected Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot amongst the Twelve (Acts 1:12–26).

The overhearing by and easy appearance of visitors from abroad to observe events show their guest lodgings were a part of the same facilities where Jesus' group had also found lodging. We should expect that all outside visitors to an Essene encampment were lodged in one place. The large scale of the interested crowd suggests that these guest facilities were adjacent to a large courtyard. The visitors who gained easy access to proceedings in Acts 2:5–11 were present for the annual Essene Covenant Renewal Festival at the Feast of Weeks. The guest facilities formed only a part of the Essenes' associated complex of buildings. Since they had already prayed before sunrise after the Essene fashion,¹²¹ residents and staying guests were already up and about at the third hour (Acts 2:15).

The overhearing visitors included guests from abroad interested to retire to the Essene corporate life on this campus. Others from abroad in the crowd had already, also for this purpose, taken up residence in this complex. Many members of the wider Judaeen Essene movement were also present, to celebrate at the Feast of Weeks renewal of the Covenant.

Peter preached to all in the open courtyard space. He may have spoken from a raised feature of one of the surrounding buildings, perhaps a stair or balcony of the lodgings where the disciple group were residing. Some in the courtyard may have been preparing to undergo their first ritual washing amongst the Essenes. The complex included ritual baths on a scale appropriate for regular use by large numbers of residents and guests. These baths were made available to the Twelve for baptizing the large number of hearers who responded to Peter's address.

Those who responded and accepted baptism soon joined with Jesus' group in an intensely united property-sharing fellowship which met daily for study, shared meals, and worship, after the order of Essene virtuoso piety. Many who responded to Peter's address and received baptism already shared the Essene common life, or were intending to enter it ritually through the day's covenant renewal festival. In the fellowship in study, prayer and the breaking of bread of Acts 2:42, the sharing of property of Acts 2:44–45 and 4:32, 34, and the shared daily meals and daily attendance at the Temple of Acts 2:46, we catch glimpses not only of the former intensely corporate social fellowship of Jesus' travelling party, but also of the regular life of the Essene settlement on the southwest hill of Jerusalem.

Jesus had seeded his founding group of Twelve into the Essene settlement of Jerusalem with the intent that they would become its leading echelon. He had trained his inner group of disciples for at least two years (cf. the three Passovers he celebrates in the Gospel of John). For some time prior to the events of Acts 2, the Essene settlement had received Jesus as a guest, for its location and guest facilities were already known to Jesus, but not to his Galilean disciples (Mark 14:12–16). At the occasion of his Last Supper the settlement received Jesus and his travelling group as guests.¹²² Many amongst the Jerusalem Essene settlement and their guests may already have responded to John's call for repentance and national unity. Jesus' Essene hosts on the southwest hill had already discussed his potential significance. Was he a Spirit-anointed national leader sent by God? Pious Essenes who received baptism in response to Peter's sermon and joined Jesus' group shared the Essene understanding of perfect social unity in holiness expressed with the distinct terminology of the *yachadh*, known to us from IQS and other Dead Sea Scrolls documents. These converts formed a numerically dominant group within the earliest expansion in Jerusalem of Jesus' reform movement. These converts were likely to expect that those who received the fulness of the Holy Spirit as depicted in Acts 2:1–11 should devote themselves to an intensely corporate, unified holy life, sharing property and daily prayer, meals, study and worship, the common life of Essene religious virtuosity. Traces of the combined early group's language of corporate unity remain in the awkward Greek phrases *ēsan epi to auto* (= *ἑῶσφι ἑῶσφι / layyachadh*) at Acts 2:44 and *prosetitheī... epi to auto* (= *ἑῶσφι ἑῶσφι / layyachadh*) at Acts 2:47. Their continued, virtuoso religious practice of sharing property after the fashion of the Essene *yachadh* is evident in Acts 2:44–45 and Acts 4:32–5:11.

¹²¹ Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.8.5 §128.

¹²² Jesus' disciples were directed to find the room where they were to prepare the Last Supper by meeting and following a man carrying water who would approach them (Mk. 14:13; Lk. 22:11). Carrying water was normally the work of the women of the household. The man may have carried water because as a celibate he belonged to a community without women. He may have been a youth and novice delegated to undertake menial tasks comparable with the 'young men' of Acts 5:6 and 10 who bury Ananias and Sapphira. It was a feature of Jerusalem life that if men were seen carrying water, they were known to be associated with the Essene ascetic conventicle on the southwest hill. If this was not Jesus' reason, we must assume that a man walked in the direction of the disciples carrying a jar of water in order to be recognised by them, a rather contrived signal. Cf. Brian J. Capper. "With the Oldest Monks..." Light from Essene History on the Career of the Beloved Disciple?, *Journal of Theological Studies* 49 (1998), pp. 1–55, see 16, 49–53.