Using Comparative Sociology to Explore the Relationship between the Qumran Community and the Early Christian Communities of the New Testament.

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Introduction

Some time ago I was writing a paper on the eighteenth chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, which is referred to under various titles: “The Discourse on the Church”, or “Matthew’s Advice to a Divided Community.”¹ One of my sources for that paper was a commentary written by Daniel Harrington,² a noted New Testament scholar. In that section of his commentary he pointed out many similarities and contrasts between Matthew’s community and the Qumran “Manual of Discipline”³ and the related “Damascus Document.”⁴ There were other references throughout his commentary to various Dead Sea Scroll documents, and it kindled in me a desire to study the Dead Sea Scrolls. I also noticed in my work on Matthew that Paul’s reprimand of the Corinthians⁵ was rather similar to the text in Matthew and so, presumably, the Qumran documents as well. Were the similarities coincidental or did they reflect a strong influence by the Qumran community or the Essenes on the early Christians?

¹ The variety of names given to this discourse reflects, in part, a lack of agreement on the theme of the discourse.
³ This is an older title of the work which is now called The Community Rule
⁴ The Damascus document is not from Qumran. Two variations of it were discovered in 1896 in Cairo and they date from the 10th and 12th centuries. However, the content of the copies appears to be quite ancient because fragments of the document copy were found at Qumran in cave 4. James C. VanderKam, The Dead Sea Scrolls Today, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010), p 76.
⁵ 1 Corinthians 5:9-13
Hershel Shanks, in his 1998 book on the Dead Sea Scrolls⁶ summarizes the current scholarly recognition that the historical Jesus and early Christianity must be studied within the context of the Judaism of that day. Certainly, the Dead Scrolls are now an important part of our understanding of Judaism during the intertestamental period and overlap with the first decades of Christianity. James VanderKam, in his summary of the New Testament and the Scrolls, concludes that the connections between Qumran the early Christians are in the realm of ideas and resulting practices.⁷ He notes that Millar Burrows, who has written on various similarities between the Scrolls and the New Testament, thought that “the convincing resemblances were to be seen in matters such as communal structure, forms of worship, practices, doctrines and interpretation of scripture,” without any clear direct link from Qumran to the first Christians.⁸

I suspect as well that the similarities reflect neither a complete coincidence nor a direct influence from the Qumran writing to the early Christians. Rather it seems most probable that the two groups, sharing a common Jewish heritage and established as relatively small, but diverse sects with an eschatological and apocalyptic worldview, arrived at similar solutions to matters of community discipline.

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⁸ Ibid. p 200
Thesis and Outline

The similarities that have been noticed over the years between the communities of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament certainly have a foundation in their common Jewish heritage and historical contexts. I will show, however, that the similarities are also due to general sociological or anthropological forces. These arise from the communities’ shared context as “introversionist sects” – to use the words of Eyal Regev⁹ – and are best thought of as a common and limited set of strategies for maintaining social cohesion and order among groups that live outside or on the margins of a larger culture for sectarian reasons of purity or to separate themselves from worldly influences. Then I will demonstrate that because these sects share common social patterns and strategies, which transcend any given historical period, it is useful and informative to make comparisons from more modern communities to Qumran. This will reinforce the general consensus noted by VanderKam, that the connections between Qumran and the early Christians are indirect and in the realm of ideas and practices.

In part one, I will look at an example of the common heritage of the Hebrew Scriptures shared by the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament using the phrase “stumbling block.” This will lead to a discussion of matters of disciplining errant members of the community in part two, where I will explore the phenomenon from a broader sociological perspective. Then, having demonstrated that the groups discussed in part two share a common set of strategies for dealing with disciplinary

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matters, I will show in part three how exploring at the longevity of the Hutterites, an introversionist sect with an eschatological and mildly apocalyptic worldview, can provide insights to the Qumran community. Finally I will end with my reflection on the relationship between Qumran and the early Christians of the New Testament.

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Part 1: The Common Scriptural Heritage

One easily recognizable illustration of a similar point of reference in the Community Rule and the New Testament is the term "stumbling-block." It is a phrase familiar to many from Paul’s letter to the Romans: "but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (1 Cor 1:13). In the Greek the word for "stumbling-block" is skandalon (scandal) and when it is used in a religious context refers to something that results in sin or a loss of faith. In the Community Rule this is the very context in which term also occurs:

"Cursed by the man who enters this Covenant while walking among the idols of his heart, who sets up before himself his stumbling-block of sin so that he may backslide. ... He shall be cut off from the midst of all the sons of light, and because he has turned aside from God on account of his stumbling-block of sin, his lot shall be amine those who are cursed for ever. 1QS II.10-20

Stumbling-block also occurs in Leviticus in the section of rules on personal conduct: “You shall not insult the deaf, or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord” (Lev. 19:14). While the use of the term in

10 Unless otherwise noted all scripture citations are from New American Bible Revised Edition (Charlotte, NC: Saint Benedict Press, 2011).
11 All quotations from the Dead Sea Scrolls are taken from: Géza Vermès, The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English, Rev ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p 100. N.B.: Vermès provides only numbering for every 5th line, which will be reflected in citations from this work.
this passage refers to a literal stumbling block, it had apparently become a common metaphor for sin in later centuries. Regardless of the evolution of the term, it was part of common heritage for Jews and shared by Essenes in their Community Rule, by the former Pharisee Paul in several of his letters, and in the words of Jesus as presented in Matthew’s Gospel. In English the passage reads:

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Woe to the world because of things that cause sin! Such things must come, but woe to the one through whom they come! If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life maimed or crippled than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into fiery Gehenna." (Matt 18:6-9)

Harrington points out however that some form of the word skandalon appears six times in the original Greek text of this passage. Thus one who is causing a little one to sin is one who is behaving as a stumbling block, and such stumbling blocks are a ‘woe to the world’.

This passage from Matthew shares another similarity with the passage cited above from the Community Rule (1QS II.15-20). The penalty for “scandalous” behavior is excommunication and expulsion:

- He shall be cut off from the midst of all the sons of light ... (Community Rule)
- If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. (Matthew)

It’s also notable that Paul also advises this same penalty in his reprimand of the Corinthians:

12 W.P. Addley argues convincingly that in the larger context of this passage, a metaphorical and corporate interpretation makes the most sense: “the body parts are metaphors for someone in the community who leads others astray and so community should expel and exclude that person.” W. P. Addley, "Matthew 18 and the Church as the Body of Christ," Biblical Theology 26 (1976): 12-18.
"But I now write to you not to associate with anyone named a brother, if he is immoral, greedy, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunkard, or a robber, not even to eat with such a person. For why should I be judging outsiders? Is it not your business to judge those within? God will judge those outside. 'Purge the evil person from your midst."' (1 Cor 5:11-13)

Paul appears to be quoting Deuteronomy 13:6, 17:7, and 22:24 in use of the phrase 'Purge the evil person from your midst,' although the punishment in Deuteronomy is not expulsion but death.

So all three groups -- the Qumran community, Matthew's community, and Paul's Corinthian community -- arrived at the same strategy for dealing with scandalous sin that could destroy unity. Each group also may have described that kind of sin using a shared metaphorical reference to the 'stumbling block' of Leviticus 19. Since Qumran existed before the other two communities, does this imply a direct influence from Qumran to the Christian communities? While it is possible, it doesn't seem likely since other explanations come readily to mind. Indeed, the similarity seems rather superficial.

If the behavior of a member of small religious community begins to threaten community cohesion, what recourse does the group have? They could act literally vis-à-vis the passages from Deuteronomy already noted and kill the offender, although such a drastic step would violate other biblical understandings that judgment belongs ultimately to God and not to man. They could imprison the

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14 Vermes notes that although the members of Qumran were to nourish an everlasting hatred for 'wicked men', "this went together with affirm conviction that their fate was in God's hands alone. And the poet proclaims in the Hymn with which the Community Rule ends: I will pay to no man the reward of his evil ... For judgment of all the living is with God alone." Vermès, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 694, p. 27
offender, but that seems very unlikely in small community with insufficient resources to maintain such a situation for the long term. The only reasonable alternative is to expel the offender.

