

John Kampen, *Matthew within Sectarian Judaism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019). Pp. xv + 320. \$65.00 (Hardcover). ISBN: 978-0-3001756-3.

John Kampen is a well-known scholar in the field of Qumran studies. In this book he dedicates his great expertise to an extended reading of Matthew as a Jewish document. Ever since Jerome and Eusebius (quoting Papias), Matthew has always been seen as the most “Jewish” Gospel (see e.g., Matt 15:24), yet it also features some of the most vitriolic and toxic anti-Pharisaic (Matt 23!) diatribes and is a source of anti-Jewish (Matt 27:25) tropes as well. Redaction-critical and narrative-critical scholars have, until recently, assessed Matthew (based e.g., on Matt 21:43) as “extra muros,” i.e., constituting an independent, (Jewish-) Christian community as based on Matthew’s Christology and concomitant substitution-type ecclesiology. However, Kampen follows the recent approach that solves this conundrum by referring to Matthew’s proximities to Jewish practice (Law, ethos) and apocalyptic motifs and rhetoric instead. Matthew, according to this new paradigm, continued inner-Jewish sectarian policies in the disturbed climate after the demise of the temple in 70 CE. Controversies in Qumranic and Rabbinic sources and legal debates between groups in these documents attest to Matthew as being part of a perturbed Jewish world, and amidst dynamics of cultural romanizing, war, and subsequent political turmoil. In the first chapters, Kampen enters this discussion on the community behind Matthew’s Gospel—which he dates at the end of the first century CE and locates somewhere in (southern?) Syria—and its relation to surrounding Judaism. He extensively draws on his expertise in the Scrolls and artefacts of Qumran. Engaging with scholars who operate with theory on social identity formation, he maps Matthew onto the prolonged sectarian policies after 70 CE and locates Matthew’s community next to Pharisaic and proto-Rabbinic networks. The issue of terminology is pressing here. Albert Baumgarten’s influential definition emphasizes the sect as a voluntary association setting up boundary marking mechanisms separating them from surrounding intra-religious surroundings. To this model Kampen now adds the modification as applied to Qumran by Jutta Jokiranta. She qualifies sectarian politics as articulating “Difference, antagonism, and separation.”¹ In Kampen’s view, this approach of Matthew yields a view of this community at odds with the surrounding Jewish world, while still being an integral part of it. Matthew appears as a deviant

1 Albert I. Baumgarten, *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era: An Interpretation* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Jutta Jokiranta, *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

denomination, but not, as in the radical proposal of Anders Runesson, as a sub-denomination within the Pharisaic movement.² Matthew did not draw on Qumranic traditions either, or as representing one of the movements attested in Qumranic sources, but these texts do indicate a cultural and religious environment close to Matthew. Distinctive from the redaction critical school, it is less the beliefs and more the practices that allows us to map Matthew in first century CE Judaism, according to Kampen. Matthew represents a religious “denomination” in Syria (including the Galilee from a Roman perspective). The community’s practices and views were functional in reconstituting Jewish life after 70 CE, after the fall of the temple, and the centrality of this phenomenon is correctly argued for by Kampen, in my view. This “denomination” would reappear in law-observant forms of Christianity (Didache, Pseudo-Clementine Homilies?), and gradually yield to or be absorbed by proto-orthodox churches.

The core of the book is dedicated to some central genres in Matthew: law, wisdom, apocalyptic, and polemic. Prominent is his discussion of the Sermon on the Mount, considered, since W.D. Davies’ seminal work, as the heart of the Gospel and as presenting the core of the teachings of Jesus.³ This is followed by a chapter on wisdom traditions (Matt 11), community rules (Matt 18), sectarian rhetoric and polemics (Matt 23), apocalyptic traditions (Matt 24–25), a discussion of Matthew’s opponents, especially the “scribes and Pharisees,” in the passion narrative (Matt 26–27), concluding with the commissioning of the disciples (Matt 28).

The strongest and most innovative readings are offered in the chapters on the Sermon on the Mount (especially in the macarisms), wisdom, and apocalyptic polemics. Kampen, following and adding to David Flusser, offers impressive parallels to the “poor in spirit” (Matt 5:3) and the “merciful” (Matt 5:7) as self-references of the “sect” that experiences tribulations and oppression, and as those with a pure heart and living humbly in the realm of God’s spirit.⁴ Similarly, the importance of righteousness in this Gospel gains weight in light of Qumranic texts. Kampen not only illuminates these motifs in his discussions of Qumranic and rabbinic sources but also beautifully points to the rhetorical importance for a sect of locating these experiences in the life of its alleged founder (e.g., CD 6:19; 1QpHab 11:4–6, 1QH^a 6:14–15; Matt 5:10–11, 44; 10:22–23; 23:34). I also appreciated his readings of wisdom traditions, where Kampen highlights parallels to the motif of the “yoke” and shows how wisdom and

2 Anders Runesson, “Rethinking Early Jewish—Christian Relations: Matthean Community History as Pharisaic Intragroup Conflict,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127 (2008): 95–132.

