

approach is seen as a real breakthrough in bilateral dialogues with unmistakable implications for the future of the ecumenical movement.

Today, more than ever, the Catholic Church plays a pivotal role in the ecumenical movement. From an inflexible rejection of the movement before Vatican II, the Catholic Church now sustains the movement. Its patient and open approach to dialogue has removed many barriers with other Christian communities. As Cardinal Kasper comments in his foreword, “The path to the full unity of all Christians is nowhere near its end. But what has been achieved in the ecumenical century that lies behind us can give us courage and confidence that what the spirit of God has initiated will continue in the new century in a rapidly changing world in ways that we human beings cannot predict” (x).

Andrews University

DENIS FORTIN

VanderKam, James C. *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. ix + 202 pp. Paper, \$25.00.

James C. VanderKam is the John A. O’Brien Professor of Hebrew Scriptures at the University of Notre Dame and a member of the international team charged with editing and translating the Dead Sea Scroll manuscripts. He has authored many books and is one of two editors-in-chief of the *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. VanderKam previously published *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, an important introduction for readers interested in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and *An Introduction to Early Judaism*.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible contains seven chapters, six of which began as the Speaker’s Lectures at Oxford University in May 2009. This book surveys the Dead Sea Scrolls and explores how they enlighten both the Hebrew Bible and the NT. The purpose of these published lectures is to provide the reader with up-to-date overviews of interesting subjects in the area of the scrolls and to ponder the scrolls’ significance in relation to the Bible. VanderKam’s goal is to communicate the implications of the scrolls and their context by asking questions such as: “What is the information available, what are the problems connected with it, and what possibilities are raised by it?” (ix).

VanderKam begins his book with a “survey of the manuscript copies of books that eventually became part of the Hebrew Bible” (x). While he does not provide new information about the scrolls, he discusses the number of scrolls that were found as well as with their relationship to the Bible. He further explains how these copies of the scrolls were found, and in which cave, and also how the nonbiblical text reveals the worldview of the people of that time that influenced how they transmitted their text. VanderKam continues by comparing the Judean Desert texts with the MT; the differences,

while numerous, are very slight and do not often affect the meaning of the text (7). In the first chapter, he shows how the orthography of these texts and the MT are connected. In addition, he comments on textual variants, isolated interpretive insertions, and new and expanded editions of biblical books.

In chapter 2, VanderKam discusses *pesher* exposition as the method that he believes is employed in the scrolls. He provides examples of this interpretation from the Hebrew Bible and then compares some of these with the scrolls and extrabiblical literature. He perceives the *pesher* of the Bible as corresponding with the modern understanding of *pesher* exposition; however, one can argue that *pesher* is not the only method used, particularly from the perspective of the biblical method. Biblical authors did not use *pesher* exposition in the same way as did the authors of nonbiblical texts.

In chapter 3, the authority of the scrolls is explored in light of the biblical canon. VanderKam sees the Dead Sea Scrolls and the NT books at the same level in terms of people writing their thoughts to make the “Scriptures” (53-55). His purpose in this chapter is to compare Jesus’ use of the Scriptures as opposed to the Jewish use of Scripture. He points out that both Jesus and the Pharisees “assume the question they are discussing is to be answered from the scriptures” (54). He also clearly states that the Jews of the Second Temple period already had an authoritative view about which old scrolls comprised the Scripture of the OT. VanderKam—by referring to the OT with the three terms, book of Moses, Prophets, and Writings—argues that Qumran literature closely resembles the NT.

In the fourth chapter, VanderKam unveils several extrabiblical texts and discusses their authority in relation to the Bible. About the *Jubilees*, for example, VanderKam remarks that “it seems unlikely that the writer, or at least the people of the scrolls, believed *Jubilees* rendered Genesis-Exodus obsolete” (76-77). In chapter 5, as he did in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, he discusses three potential groups that could have written the scrolls: the Essenes, the Sadducees, or the Pharisees. In chapter 6, he discusses the Dead Sea Scrolls in relation to the NT Gospels. The extrabiblical Dead Sea Scrolls, which he accepts were copied or owned by people who were Jewish, do not mention or acknowledge Jesus or John the Baptist (118-119). The scrolls promote several messiahs, whereas the NT points to one messiah. He then elaborates on the different types of messiahs and their works.

The final chapter compares the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of Paul, outlining the parallels and the differences between these texts. He concludes that Acts 1–2 was “heavily influenced by Jewish traditions about the festival of Weeks, prominently including ones known from the Dead Sea Scrolls” (156). Regarding Paul’s letters, he suggests that the Qumran texts would have had some connection, such as 2 Cor 6:14–7:1, although he cautions against any rash conclusions. Laws in Paul also

resemble the Qumran writings.

VanderKam has incorporated clear divisions in his book by beginning with the brief history of the Dead Sea Scrolls, discussing their relationship with the OT, and finally exploring their relationship with the NT. He uses good sources throughout the book to support his arguments, and at the end of the book there is a substantial bibliography.

The author accomplishes his goal by communicating that the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible have much in common and therefore one should not be overlooked when the other is studied. However, VanderKam could more strongly support his claim that the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible have significant ties with each other. While he supplies a few examples from both the OT and the NT, he could have provided more texts for support. At the end of the book, the reader is left wondering if VanderKam's argument is as strong as he proposes in the beginning.

The book also lacks a good solid conclusion by ending with chapter 7. This book would be strengthened by the inclusion of an additional chapter recapping the major points that the author is trying to communicate. Some readers may find the author's logic in chapter 4 hard to understand, since it targets an audience that is well versed in the subject of the extrabiblical texts found in the Qumran caves. Finally, it would be helpful if the author would reveal his presuppositions in the introduction. The author's critical approach to the Bible treats it as just another ancient text, thereby suggesting that biblical and nonbiblical texts can be analyzed and compared equally.

Aside from these possible improvements, I commend VanderKam for his careful attempt to compare the Dead Sea Scrolls with the Bible. He brings a fresh analysis to the relationship between these books, one that is worthy of reflection. Truly the Dead Sea Scrolls are instrumental in assisting scholars and students to understand the Bible.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

STEPHANE BEAULIEU