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**Part 2: A shared pattern of discipline for maintaining community integrity and cohesion.**

Edward Hardy wrote that when reading the Dead Sea *Manual of Discipline* (*Community Rule*), it was obvious that the Qumran community had “many of the characteristics of a monastic brotherhood.”\(^{15}\) Eyal Regev has noticed the similarities between the Community Rule and related Dead Sea texts to the regulations of the Shakers, Hutterites, Mennonites and Amish.\(^ {16}\) James VanderKam has also written that “from the first wave of Qumran studies to the present, some scholars have either spotted extraordinarily close parallels between the Scrolls and the books of the New Testament or identified the Qumranites as Christians.”\(^ {17}\) Although the similarities between the Community at Qumran and the early Christians seems intriguing because they were near each other both geographically and temporally, the similarities others have seen between the Qumran sect, Benedictine monasticism and Anabaptist communities are at first a little more puzzling. But if we look a little closer at how each group settled disputes or conflicts within the

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\(^{17}\) VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, p128-133.
community and approached the discipline of errant or misbehaving members, we will find that there is nothing puzzling about it at all.

I will begin by summarizing the common social situation of Qumran, the Hutterites, and the early Benedictine Communities. These are all groups that lived outside or on the margins of the larger culture – even if not physically or geographically separated from that culture – for reasons of purity or to otherwise separate themselves from ‘worldly’ influences. Then I will show that all such sects have at their disposal a limited set of strategies for dealing effectively with disorder and disciplinary problems in their communities – arguing that there seems to be a limited number of patterns for sectarian life and that these are adapted to various situations by each group. If such patterns exist, it would be difficult to establish a direct relationship between two communities on the basis their approaches to discipline alone. Indeed, even demonstrating that two communities had several common practices would not prove a direct relationship between groups. For example all such groups may practice exclusion and expulsion of disorderly or destructive members simply because that is the only practical option in such situations. Demonstrating a direct relationship would then depend on some other type of sound collaborating evidence.

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The Rule of St. Benedict

St. Benedict of Nursia established the monastic community at Monte Cassino in Central Italy around the year 525. It was there as abbot that he wrote his famous
Rule. His community was composed of celibate men devoted to a life of prayer, sacred reading, manual labor and obedience to the abbot and the rule. Like the community at Qumran, they isolated themselves from the rest of the world; practiced piety, prayer and communal living; and made a lifetime commitment to the community. Unlike Qumran, they were not strongly apocalyptic in their outlook. While the Benedictines were celibate, we do not know if celibacy was actually practiced at Qumran, although the community does seem to have been disproportionately male.

Eileen Schuller provides a summary of the evidence that women may have been part of the wider ‘Essene’ community with Qumran existing in some fashion as an exclusively or predominantly male sub-community. She notes the recent ‘working scenario’ in recent scholarship is that the Community Rule was for “a celibate male group (the yahad) living at the site of Qumran” while the related Damascus Document was intended for the scattered communities or camps that included married couples and their families.

Despite the many differences, the broad outlines of the two communities were similar: they were primarily religious in purpose and lived apart from the surrounding society, they followed a strict rule, they lived communally and obedience to the community authority was paramount. Furthermore, they had a similar pattern of governance: discussion of significant issues in the community

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20 Ibid. p86
were addressed in gatherings of the whole community, but final decision making rested with the leadership.

The Rule of St. Benedict\(^{21}\) begins with a brief introduction to the different kinds of monks\(^{22}\) and the nature of a good abbot. Then begins the exposition of the rules and procedures, starting with the calling of a counsel:

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\text{Whenever weighty matters are to be transacted in the monastery, let the Abbot call together the whole community. ... Having heard the brethren's view, let weigh the matter with himself and do what he thinketh best. (III)}^{23}\ ... \text{if matters of less importance, having to do with the welfare of the monastery, are to be treated of, let him use the counsel of the Seniors only ... (citing Sir 32:24) (III).}
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\text{If the community is a large one, let there be ... brethren ... appointed deans. These shall take charge of their deaneries in all things, observing the commandments of God and the instructions of their Abbot. (XXI)}
\]

Besides the leadership positions, there was also ranking of all the members of the community and this ranking was important in ensuring civility and proper etiquette among the monks:

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\text{Let the brethren keep their rank in the monastery according as the time of their conversion and the merit of their lives determine, or as the Abbot shall appoint. :}
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\text{... let the younger honor their elders, and the older love the younger. In naming each other let no one be allowed to address another by his simple name; but let the older style the younger brethren, brothers; let the younger, however, call their elders, fathers, by which is implied the reverence due to a father. But because the Abbot is believed to hold the place of Christ, let him be styled Lord and Abbot ... (LXIII)}
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The Abbot had absolute authority in Benedictine communities:

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\text{Let no one in the monastery follow the bent of his own heart, and let no one dare dispute insolently with his Abbot ... (III)}
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\(^{22}\) Cenobites (monastic), Anchorites (hermits), Sarabites, and ‘Landlopers’.

\(^{23}\) Roman numerals correspond to the chapters or sections of the Rule of St. Benedict.
Although he was expected to be pastoral, rather than tyrannical in his leadership:

“Listen, O my son, to the precepts of thy master, and incline the ear of thy heart, and cheerfully receive and faithfully execute the admonitions of thy loving Father, that by the toil of obedience thou mayest return to Him from whom by the sloth of disobedience thou hast gone away.” (prologue)

Let the abbot correct at the first and second admonition only with words. ... Let him so adjust and adapt himself to everyone ... each one according to his bent ...” (II)

Admission of new members into the community was a serious and lengthy process:

Let easy admission not be given to one who newly cometh to change his life; but, as the Apostle saith, “Try the spirits, whether they be of God” (LVIII)

If a newcomer persisted in seeking admission by knocking every day at the door for four or five days he would be admitted to the guest house. After a few days in the guest house he would be assigned a spiritual director and moved to the novice quarters. After two months of this he was to be formally questioned again and the Rule read to him. The process was repeated after six months and then again after another four months. At this point, after a full year of discernment, he could be admitted to the community (LVIII).

The procedure for admitting new members to the Qumran community is quite similar in approach. There is an initial questioning of the aspirant. If he is accepted there is a kind of novitiate in which the novice is not fully admitted to the community but enters a probationary period where part of his task is to study the Law and conform himself more closely to what he learns:

... And later when he comes to stand before the Congregation, they shall all deliberate his case, and according to the decision of the Council of the Congregation he shall either enter or depart. ... After he has entered the Council of the Community he shall not touch the pure Meal of the Congregation until one full year is completed, and until he has been examined concerning his spirit and deeds; nor shall he have any share of the property of the Congregation. Then when he has completed one year within the community,
the Congregation shall deliberate his case with regard to his understanding and observance of the Law. (1QS VI 15-20)

As with the Rule of St. Benedict there are further examinations, although the probationary period lasts two years rather than one.

Order and harmony among the monks was critical to the functioning of the monastery, and it was imperative that misbehavior of any kind be addressed promptly before it could cause problems. Yet the initial approach to maintaining discipline and correcting faults was a simple reprimand followed by some kind of private talk or explanation. It is not clear if the reprimand happened in a formal community setting, or if it was given when the Superior noticed the fault:

*If a brother is found stubborn or disobedient or proud or murmuring, or opposed to anything in the Holy Rule and a contemner of the commandments of his Superiors, let him be admonished by his Superiors once and again in secret, according to the command of our Lord*. (XXIII in reference to Matthew 18:15)

The reference to Matthew 18:15 would indicate that the initial reprimand was handled more informally, that is without the calling of any special disciplinary meeting.

Because of the nature of the communal lifestyle, these simple kinds of correction may have had more impact and been more often effective than we might

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24 See the appendix to this paper for the listing of the *Instruments of Good Works*, which, if they are transgressed, constitute a list of the faults a monk could commit.

