As early as the Second Letter of Peter the difficulty of some passages in
the letters of Paul was emphasized: "In all his letters there are of course
some passages which are hard to understand" (2 Pet 3:16). It thus seems
sensible to use all available means to obtain a better understanding of
Paul, including recourse to the texts from Qumran. For this reason I shall
study at Gal 3:10–14 in the light of Qumran, even though I thereby run the
risk that this incursion into the field of Pauline studies might call down
upon myself the warning that follows the words just quoted, “and these
are the ones that uneducated and unbalanced people distort, in the same
way as they distort the rest of scripture—to their own destruction.”

If I am not completely mistaken, the greatest achievement of the re-
search on Paul of the last thirty years has been a better understanding
of Paul’s Jewish identity thanks to the Dead Sea Scrolls. For example, on
the Christian side, the work of Sanders and Dunn, and the discussions
around what Dunn has termed “The New Perspective on Paul” and, on

---

1 This has been done, among others, by J. A. Fitzmyer, “Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment (ed. P. W. Flint and J. C. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 2:599–621, and by H.-W. Kuhn on his studies of the different letters of Paul in the light of Qumran.

2 According to the translation of The New Jerusalem Bible.


the Jewish side, the works of Segal\textsuperscript{6} or Boyarin.\textsuperscript{7} Not that this Jewish identity was ever doubted, since Paul himself asserts it forcefully many times, for instance, in 2 Cor 11:22: “Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.” Or in Phil 3:5–6: “Circumcised on the eighth day of my life, I was born of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrew parents. In the matter of the Law, I was a Pharisee; as for religious fervour, I was a persecutor of the Church; as for the uprightness embodied in the Law, I was faultless.”

So let us now look at Gal 3:10–14 in the translation of the New Revised Standard Version:

\begin{quote}
10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.”

11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for “The one who is righteous will live by faith.”

12 But the law does not rest on faith; on the contrary, “Whoever does the works of the law will live by them.”

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—

14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
\end{quote}

I shall start with two examples of Paul’s language and terminology from a Qumran perspective, move to a central topic of Paul’s theology, and end with what I think better explains the relationship between Qumran and Paul: neither an improbable genetic relationship nor literary dependence, but the common use of the same source: the Hebrew Scriptures.

A. Gal 3:10: The Works of the Law

It is well known that until the publication of 4QMMT we did not have an exact Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent of the expression used by Paul in Galatians (Gal 2:16, 3:2.5.10) and in Romans (Rom 3:20.28): \textit{erga nomou} (ἔργα νόμου) “the works of the law.” The Greek expression could be translated into Hebrew by \textit{ma‘aše torah} (משהו תורה), because the LXX translates \textit{ençãotorah} with \textit{ἔργα} most of the time, and \textit{תורה} by \textit{뇨ם}. And, in fact, the traditional translation of the New Testament in Hebrew uses the

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{6}] A. Segal, \textit{Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).
\item[\textsuperscript{7}] D. Boyarin, \textit{A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
\end{itemize}}