

BOOK REVIEWS

CHRIS ARMITAGE, *From Qumran to Jude: A History of Social Crisis at Qumran and in Early Jewish Christianity*, Hebrew Bible Monographs 105 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2023). Pp. xii + 196. Hardcover. £65.00.

The intersection of the literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament is a tantalising realm to investigate, but the point at which they connect is difficult to find. In this offering, however, Chris Armitage has demonstrated how these two areas may usefully be brought into conversation. In essence, in this short study, Armitage carefully walks the reader through the Greek text of the New Testament letter of Jude, one or two verses at a time, and then introduces material from Qumran which illustrates similar concepts or seeks to mediate similar concerns in the community.

This book is divided into five chapters, with an introduction and conclusion, each chapter looking closely at between three to six verses, based on the breakup discussed on pages 6–8. Each chapter then concludes with a sociological approach, usually drawing upon the work of Mary Douglas.

As such, this book will appeal to those interested in the letter of Jude, because the similarities to the Qumran literature demonstrates the significance of the cohesiveness of the community and the importance of diagnosing and expelling impurity. There were also judicious discussions about the interpretation of the Greek text (such as how to understand ἦλθεν in verse 14, page 92) and text-critical questions (such as whether Ἰησοῦς or κύριος is to be preferred in verse 5, page 57). Another fascinating discussion is regarding the phrase ἐπ’ ἔσχάτου χρόνου (“in the last times,” verse 18), its potential provenance in the Septuagint and Hebrew Bible, as well as its eschatological shift in meaning in Qumran, especially as used in the Damascus Document (pages 108–10).

The book will also appeal to those engaged in work in the literature of Qumran, and in particular in the sectarian documents (or with a desire to learn about the sectarian documents). Armitage is clearly well-versed in a wide breadth of Qumran material, as multiple parallels were demonstrated, often with material which seemed at first perhaps irrelevant, but through careful analysis the relevance to the topic was always ultimately clear. Discussions of the Watchers, giants, Belial, the identity of the Kittim, were illuminating and their relevance was clearly shown. In the latter part of the book there was also a concern with the history of that period, as the significance of Zadok and those who looked back to him in Qumran was explained (110–12), but also how this helps us better understand the role of Jude in his own community.

A third group who will appreciate this book are those wanting to understand Jude from a sociological perspective. The in- and out-group rhetoric at Qumran is well-known, but what Armitage does well is to explain the similarities in

rhetoric with Jude, but also the differences. Especially in verses 20–23, it is made clear that Jude holds out hope for those who have been corrupted, in a way which was not there in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The discussions from “A Sociological Approach” which conclude each of the five chapters help readers think through the importance of purity in both communities, as well as the possibilities of cleansing in the midst of corruption (this includes an insightful discussion on the way כפר in Leviticus was understood in this temple-less community as well as in other contemporaneous communities (154–56).

Particularly helpful throughout the book is Armitage’s restating of two key points: First, none of this is to suppose a direct correlation between Qumran and Jude. Perhaps John Walton’s work in the ancient Near Eastern parallels to the Hebrew Bible takes a similarly cautious approach; to put it in Walton’s language, Jude and the Qumran community are drinking from the same water, in the same world of ideas. They need not be saying the same thing, but they are both dealing with similar problems, thus by reading them together our understanding of Jude will be deepened. So Armitage writes, “there is no textual bridge between the Qumran library and the NT,” and he is constantly on guard against “parallelomania” (27). Second, Armitage continually reminds his readers of the aims of his book, and the aims of Jude’s rhetoric. Armitage’s own rhetoric is thus never confused, making his book clear to read and his points straightforward. This at times led to a degree of repetitiveness, but as the purpose was clarity, this can be forgiven.

There were very few typos in this book; the majority were errors of rendering some Greek letters, and one or two absent halves of parentheses.

As someone who has preached through Jude several times, I greatly appreciated re-reading the letter with a new frame of reference. And as someone currently engaged in work in the biblical Dead Sea Scrolls, this was an unexpectedly insightful survey of several key sectarian texts of that library. Overall, the nuance mixed with insight made for a joyful reading experience of this brief but thoroughly engaging book.

DOUGLAS R. FYFE

BRUNO CALLEGHER, *Following the Coins from the Excavations at Khirbet Qumran (1951–1956) and Aïn Feshkha (1956–1958)*, *Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus, Series Archaeologica* 10 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2024). Pp. 347. Hardback. €300.00.

In April 1969 (though the date was contested), King Hussein of Jordan gifted then-President Richard Nixon of the United States with three coins from the hoard found at Locus 120 at Qumran, supposedly featuring the heads of “Syrian