25 The steps in Matthew 18 prescribe a private meeting, followed another meeting, this time with a witness. The matter is brought before the Church only if these two steps fail:

*18:15 - If your brother sins [against you], go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother.*

*18:16 - If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that ‘every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.’*  
(New Testament quotations are from the *New American Bible, revised New Testament*)
This point will be discussed further in the discussion of the Hutterites. For that reason too, it is important to note that all four groups – Benedictines, Qumran, Hutterites, and of course, Matthew’s community, codified this initial approach to confronting errant members of the community. On some occasions, however, the offender would be recalcitrant and additional measures were required:

If he doth not amend let him be taken to task publicly before all. But if he doth not reform even then, and he understandeth what a penalty it is, let him be placed under excommunication; but if even then he remaineth obstinate let him undergo corporal punishment. (XXIII)

Excommunication was the common punishment for serious faults. But it was not to be employed if the offender was not sufficiently socialized to understand and regret the imposition of excommunication, as was the case with boys who might be found within the monastery:

Every age and understanding should have its proper discipline. Whenever, therefore, boys or immature youths or such as can not understand how grave a penalty excommunication is, are guilty of a serious fault, let them undergo severe fasting or be disciplined with corporal punishment, that they may be corrected. (XXX)

The degree of excommunication depended on the nature of the fault:

If ... anyone of the brethren is detected in smaller faults, let him be debarred from eating at the common table (XXIV).

But let the brother who is found guilty of a graver fault be excluded from both

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26 One author reports that among the Hutterites he studied “shunning ... had to be exercised only once in the colony’s 20-year history. In this instance, within a week of his isolation (in which meals and lodging were provided the person separate from the colony dining hall), the young man made confession of his wrong-doing before the congregation and was at once full re-integrated into colony life.” The implication being that milder forms of punishment were usually sufficient. Donald W. Huffman, “Life in a Hutterite Colony: An Outsider’s Experience and Reflections on a Forgotten People in our Midst,” American Journal of Economics and Sociology, 59, no 4 (October, 2000), p554

27 Excommunication refers to the temporary isolation (full or partial) of the one at fault from the community. This is equivalent to the act of “exclusion” in the Community Rule.
the table and the oratory. Let none of the brethren join his company or speak with him. Let him be alone at the work enjoined on him, persevering in penitential sorrow ... Let him get his food alone in such quantity and at such a time as the Abbot shall deem fit; and let him not be blessed by anyone passing by, nor the food that is given him (XXV).

The excommunicated brother was not to have interaction with anyone but the Abbot or someone designated by him. Violators of this rule were punished with to the same degree as the original offender (XXVI).

The purpose of punishment, besides maintaining order in the monastery, was not primarily focused on the purity of the community but on the well being of the individual:

Let the Abbot be most solicitous in his concern for delinquent brethren ... let everyone pray for him. Let him send ... brethren of mature years and wisdom, who may ... console the wavering brother and induce him to make humble satisfaction ... Let [the Abbot] imitate the loving example of the Good Shepherd (XXVII).

If however an offender would not repent and amend his ways, the maintenance of order in the community eventually took precedence over the individual:

If a brother hath often been corrected and hath even been excommunicated for a fault and doth not amend, let a more severe correction be applied to him, namely, proceed against him with corporal punishment.

... But if he is not healed even if (by the Abbot's prayers), then finally let the Abbot dismiss him from the community, as the Apostle saith: "Put away the evil one from among you" (1 Cor 5:13); and again: "If the faithless depart, let him depart" (1 Cor 7:15); lest one diseased sheep infect the whole flock (XXVIII).

Expulsion from the community was not necessarily permanent:

If a brother, who through his own fault leaveth the monastery or is expelled, desireth to return, let him first promise full amendment of the fault for which he left; and thus let him be received in the last place, that by this means his humility may be tried. If he should leave again, let him be received even a third time, knowing that after this every means of return will be denied him (XXIX.)
In this regard the Benedictine Rule was much more lenient than the Qumran Community Rule in which expulsion was permanent.  

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The Hutterites

The Hutterites, along with the Mennonites and Amish, originated in the Anabaptist movement of 1517, which was lead by Ulrich Zwingli. They denied the validity of infant baptism and rebaptized adult converts. At a time when baptism conferred not only membership in the church but also ‘citizenship’ in society, adult baptism was a capital offense. The Anabaptists were ambivalent about civil edicts and law, deferring only to the authority of scripture. As a result they were highly persecuted, tortured and killed. Hutterite records list over two thousand early martyrs. Those Anabaptist groups that were revolutionary and militant in outlook did not endure.

Hutterites were pacifists and began as Bible study groups. They rejected traditional religious practices and traditions rejecting the use of images, the mass, and the church hierarchy.

The Hutterites wanted to form new and pure church with a disciplined life in non-conformity to the world, following their understanding of a scriptural based

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28 The punishment of expulsion is typically worded in Vermes’ translation as “[he] shall be expelled from among them and shall return no more (see several examples in 1QS VII). In 1QS there is never an indication that return is possible. At best, a serious fault resulting in expulsion might be determined to be ‘inadvertent’ in which case a severe period of exclusion would be imposed instead of expulsion (see 1QS VIII 20 – 1QS IX 5).
30 Ibid. p5
31 Donald B. Kraybill and Carl Desportes Bowman, On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 330. p29
32 Hostetler, Hutterite Society, p6
33 Ibid. p7
Christian way of life. They early Hutterites stressed the immanence of Christ's second coming and believed that they were God's elect. In this latter belief, they are closer to the Qumran community than to most monastic communities.

The Hutterites have constructed a dualistic worldview that leaves little room for uncertainty. Theirs is a world of bipolar opposites: God and man, eternal and temporal, carnal and spiritual, righteous and wicked, right and wrong, men and women, colony and world.” Jakob Hutter, the early leader of the group, did not believe in an “earthly utopia but that as ‘saints, chosen and elect, fighters and witnesses of God’ they should be ready to suffer poverty, tribulations, pain, torture, and even death.” This worldview was similar to the worldview of the Qumran community with its dualism of “the sons of light and the sons of darkness” as will be discussed later.

Hutterites differed from other Anabaptists in their strict belief in communal property and an accompanying denial of all private property. Hutterites do not even own their own clothing or toiletries. They developed agricultural colonies segregated from the greater societies in which they lived. Today each colony is organized as a legal corporation. Religious service is held each evening before the

34 Ibid. p21
35 Ibid. p20
36 Kraybill and Bowman, On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren, p55
37 Hostetler, Hutterite Society, p27
38 Kraybill and Bowman, On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren, p4
39 Ibid. p4
40 Ibid. p31 Indicates that in the year 2000 there were 146 Hutterite colonies in Alberta, 105 in Manitoba, 57 in Saskatchewan, 52 in South Dakota, 46 in Montana, and 6 each in North Dakota, Washington and Minnesota.
41 Ibid. p25
common meal. The readings and sermons used in the services are from 16th and 17th century German texts.

**Organization / Social Structure:**

The colony includes all members living in a particular community. The church consists of all baptized members. Only male church members may vote on church affairs and hold positions of authority.

“Behavior in Hutterite colonies is carefully organized around status, gender and age. Each category has its own ladder of authority – religious over secular, ordained over laity, male over female, elderly over youth, baptized over unbaptized, married over single, and so forth. Moreover, as one member noticed, ‘Anyone can punish someone else on a lower level.’ An older minister, topping all the categories, carries considerable influence in colony affairs, whereas young women can influence little more than their offspring.

These social distinctions are reaffirmed and sacralized every day in religious services. The seating pattern for worship enshrines gender, age, and status distinctions in God’s eternal order. The council members, all men, sit on a bench at the front of the austere room, facing the congregation. Women file in on the right side of the small chapel and men on the left. The youngest sit on the front benches and the olders in the rear. Although specific seats are not formally assigned, everyone has a particular place defined by their gender, age and status.”

There is a council of five to seven baptized men, usually older men, who make all the major decisions and establish the work schedules. The head preacher, or elder, is the highest position, although the church or council has the authority to remove him from office.

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42 “... the day’s work usually ceases by 5 or 5:30 p.m. This enables members to get ready for the evening worship service at 6 p.m., which is followed by dinner at 6:45 p.m.” Huffman, “Life in a Hutterite Colony,” American Journal of Economics and Sociology, p556.
43 Kraybill and Bowman, *On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren*, p4; and Hostetler, *Hutterite Society*, p250
44 Hostetler, *Hutterite Society*, p162
45 Kraybill and Bowman, *On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren*, p40
46 Ibid. p164
Hutterite communities tend to grow by natural increases from births within the community, which is in stark contrast to both the situations at Qumran and in monastic communities. In a sense, the Hutterites have the lengthiest procedure for full admission to the sect: one must first grow from childhood into an adult.