3 William D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

4 David Flusser, “Blessed are the Poor in Spirit...” *Israel Exploration Journal* 10 (1960): 1–13.

apocalypticism come together in passages identifying Jesus as incarnate wisdom of God, and therewith as the sole authority for his community. Kampen shows the intertextuality with Lev 18 and 19:15–18 in the Damascus Covenant (CD 6:11–7:6) as well as traditions in 1QS as informing both the structure of and commandments on brotherly reproof in Matt 18:15–17. A lucid solution for the paradox that Jesus came only for the lost sheep in Israel, yet commissions his disciples to teach “all the nations” is offered in the end: Matthew represents what Kampen labels as “exclusive inclusivity,” in which the sectarian redefinition of Jewish exclusivism comes to include gentiles as well as those Jews who adhere to the strict standards of the community. Some critical notions: legal issues such as purity and Sabbath are less present in the book. I notably missed the work of Lutz Doering,⁵ who has shown how both CD and other Qumranic traditions as well as early rabbinic halakha prove their relevance as well for reading Matthew as a unique legal stand in between. Whether *kataluo* (Matt 5:17) is a rendering of Hebrew *parar* and not of *batal* may be possible in light of b. Shab 116b, but remains undecided as yet. His proposal to see Matthew’s construction of Jesus as a form of “seconding Sinai” is illuminating, however, and I sympathize with the interpretation where Jesus does not replace or transcend Moses, even if his legal teachings extend biblical law by appeal to an exclusive authority. Clearly, the mountain of the Sermon on the Mount evokes the eschatological teacher of the Law in Isaiah, and Jesus as taking the reader back to Moses, not surpassing or replacing him. Kampen also correctly argues the absence of the temple to be an issue for Matthew, and he also correctly discredits the redaction critical notion that the community (*ekklēsia*) would be a substitute for the temple. However, Matt 5:23 and the twofold quote of Hos 6:6 suggests a discourse that might be closer to rabbinic tradition in addressing an ongoing crisis by stressing or redefining religio-ethical priorities. So too is the Matthean parable of the Bad Tenants (Matt 21:33–44), a clear reference to the crisis due to the temple leaders’ failure and engaging with the Pharisees (v. 45) surrounding Matthew’s community at the end of the first century as well. Matthew’s “genre consciousness” (the term is from Ruben Zimmermann) of parables appears close to the rabbinic *mashal* in terms of form, scriptural rhetoric and motifs, and this actually suggest a non-sectarian outlook. In Jesus’s “parable” of the Coming of the Son of Man (Matt 25: 31–46), the motif of the angels connects this scene with apocalyptic (1 En. 61:1–2; Tob 12:13; 3 Bar. 15:1–3) and rabbinic (m. Avot 4:11) tradition of angels as mediators of man’s actions before the heavenly court.

5 Lutz Doering, “Sabbath Laws in the New Testament Gospels,” in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. Reimund Bieringer, Florentino García Martínez, Didier Pollefeyt and Peter. J. Tomson (Brill: Leiden, 2009), 207–253.

The book is rich in offering discussions of source material (although sometimes one would have loved to read some of the texts alluded to) and is densely written. In the discussion of sectarianism of Matthew, Baumgarten's notion of a "introvert" versus "reformationist" sects might be applicable as well: it appears that both Matthew and (most of?) the Pharisees belong to the second type, and it is remarkable indeed that Matthew became the most "Catholic" Gospel in the medieval era. Does this make Matthew's community relatively closer to proto-rabbinic tradition than to the Essenes or Qumran? Matthew 23, discussed extensively by Kampen, actually points to proximities with early rabbinic halakha, as I argued elsewhere.⁶ Here I sympathize with the intuition behind Runesson's proposal: closeness to rabbinic traditions indeed comes to the fore in legal terminology (e.g., Matt 12:12; 23:40), scriptural reasoning (e.g., in the antithesis on murder, where rabbinic texts may be of greater importance). It is, finally, especially in the parables that sectarian rhetoric as present in apocalyptic notions of separation and purification (e.g., Matthew's addition to the Great Meal, or the Ten Maidens) is paired with a non-sectarian coexistence of good and evil (e.g., the Tares), divine patience and universal ethics (e.g., the judging of the Son of Man, Matt 25). Kampen correctly stresses the universal outlook behind the commissioning of the disciples (Matt 28:19) as a form of "exclusive inclusivity," an in essence ethical and individualized outlook attracting "peripheral" gentiles in a particular form of Jewish identity formation (here, a discussion of baptism might have enhanced his argument). In short, Kampen convinces in showing the proximities to tropes found in sectarian and non-sectarian traditions in the Qumran documents where it comes to wisdom, apocalypticism, community regulations and concomitant polemics, and thus firmly establishes Matthew within late Second Temple Judaism, and even beyond. This rich book offers a confirmation for those scholars who qualify Matthew as a cultural and religious bridge between sectarian Second Temple Period, early rabbinic Judaism, and Jewish-Christian communities such as those behind the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies. Matthean studies indeed should be considered part of Jewish Studies.

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⁶ Eric Ottenheijm, "Matthew and Yavne: Religious Authority in the Making?," in *Jews and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: The Interbellum 70–132 CE*, ed. Joshua Schwartz and Peter J. Tomson (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 378–400.