

## Was Jesus an Essene? How Archaeology, Texts, and Religious Ideas Merge

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**Classical Sources:** Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 13 & 18; *Jewish War* 2; Philo, *Every Good Man is Free* 75-91; *Hypothetica* 11; Pliny *Natural History* 5.

### Pinpoint Questions:

1. Are the Scrolls connected to the site of Qumran?
2. Is the group that wrote the scrolls one known or unknown to us from other sources?

Qumran as a villa, fortress, or sectarian religious center? How do texts and archaeology merge?  
Jodi Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*

The Scrolls and the Essenes? 'essaioi or 'ossaioi=Hebrew 'ossim *haTorah* (1QpHab 8:1)  
Seekers of "smooth things" (*haChalqot*)=Dan 11:32

### Profile of the group that wrote the scrolls:

**An apocalyptic, wilderness, messianic, new covenant, baptizing, anti-Temple, community...**

- 1) "This the time for the preparation of the way into the wilderness" (1QS 9) "From the day of the gathering in of the Teacher of the Community until the end of all the men of war who deserted to the Liar there shall pass about 40 years" (CD(B) 2)
- 2) "They shall separate from the habitation of unjust men and shall go into the wilderness to prepare there the way of Him" (1QS 8)
- 3) "They shall be ruled by the primitive precepts in which the men of the Community were first instructed until there shall come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel" (1QS 9)
- 4) "None of the men who enter the New Covenant in the land of Damascus and betray it shall be inscribed in its Book from the day of the gathering in of the Teacher of the Community until the coming of the Messiah(s) of Aaron and Israel" (CD 8)
- 5) "And when his flesh is sprinkled with purifying water and sanctified by cleansing water, it shall be made clean by the humble submission of his soul to all the precepts of God" (1QS 3) "They shall not enter the water to partake of the pure Meal of the saints unless they turn from their wickedness" (1 QS 5) (**Josephus**)
- 6) "He has commanded that a Sanctuary of men be built for Himself, that there they may send up, like the smoke of incense, the works of the Torah" (4Q174) "They shall atone for sins without the flesh of holocausts and the fat of sacrifice and prayer shall be an acceptable fragrance of righteousness" (1QS 9) (**Josephus, Philo**)
- 7) "All those who freely devote themselves to His truth shall bring all their knowledge, powers and possessions into the Community of God" (1QS 1) (**Josephus? Philo**)

### Unresolved issues: Josephus, Philo, the Scrolls, & Jesus

Pacifism, celibacy, slavery, oaths, sacrifice, calendars?

### Sharp Differences:

Sabbath observance, ritual purity, women, Gentiles, penal code

### Time & Place:

1<sup>st</sup> century BCE vs. 40 years before the 1<sup>st</sup> Jewish Revolt  
Jordan River, Essene Quarter of Jerusalem, Damascus