Admission to adulthood happens with baptism and it is a submission of one’s life to the Church. There are six to eight weeks of formal instruction before baptism and the individual must also demonstrate a life of humility and obedience.47

ORDER AND DISCIPLINE

Each individual learns to surrender his personal interests to communal goals and the greater good, and is achieved by socialization, informal and mutual surveillance, and by sanctions.48 Children are taught to respect authority and set aside selfishness and to control self-will,49 while “the adult Hutterite receives constant social reinforcement.”50

“A successfully socialized adult Hutterite gets along well with others and, submissive and obedient to the rules and regulations of the colony, is a hard-working, responsible individual. He is taught never to display anger or precipitate quarrels.”51 Hutterites show a strong tendency to be extroverted, concerned about others and cooperative.52

47 Ibid. p236
48 Kraybill and Bowman, On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren, p28
49 Ibid. p28
50 Hostetler, Hutterite Society, p244
51 Ibid. p245
52 Ibid. p246
Social control for adults is primarily achieved through fear of rejection and simple ‘cautioning’ (reprimand) by a fellow is often sufficient. Private space in Hutterite life is nil, and a hundred eyes are watching, but loneliness is unheard of. The psychological problems that plague the western world (alienation, addiction, divorce, depression, and domestic abuse) are extremely rare in Hutterite colonies.

If cautioning does not correct misbehavior then the preacher will speak to the individual privately. If the misconduct still continues the individual may be brought before the council. (As already alluded to, this process of passing from private interpersonal correction to a more formal public venue is common to Qumran, Matthew and the Benedictines.)

If the transgression is continuous (e.g. persistent drunkenness) then excommunication is imposed. The member is isolated from work and common meals until he voluntarily decides to repent and asks to rejoin the church or leave entirely. Only murder is punished by forced expulsion.

One particularly interesting note is that Hostetler’s observation that Hutterites are inclined toward conversation but that “the culture frowns on meaningless talk, and unnecessary or foolish remarks bring reproach.” There are similar concerns about foolish or idle talk expressed in both the Rule of St Benedict and in the Community Rule.

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53 Ibid. p245
54 Kraybill and Bowman, On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren, p59
55 Ibid. p59
56 Hostetler, Hutterite Society, p245
57 Ibid. p245
58 Ibid. p175
59 See rules 53 and 54 in the Appendix
The Qumran Community

VanderKam\textsuperscript{61} provides an excellent overview of current thinking about the “Pre-Qumran Period” of the Essenes that eventually settled at Qumran. He writes that “it is evident that before the Qumran settlement was built a new penitential movement came into being and eventually the person known only by the epithet ‘the Teacher of Righteousness’ became its leader.”\textsuperscript{62} The dating of this event are uncertain, but it probably occurred between 170 BCE and 150 BCE. By 100 BCE there was a settlement established at Qumran.

It is important here to note that the Qumran community was established as a pious, isolated religious community with an apocalyptic and dualistic worldview\textsuperscript{63}. VanderKam says that "the category of Qumran texts that mention or have sections about the last day is very large." Indeed, “... much of what the residents of Qumran wrote and read was concerned with the latter days (in which they thought they were living) ...”\textsuperscript{64} That Qumran was in an isolated location was probably based on the groups reading of the scriptures. For example, Isaiah 40:3:

\begin{quote}
...they shall separate from the habitation of the unjust men and shall go into the wilderness to prepare there the way of Him; as it is written, PREPARE IN THE WILDERNESS THE WAY OF ..., MAKE STRAIGHT IN THE DESERT A PATH FOR OUR GOD. (1QS VIII 12-15)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{60}“Whoever has spoken foolishly: three months (of penance)” 1 QS VII 5-10.
\textsuperscript{61}VanderKam, The Dead Sea Scrolls Today. p128-133.
\textsuperscript{62}Ibid. p128
\textsuperscript{63}One wonders exactly how strongly apocalyptic the later Qumran community actually was, simply because they existed for so long until they were finally caught up in the calamity of the brutal Roman suppression of the Jewish revolt and the destruction of the Temple. Both the early Christians and the Hutterites began with a strong eschatological and apocalyptic outlook, which remains in the background of their faith today. Were the people of the Dead Sea scrolls on a similar trajectory?
\textsuperscript{64}Ibid. p88
ENTRY INTO THE COMMUNITY

The Community Rule begins with an injunction for the Master to teach his followers to live holy and pious lives following the commands of scripture (Moses and the prophets). He is only to admit those who voluntarily seek the life of the community. Those who are admitted must be obedient to the regulations and ways of the community (1QS I:1-20).

They believed that their community was chosen by God to receive “all the glory of Adam” but that only God could see clearly the destiny of any man. The man and the community were set the task to discern if the member was a true son of light (truth) or a son of darkness (injustice) (1QS IV 20-).

Someone who aspired to join the Community was put on probation for two and perhaps three years. He was then examined by the Guardian in the presence of the congregation (full community). (1QS V 5-10). If he was accepted the novice was placed on probation for one year. During this time he did not join the community meal or share in the community property. At the end of the year he was reexamined. If it was determined that he could continue in the community, his property and earnings were given over to the Bursar of the Community, and he could participate in the meal but not in the drink. If he was found acceptable at the end of his second year he was fully included in the community and assigned his rank (1QS V 15-20). Except for the length of each probationary period, the procedure is very similar to the procedure outlined in the Rule of St. Benedict.

New members are to be instructed in dualistic worldview of the community:

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65 Vermès, The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English. p 32
the way of light and darkness. They are to be sons of light following the Prince of Light and rejecting the Angel of darkness, the spirits of truth and injustice (1QS 15-21). No man was to enter the community who refused obedience and continued to walk "in the stubbornness of his heart" (1QS II 25-). An attitude of humility and obedience were a perquisite for receiving atonement, purification and instruction (1QS III 1-10).

VanderKam has outlined the entry procedures for the Qumran community from Josephus and from the Community Rule.

**Josephus**
1. one year outside the group but living by its rules
2. 2 two more years of testing
3. enrollment

**Community Rule**
1. a period from examination by the Guardian to examination by the Congregation
2. one year in the Council of the Community but with limited rights to the meal.
3. after another year, he is again tested and become a full member with full rights to the meal.

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66 VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today.* p116
67 1QS VI 10  ... Every man, born of Israel, who freely pledges himself to join the Council of the Community shall be examined by the Guardian at the head of the Congregation concerning his understanding and his deeds. [15] If he is fitted to the discipline, he shall admit him into the Covenant that the may be converted to the truth and depart from all injustice; and he shall instruct him in all the rules of the Community. ... And later when he comes to stand before the Congregation, they shall all deliberate his case, and according to the decision of the Council of the Congregation he shall either enter or depart.
68 1 QS VI 15  ... After he has entered the Council of the Community he shall not touch the pure Meal of the Congregation until one full year is completed, and until he has bee examined concerning his spirit and deeds; nor shall he have any share of the property of the Congregation. Then when he has completed one year within the community, the Congregation shall deliberate his case with regard to his understanding and observance of the Law.
69 1QS VI 15  ... And if it be his destiny, according to the judgment of the Priest and the multitude of the men of their Covenant, to enter the company of the Community, his property and earnings shall be handed over to the Bursar of the Congregation [20] who shall register it to his account and shall not spend it for the Congregation. He shall not touch the Drink of the Congregation until he has completed a second year among the men of the Community. ... But when the second year has passed, he shall be examined, and if it be his destiny, according to the judgment of the Congregation, to enter the Community, then he shall be inscribed among his brethren in the order
Once part of the community each member must continue to reject evil and obey all the commandments, submit to the authority of the priests and any elder member in good standing, turn-over all possessions to the community and live communally (1QS V 1-5), they must be humble, patient, charitable, of admirable purity (1QS IV 1-5), and keep away from those who are wicked or have turned from the ways of truth. Again, the similarities to the Rule of St. Benedict and to the expectations of the Hutterites are obvious, particularly the stress on humility and obedience, that is the surrender of the self to the good of the community. Although the member's property was shared with the community (1 QS VI 18-23), but it does seem that some private property was permitted.\textsuperscript{70}

VanderKam also summarizes the issues on the practice of celibacy at Qumran.\textsuperscript{71} He notes that there is some reasonable indication that the group at Qumran was nearly all male and perhaps celibate, but celibacy was not practiced in those allied communities found adjacent to towns and villages.\textsuperscript{72}

Qumran had a strict hierarchy: the Priests in order of Perfection, the Levites, and the people in their allotted positions (rank). In meetings everyone had the right to ask to be heard, but had to wait his turn as determined by his rank. Each member is ranked annually according to his ‘spirit and his deeds’ and men of lesser ranked must obey his companions of higher rank (1QS V 20-25). This sounds very similar to rule sixty three of the Rule of St. Benedict: “Let the brethren keep their order in the

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid. p108-110
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.p116-118
\textsuperscript{72} see also Schuller, "What Have We Learned about Women?” p80-104.
monastery in such wise, that the time of their conversion and the merit of their lives distinguish it.” (LXIII)

The Council of the Community consisted of twelve men and three Priests. All the members of the Council were to be well studied in the Law, live exemplary lives, practicing truth, righteousness, loving-kindness, and humility (1QS VIII 1-5). The Council had the ultimate responsibility for decisions on matters of doctrine, discipline, purity and impurity, and … everything pertaining to justice and property.’ ⁷³ Reading this one is also reminded of the Council of Seniors from the Benedictine Rule and the Hutterite Council described above.

As already noted, the description for the first step in the procedure for disciplining an erring community member is very similar in all three groups that we have examined. It begins informally as a strictly personal matter: “Members should rebuke one another in truth, humility and charity. Rebukes should be given on the same day the offense is made. Recalcitrant men should be confronted in the presence of witnesses, and only then, if necessary, should the issue be brought before the council” (1QS V 25 - 1QS VI 5).

Faults and their penalties

Expulsion was the most severe penalty and there was no chance for readmission.

• Intentional misconduct … deliberately or through negligence transgressing one word of the Law of Moses:

1QS VIII ¹²⁰ Every man who enters the Council of Holiness, (the Council of those) who walk in the way of perfection as commanded by God, and who deliberately or through negligence transgresses one word of the Law of Moses on any point whatever, shall be expelled from the council of the Community and shall return no more; no man

⁷³ Vermès, The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English. p 28
of holiness shall be associated in his property or counsel in any matter at all.

- An exception was made if the transgression was inadvertent:
  1QS VIII\textsuperscript{[20]} ... But if he has acted inadvertently, he shall be excluded from the pure Meal and the Council [\textsuperscript{[25]}] and they shall interpret the rule as follows. For two years he shall take no part in judgement or ask for counsel; but if during that time, his way becomes perfect, then he shall return to the Court of Inquiry and the Council, in accordance with the judgement of the Congregation, provided that he commit no further inadvertent sin during two full years. IX For one sin of inadvertence alone he shall do penance for two years. But for him who has sinned deliberately, he shall never return; only the man who has sinned inadvertently shall be tried for two years, that his way and counsel may be made perfect according to the judgement of the Congregation. And afterwards, he shall be inscribed in his rank in the Community of Holiness.

- Pronouncing the Divine name:
  1QS VI\textsuperscript{[25]} ... If any one has uttered the Most Venerable Name VII even though frivolously, or as a result of shock or for any other reason whatever, while read the Book or blessing, he shall be dismissed and shall return to the council no more.

- Slandering the Congregation:
  1QS VII\textsuperscript{[15]} ... Whoever has slandered the Congregation shall be expelled from among them and shall return no more.

- Taking pity on an expelled member by sharing food or money with him:
  (note how similar this rule is to Benedict’s Rule XXVI)
  1QS VII\textsuperscript{[20]} ... if any member of the Community has share with him his food or property which ... of the Congregation, his sentence shall be the same; he shall be expelled

In the matter of expulsion, the Community Rule was certainly more severe than the practice of either the Hutterites or the Benedictines. Although all three groups used it when the circumstances and the nature of the offense was of vital importance to the community. In all the groups, expulsion was the ultimate punishment and probably used infrequently.

Vermes\textsuperscript{74} summarizes the other faults and penalties in descending order:

- Loss of rank, exclusion from the ‘purity’ of the Congregation for two years and from the ‘drink’ in the second year:
Betraying the truth and walking in the stubbornness of his heart.\textsuperscript{75} (compare with \#10 from the Rule of St. Benedict in the appendix)

Inadvertently transgressing the Law of Moses. (see the note above under expulsion)

- Exclusion from purity for one year loss of a quarter of the food ration:
  - Lying in matters of property (concealing possessions?)\textsuperscript{76}
  - Showing disrespect to a person of higher rank, rudeness or anger to a priest, slander and deliberate insult to another.\textsuperscript{77} (compare with \#60, \#68, \#7 in the appendix)

- Other faults receiving lesser penalties\textsuperscript{78} included:
  - Lying deliberately\textsuperscript{79} (compare with \#53 in the appendix)
  - Bearing malice unjustly\textsuperscript{80} (compare with \#23 & \#30-32 in the appendix)
  - Appearing naked without being required to do so.\textsuperscript{81}
  - Murmuring against a companion unjustly.\textsuperscript{82} (compare with \#7, \#39 & \#40 in the appendix)
  - Failing to care for a companion.\textsuperscript{83} (compare with \#16, \#18 & \#19 in the appendix)
  - Speaking foolishly.\textsuperscript{84} (compare with \#53 & \#54 in the appendix)
  - Falling asleep in Council meetings.\textsuperscript{85} (compare with \#37 in the appendix)
  - Spitting in Council meetings.\textsuperscript{86}
  - Leaving an assembly three times with out reason.\textsuperscript{87}
  - Interrupting another who is speaking.\textsuperscript{88}

\textsuperscript{75} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[15]} ... Should a man return whose spirit has so trembled before the authority of the Community that he has betrayed the truth and walked in the stubbornness of his heart, he shall do penance for two years. During the fist year.\textsuperscript{[20]} he shall not touch the pure Meal of the Congregation, and during the second year he shall not touch the Drink of the Congregation and shall sit below all the men of the Community. Then when his two years are completed, the Congregation shall consider his case, and if he is admitted he shall be inscribed in his rank and may then question concerning the Law.

\textsuperscript{76} 1QS VI\textsuperscript{[25]} ... If one of them has lied deliberately in matters of property, he shall be excluded from the pure Meal of the Congregation for one year and shall do penance with respect to one quarter of his food.

\textsuperscript{77} 1QS VI\textsuperscript{[25]} ... Who ever has answered his companion with obstinacy, or has addressed him impatiently, going so far as to take no account of the dignity of his fellow by disobeying the order of a brother inscribed before him, he has taken the law into his own hand; therefore he shall do penance for one year and be excluded.

\textsuperscript{78} Exclusion periods of from ten days, thirty days, three months and six months, each accompanied by some reduction in food rations.

\textsuperscript{79} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[1]} ... Whoever has deliberately lied shall do penance for six months.

\textsuperscript{80} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[5]} ... Whoever has borne malice against his companion unjustly shall do penance for six months / one year; whoever has taken revenge in any matter whatever.

\textsuperscript{81} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[10]} ... Whoever has gone naked before his companion, without having been obliged to do so, he shall do penance for six months.

\textsuperscript{82} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[15]} ... if he has murmured against his companion unjustly, he shall do penance for six months.

\textsuperscript{83} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[5]} ... If he has failed to care for his companion, he shall do penance for three months.

\textsuperscript{84} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[5]} ... Whoever has spoken foolishly: three months.

\textsuperscript{85} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[10]} Who ever has lain down to sleep during an Assembly of the Congregation: thirty days;

\textsuperscript{86} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[10]} ... Whoever has spat in an Assembly of the Congregation shall do penance for thirty days.

\textsuperscript{87} 1QS VII\textsuperscript{[10]} ... whoever has left, without reason, an Assembly of the Congregation as many as three times during one Assembly, shall do penance for ten days. But if he has departed whilst they were standing he shall do penance for thirty days.
o Gesticulating with the left hand.

There appear to be many similarities in matters of discipline and etiquette among the groups just surveyed. They include among others:

- a common approach to addressing offenses against members and breaches of the rules that begins informally and follows a similar path of escalation,
- common methods of punishment with a strong preference for exclusion or excommunication, and, of course
- rules against foolish talk.

Does this mean that there is a direct link between these communities? Of course not! The similarities we note are shared patterns of admission, discipline, etiquette and organization inherent in small sectarian communities with similar worldviews and a common scriptural foundation.

If making a direct link between Community Rule of Qumran and the Rule of St. Benedict, or between the Qumran community and the Hutterites seems far fetched, then perhaps those who see the same common patterns between the Qumran Community and the early Christian communities should look elsewhere if they wish to establish a real connection between them.

On the other hand, perhaps the Qumran community is not as mysterious as some may think, for we see their social patterns repeating over time in different places and circumstances.

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88 1QS VII[5] … Whoever has interrupted his companion whilst speaking: ten days.
Part 3: Taking advantage of the sociological approach ...
What can the Hutterites tell us about Qumran?

Why study the Hutterites if one is interested in the Qumran community? The Hutterites are neither Jewish nor ancient. What do they have to tell us about a group that predates them by over 1500 years and lived in a different cultural and historical milieu? That is certainly a fair question, but it becomes a very intriguing question as one studies the Hutterites in some detail and begins to recognize some common social patterns shared by the two groups.

I will argue that we are misled by the apocalyptic outlook in the writings found at Qumran: that the fervor of the apocalyptic outlook was not the primary focus of the community and other concerns tempered any strong apocalyptic tendencies that might have otherwise developed. What developed instead was a pattern of isolationism that was sustainable for the long term -- even as the apocalyptic teaching and the writing of the founders became an integral part of the worship and worldview of later generations. This is what occurred among the Hutterites and quite likely what also occurred at Qumran.

John Hostetler, a sociologist and anthropologist and a scholar of minority religions in the United States and Canada, has succinctly summarized the worldview of the Hutterites:

“Each [Hutterite agricultural] colony considers itself symbolic of Noah’s Ark, a God-given provision for living in a world that is otherwise hopelessly lost. The colonists derive from the sixteenth-century Anabaptist tradition but identify with neither Catholic nor Protestant theology.” 89

Kraybill and Bowman provide a different but complimentary summary:

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89 Hostetler, *Hutterite society*, p 1
“Commitments to communal property and colony life provide the fundamental source of Hutterite identity and distinguish them among Old Order groups. To retain such radical practices requires vigilance and careful social control. Their pattern of geographic isolation makes it easier for them to exercise the necessary control and to regulate interaction with outsiders. ... Because all of life is immersed within the community, the Hutterites have fewer worries about controlling leisure behavior than most of the other groups.”

Both the Hutterites and the Qumran Essenes are “introversionist” sects. Such sects seem to possess a particular and limited set of strategies for maintaining their beliefs and way of life. It would seem, therefore, that by studying one sect, it should be possible to gain a general insight into the nature of another.

The Qumran community and the Hutterites share some interesting common patterns in the way each group began. If we reflect on how the Hutterites managed to survive and flourish, perhaps we will understand something of how the Essenes came to flourish as well.

Many scholars have commented on the apocalyptic aspects and eschatological outlook of the Qumran community. It is an outlook that some might suppose would lead to self-destruction, as observed in recent cults and sects. The Branch Davidians who came to a tragic end in 1993 after a protracted standoff with federal agents are perhaps the group that comes most readily to mind. Kenneth Newport argues specifically that it was the centrality of their apocalyptic worldview that led to their destruction:

90 Kraybill and Bowman, On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren, p226-227
“The basic point ... is a simple one: that from the beginning of the movement with Houteff, the Davidians/Branch Davidians expected that an important part of the events leading up to the coming of the literal kingdom of God and the cleansing of the earth would be the outbreak of a cleansing fire through which they would have to pass. The detail of that expectation changed somewhat through the course of the movement, but the core remained constant: there would be a fire; this was part of God’s plans; and those plans, including the fire, could be seen clearly prophesied in scripture. At the very least such a belief probably explains why some Branch Davidians reacted to the fire as they did. Many made no obvious attempt to escape; indeed, according to the Final Report, one of those who did manage to flee the flames, survivor Ruth Riddle, at one point came out of the building only to turn around and run back in again, where she would surely have died had she not been pulled from the flames against her will by FBI agent James McGee. Further, Wayne Martin, a man of considerable intellectual ability who must have known that his life was in imminent danger, simply sat down amid the smoke to ‘wait on God’. However, the belief in the coming of a cleansing fire as the gateway to the new kingdom probably explains more than just the reaction of the Branch Davidians to the fire once it had started; it may well account for how it was that the fire started in the first place.”

The Qumran community, unlike the Branch Davidians, is thought have thrived for almost two centuries. Was the Qumran community apocalyptic in the same way as the Branch Davidians?

The caves at Qumran contained multiple copies of the Book of Enoch and the Book of Daniel, which are apocalypses. Knibb notes that while the writing in these books had an influence on the beliefs of the Qumran community we need to remember that the community was obviously influenced by many writings of which the apocalyptic texts were only part. Simply because a group draws, to some extent,
on apocalyptic sources does not make them an “apocalyptic” sect.\textsuperscript{96} He goes on to argue that it was specifically the eschatological aspects of Daniel and Enoch that seemed to most influence the Qumran community. The eschatological themes of dualism between good and evil and a final judgment in which God finally vanquishes evil is illustrated in the Community Rule:

\textit{1QS IV} \textsuperscript{[15]} \textit{The nature of all the children of men is ruled by these (two spirits), and during their life all the hosts of men have a portion of their divisions and walk in (both) their ways. And the whole reward for their deeds shall be, for everlasting ages, according to whether each man’s portion in their two divisions is great or small. For God has established the spirits in equal measure until the final age, and has set everlasting hatred between their divisions. Truth abhors the works of injustice, and injustice hates all the ways of truth. And their struggle is fierce in all their arguments for they do not walk together. But in the mysteries of His understanding, and in His glorious wisdom, God has ordained an end for injustice, and at the time of the visitation He will destroy it forever. Then truth, which has wallowed in the ways of wickedness during the dominion of injustice until the appointed time of judgment, shall arise in the world for ever.} \textsuperscript{[20]}

Besides holding an eschatological vision for the future, the community was also messianic. The community believed in the coming a messiah or often two messiahs. Indeed this passage speaks of three individuals – of a prophet and of two messiahs:

\textit{1QS IX} \textsuperscript{[10]}… \textit{They shall depart from none of the counsels of the Law to walk in all the stubbornness of their hearts, but shall be rule 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.}

Notice that while the passage includes the expectation of two messiahs, the community is instructed that until they come, they are to keep the Law as they were taught at their founding. Thus it is the issue of interpretation of the law and purity in adhering to that interpretation that seems to be the central feature of the

\textsuperscript{96} ibid. p409
community's life. Knibb argues that issues surrounding the correct interpretation of the Law, rather than apocalyptic, eschatological, or messianic beliefs seems to have been the key factor in forming the community.\footnote{Knibb, \textit{Apocalypticism and Messianism}, 403-432, p413}

Although there is ongoing debate on the issue, it appears that \textit{ritual purity} seems to be perhaps the most pervasive theme at Qumran, touching on all aspects of life within the community: religious, economic, and social.\footnote{Jonathan Klawans, "Purity in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in \textit{The Oxford handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls}, eds. Timothy H. Lim and John Joseph Collins. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 277-402. p381} If the Qumran community's notions of apocalypticism were wrapped up in their notions of adherence to the Law, and particularly to demands of purity, then they were quite unlike the Branch Davidians. A focus on purity, even if philosophically directed toward an expected future apocalypse, requires a primary focus on living in the present -- on how one lives day to day. In other words, radically apocalyptic groups such as the Branch Davidians do not seem to be so relevant to our understanding of the Qumran community, and it is time to refocus on the Hutterites.

In comparing the Qumran community with the Hutterites, who also began with an apocalyptic and millenarian world-view, what would explain the longevity of the groups? Is there a pattern we can find in the Hutterite story, which is helpful for our study of Qumran?

It is remarkable that the Hutterites, in spite of their notably non-conformist and isolationist worldview, have flourished for nearly five hundred years. Although the Essenes and the Qumran community came to an end during tumultuous and disastrous times of the Jewish War with the Romans, they never-the-less flourished
for perhaps two hundred years. Indeed, one wonders if they may have simply been in the wrong place at the wrong time. No one has yet suggested that they brought their end upon themselves as did the Branch Davidians, and it seems that they were simply caught up in the destructive tidal wave of the Roman campaigns.

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A Brief History of the Hutterites

The Hutterites have their origins in the sixteenth-century Anabaptist movement, which rejected infant baptism and desired to found a new and voluntary church free from the state. Their rejection of infant baptism was strongly condemned as a heresy by both secular and religious authorities. Though perhaps not a heresy, their desire to found an independent church was also fiercely condemned.99

The label Anabaptists was broadly given to a wide variety of controversial, nonconformist, fanatical and rebellious groups in the sixteenth-century. Hostetler identifies two notable types of ‘Anabaptists’: The Old Testament oriented revolutionaries and the New Testament oriented pacifists.100

The Old Testament oriented revolutionaries could be subdivided into separate movements. One emphasized an Old Testament “call to war against the Cananites” and adopted millenarian beliefs. The second sought to create a communist “kingdom of God” through armed struggle. Both groups ceased to exist by the end in the Peasant War of 1525.

99 Hostetler, Hutterite society, 403., p5
100 ibid. p6
The New Testament oriented pacifists originated in lay Bible study groups allied with Ulrich Zwingli, but who became impatient with his pace of reform and his interpretation of church. These Anabaptists rejected images, an elaborate church hierarchy, and the mass. They wanted to establish a church that was entirely separate from the state.

This variant of the Anabaptist movement spread throughout central Europe and eventually gave rise to the Hutterites. Somewhat ironically, Zwingli, Luther, and Calvin all condemned them for rebelling against duly constituted political authority.101

It is interesting to note that the Hutterites, originating among Anabaptist living in Southern Germany and Western Austria, still teach their children the German dialect of the founders. They must do this because they have never translated their scriptures and other religious texts from the original sixteenth century German,102 choosing instead to copy them diligently by hand as new copies are needed. This careful preservation of the writing of the founders is mildly interesting, to say the least, when one thinks about Qumran. Without the preservation of their foundational texts, we would know almost nothing about that ancient group. In a small way it is another common pattern shared by both Qumran the Hutterites.

Charles V was the Holy Roman emperor during beginning of the Anabaptist movement and his brother Ferdinand was administrator of the Austrian region. Both were Catholic and alarmed by spread of Protestantism and Anabaptism in their

101 ibid. p6
102 ibid. p8-9
lands and they took action to counter its spread. In 1521 the Diet of Worms outlawed Luther’s reforms. Persecution of Anabaptists was severe: in 1526 the town of Zurich introduced the death penalty for Anabaptists as did the Diet of Speyer in 1529, and by 1530 it was believed that one thousand people had been executed as Anabaptists.\textsuperscript{103}

These persecuted Anabaptists fled to Moravia during this period because of its tolerance of Protestantism. Yet it was in Moravia, where they were relatively free of external persecution, that rifts developed among the proto-Hutterites:

- There was a dispute over pacifism in 1527, which fragmented the group. \textit{(Recall that this was the time when the Turks threatened much of central Europe.)}
- In the years 1529-1533 dissensions over the practice of community goods fragmented them again.
- Finally the struggle for leadership of the pacifist, communal property group saw the emergence of Jakob Hutter as the group’s charismatic leader.\textsuperscript{104}

Although Hutter was executed in 1536, the Hutterites persevered in Moravia and eventually flourished for several decades until overwhelmed forced to flee by the larger social forces of war and the Counter Reformation.

In the early seventeenth century they had migrated to Transylvania. Over the next two centuries they experienced periods of prosperity, which gave way to persecution and migration.

Although the Hutterites they were not anarchists, they were often viewed as such by civil authorizees, and their relations with them were always uneasy. The

\textsuperscript{103} ibid. p12
\textsuperscript{104} ibid. p26
Hutterites believed that civil governments were necessary for maintaining order in society, but only among the “godless.” They did not recognize any role for civil government over their colonies and way of life. Because they were pacifists they never offered physical resistance to civil authorities, which may have had a role in their ability to survive conflict and move on.

By the nineteenth century they had migrated to Russia. There they learned to live in greater geographic isolation, renewed their commitment to communal living, and learned to manage agricultural communes from the Mennonites. However, they feared assimilation and, in 1879, decided to migrate to North America.

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**Apocalyptic and Eschatological themes among the early Hutterites**

The various Anabaptist movements embraced to some extent apocalyptic and eschatological themes. Before the proto-Hutterite Anabaptists migrated to Moravia, several early thinkers of the Austrian Anabaptists wrote theological tracts, which still survive today in Hutterite codices. The tracts “stress the imminence of Christ’s second coming, personal suffering as a necessary condition for following Christ, and the sharing of goods.” 105 Another writer and pamphleteer, Hans Hut, who was active in the early period in Moravia had an “intensely apocalyptic message ... [exhorting his audience] ‘to sell house and goods’ in view of Christ’s return to establish his kingdom on earth at the approaching Pentecost of 1528.” 106 But as with the Qumran community, such apocalyptic themes were not the movement’s central focus. The pacifist strain of Anabaptism, particularly the proto-Hutterites,

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105 ibid. p11
106 ibid. p14
had a vision of the church that followed their understanding of a New Testament model -- including the 'priesthood of all believers', adult baptism following repentance of sins and confession of faith, and a disciplined way of life that included only relations with those who freely embraced and practiced the faith.

These proto-Hutterites were critical of Luther's justification by faith, arguing that it gave a believer too high a standing with God regardless of his character. In lieu of Luther's justification by faith, they believed that following Christ in daily life was the key to discipleship. The believer had to subordinate his will to the demands of discipleship and Gospel living. They developed a philosophy of self-denial, which laid the foundation for the Hutterite rejection of personal property and emphasis on communal living.¹⁰⁷

Compare this vision with the opening verses of Qumran Community Rule:

IQS I The Master shall teach the saints to live according to the Book of the Community Rule, that they may seek God with a whole heart and soul, and do what is good and right before Him as He commanded by the hand of Moses and all His servants the Prophets; that they may love all that He has chosen and hate all that He has rejected; that they may abstain from all evil and hold fast to all good; ... He shall admit to the Covenant of Grace all those who have freely devoted themselves to the observance of God’s precepts, that they may be joined to the counsel of God and may live perfectly before Him in accordance with all that has been revealed concerning their appointed times, and that they may love all the sons of light, each according to his lot in God’s design, and hate all the sons of darkness each according to his guilt in God’s vengeance.

And with these excerpts from the rules proper as given beginning in column five of the Community Rule:

¹⁰⁷ ibid. p10-11
PREAMBLE - OBEDIENCE:

V And this is the Rule for the men of the Community who have freely pledged themselves to be converted from all evil and to cling to all His commandments according to His will.

They shall separate from the congregation of the men of injustice and shall unite, with respect to the Law and possessions, under the authority of the sons of Zadok, the Priests who keep the Covenant, and of the multitude of men of the Community who hold fast to the Covenant. Every decision concerning doctrine, property, and justice shall be determined by them. ...[5]

AN OATH OF PURITY:

V...[5] Whoever approaches the Council of the Community shall enter the Covenant of God in the presence of all who have freely pledged themselves. He shall undertake by a binding of to return with all his heart and soul to every commandment of the Law of Moses in accordance with all that has been revealed of it to the sons of Zadok, the Priests, Keeper of the Covenant and Seekers of His will, and to the multitude of[10] the men of the Covenant ...

A PLEDGE TO LIVE IN ISOLATION FROM THE WORLD:

V[10] ... And he shall undertake by the Covenant to separate from all the men of injustice who walk in the way of wickedness.

V[15] ... No member of the Community shall follow them in matters of doctrine and justice, or eat or drink anything of theirs, or take anything from them except for a price ... For all those not reckoned in His Covenant are to be set apart, together with all that is theirs.

Their rejection of the doctrine of “Justification by Faith alone” reflects the Hutterite belief that the life of the disciple matters profoundly. The follower of Christ must live according to his commandments and example: most notably through the denial of his self-centeredness and self-will, and voluntary acceptance of the communal and pacifist way of life. Although their notions of what constituted “righteous living” differed markedly, the centrality of living a righteous life in community with other believers and apart the world at large and its corrupting influences was the common foundation and guiding principle of both the Qumran Community and the Hutterites. It is a common pattern found in introversionist sects, for those who envision themselves a kind of Noah’s Ark, a God-given provision for living in world that is hopelessly lost.
Conflicts over Righteous Living and the Emergence of the Founding Leader.

Another curious social pattern shared by Qumran and the Hutterites was their origins as a group who followed their leader after a conflict over the proper way of living a pure or righteous life. While many groups fragment because of conflicts among the leadership over foundational principles, one can imagine that such conflicts act to refine the nature of the group: purging it of dissenting or disgruntled members and leaving the group that remains a common vision of their purpose. In the case of the Hutterites and Qumran there seems to have also been a shared understanding or insight among the members that survival depended on isolating themselves from society in order to resist assimilation and the degradation of their beliefs and practices.

Jakob Hutter came to Moravia after several fragmented Anabaptist groups had settled there. Not long after arriving he felt called by God to unite these groups and to assume leadership over all of them. He managed to depose the existing leadership by accusing them of secretly having private possessions, a charge that proved to be true. After exposing their hypocrisy Hutter was elected the chief elder and began to reorganize his groups into a fully communal way of life.108

In its broad details, this is also what scholars speculate happened with the beginning of the Qumran community:

“... it is evident that before the Qumran settlement was built a new penitential movement came into being and that eventually the person know only by the epithet “the Teacher of Righteousness” became its leader.”

108 ibid. p20
Conflicts between the Teacher and others must have arisen from time to time. ... It seems that someone ... refused to accept the Teacher’s full claims and withdrew from him and his followers, taking a number of others with him. For his efforts he was branded as ‘the man of the lie’ in the Damascus Document and in some of the commentaries.” Vanderkam p128-129

Vanderkam also notes that the Teacher may have come into serious conflict with the authorities of the time and was also in a priestly conflict with someone dubbed the “Wicked Priest.” In one of the fragments of commentary on the psalms and another on Habakkuk it is apparent that the Teacher and the Wicked priest were contemporaries who knew each other and had contact with one another:

4Q171 IV [5] The wicked watches out for the righteous and seeks [to slay him. The Lord will not abandon him into his hand or] let him be condemned when he is tried (32-3).
Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked [Priest] who [watched the Teacher of Righteousness] that he might put him to death [because of the ordinance of the law which he sent to him. ... [10]

1QpHab XI [1] ... Woe to him who causes his neighbours to drink; who pours out his venom to make them drunk that he may gaze on the their feasts (ii, 15).
Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked Priest who pursued the Teacher [5] of Righteousness to the house of his exile that he might confuse him with his venomous fury. And at the time appointed for rest, for the Day of Atonement, he appeared before them to confuse them, and to cause them to stumble on the Day of Fasting, their Sabbath of Repose. ... [10]

Like the writers of these fragments, the Hutterites know their founding history and can tell you the names of those characters, both good and bad, who were the important parties in the conflicts that mark their history.

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**Conclusion**

What can the Hutterites and a sociological approach to the nature of introversionist sects teach us about Qumran? Quite a bit it would seem. The Qumran
community seems to be an oddity for it’s time, yet what we have learned has
influenced thinking about Judaism in two centuries preceding destruction of the
Temple and the rise of modern Judaism. But looking back over two thousand years
of history, we can also discern that the development of the Qumran community also
followed a pattern, even if it the oldest example we have yet discovered. The
Qumran Community was a specific example of what Regev’s “introversionist sects.”
They focused on living a life of purity or righteousness, and maintained their
integrity through isolation, communal living, strict limits on personal property, and
careful preservation and study of the writings of their founders. The cohesion
derived from such practices would seem to result in the longevity of the group.
Particularly when such a way of life reduces tension and conflict within the group
and enhances feeling of belonging and purpose to its members.109

But each group also exhibits patterns not shared by the other. The Hutterites
are community of married coupes and their extended families. They rarely accept
new members from outside and, because they have large families, there is no need
to add such members.

Although there is dispute about the level of celibacy at Qumran, it does
appear that from the Community Rule that they accepted new members much more
readily than we see in the Hutterites. This pattern as, noted in part 2, is something
they share with monastic communities such as the Benedictines, who are also a kind
or type of introversionist group. And while the Benedictines share some patterns
with the Qumran Community and the Hutterites, they are different in their view of

109 That was the thrust of my previous paper on discipline.
the outside world. For them, their isolation is a personal call to righteousness but not because they see the rest of humanity as hopelessly lost.

All this brings me back to my original musings about comparing or even linking the Qumran and the early Christian communities. I can see how some people would see such links, but I have to ask myself: “to what extent I am comfortable comparing the Hutterites to the first Christians?” Although there are aspects of Hutterite life that I respect, I do not think they have much to tell me about early Christianity. The early Christians were evangelists above all else. Their mission was to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world – as a group, they were rather extroverted, not introverted!

There are many other points on which I would contrast the early Christians with the Hutterites, and by extension, the community at Qumran. If we want to look somewhere for a model or type to compare with the early Christians, Qumran seems to be the wrong place to look.
Appendix

The Instruments of Good Works from the Rule of St. Benedict (IV):

1. In the first place, to love the Lord God with the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole strength.
2. Then, one's neighbor as oneself.
3. Then not to murder.
4. Not to commit adultery.
5. Not to steal.
6. Not to covet.
7. Not to bear false witness.
8. To honor all (1 Peter 2:17).
9. And not to do to another what one would not have done to oneself.
10. To deny oneself in order to follow Christ.
11. To chastise the body.
12. Not to become attached to pleasures.
13. To love fasting.
14. To relieve the poor.
15. To clothe the naked.
16. To visit the sick.
17. To bury the dead.
18. To help in trouble.
19. To console the sorrowing.
20. To become a stranger to the world's ways.
21. To prefer nothing to the love of Christ.
22. Not to give way to anger.
23. Not to nurse a grudge.
24. Not to entertain deceit in one's heart.
25. Not to give a false peace.
27. Not to swear, for fear of perjuring oneself.
28. To utter truth from heart and mouth.
29. Not to return evil for evil.
30. To do no wrong to anyone, and to bear patiently wrongs done to oneself.
31. To love one's enemies.
32. Not to curse those who curse us, but rather to bless them.
33. To bear persecution for justice's sake.
34. Not to be proud.
35. Not addicted to wine.
36. Not a great eater.
37. Not drowsy.
38. Not lazy.
40. Not a detractor.
41. To put one's hope in God.
42. To attribute to God, and not to self, whatever good one sees in oneself.
43. But to recognize always that the evil is one's own doing, and to impute it to oneself.
44. To fear the Day of Judgment.
45. To be in dread of hell.
46. To desire eternal life with all the passion of the spirit.
47. To keep death daily before one's eyes.
48. To keep constant guard over the actions of one's life.
49. To know for certain that God sees one everywhere.
50. When evil thoughts come into one's heart, to dash them against Christ immediately.
51. And to manifest them to one's spiritual guardian.
52. To guard one's tongue against evil and depraved speech.
53. Not to love much talking.
54. Not to speak useless words or words that move to laughter.
55. Not to love much or boisterous laughter.
56. To listen willingly to holy reading.
57. To devote oneself frequently to prayer.
58. Daily in one's prayers, with tears and sighs, to confess one's past sins to God, and to amend them for the future.
59. Not to fulfill the desires of the flesh; to hate one's own will.
60. To obey in all things the commands of the Abbot even though they (which God forbid) should act otherwise, mindful of the Lord's precept, "Do what they say, but not what they do."
61. Not to wish to be called holy before one is holy; but first to be holy, that one may be truly so called.
62. To fulfill God’s commandments daily in one’s deeds.
63. To love chastity.
64. To hate no one.
65. Not to be jealous, not to harbor envy.
66. Not to love contention.
67. To beware of haughtiness.
68. And to respect the seniors.
69. To love the juniors.
70. To pray for one’s enemies in the love of Christ.
71. To make peace with one’s adversary before the sun sets.
72. And never to despair of God’s mercy
Bibliography


