The theology of AIDS deals with dogmatic and ethical matters, such as AIDS as punishment of God, sexuality and marriage, forgiveness and compassion, homosexuality, alienation of people with AIDS, and the common cup at Holy Communion.

The ethical issues focus on the rights of the individual versus the rights of the community. The ethical model aims to balance God’s concern for the individual with the need to do what is best for the community as a whole. To this end a mixture of prescriptive ethics, imitative ethics, situation ethics and utilitarian ethics is adopted as a method for Christian ethics. Consequently, a Christian ethical response to AIDS emphasizes love and responsibility, forgiveness and service to the community. Within this model aspects such as the use of condoms, compulsory testing, abortion, and unborn babies with AIDS are discussed.

The second last chapter considers several questions which have a bearing on legal ethics. Practical situations are dealt with such as compulsory tests for AIDS performed by the State, deportation of sero-positive individuals, enforced disclosure of names of partners of HIV positive individuals to authorities, the right of insurers to insist on tests, limitation or refusal of treatment by Medical Aid policies, and testing without knowledge or consent.

Although theological and ethical arguments could be questioned, the value of this booklet lies in the fact that it timeously identifies the church as the most important role player in preventing AIDS. Achieving changes in behaviour is viewed as the responsibility of the churches in South Africa. The church is often the only organization active in rural areas. Churches have, therefore, a unique facility for providing education and for organizing community responses. In this regard it is emphasized that the church should be a loving community, not only taking care of AIDS victims, but also changing the attitudes of the community with regard to them. The core message which is presented to preventing AIDS is sexual abstinence or absolute sexual faithfulness to the partner within marriage. In order to change attitudes to this effect a theology of AIDS is required which would provide the basis for actions and the active involvement of the church in respect of the prevention of AIDS, changing of attitudes towards and assistance to infected people.

The author succeeds in stimulating reflections on the very essence of the church in this world. The following remark should be taken note of: ‘If the churches fail to provide leadership, their claims to preach the gospel are brought into question’.

Cross, Frank Moore 1995 — The Ancient Library of Qumrán (3rd edition)
Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. 204 pages. Price: US $41.00
Reviewer: Prof J H Potgieter

I was mildly surprised when I received a copy of the third edition of Frank Moore Cross’s well-known book The Ancient Library of Qumrán. Even after reading the preface to the third edition and acknowledging that certain additions have been made to the earlier editions, the question remains whether an update can compare with more recent publications in the ever expanding and fast changing field of Qumran studies.

But after reading the book for a second time, I came to the conclusion that it was a worthwhile exercise. It is evident that Frank Moore Cross is an expert in this field. His style is fluent, his arguments clear and his knowledge enviable, which makes the reading of the book an enjoyable experience.
The book comprises six chapters. The third edition differs from previous editions in the addition of supplementary material to chapter 1 and to the footnotes, as well as a full set of script charts. Especially valuable is the addition of the sixth chapter, *Notes on a generation of Qumran studies*, in which he addresses such important themes as the value of the Qumran scrolls to paleography, to the comparative orthography of Jewish writings, to the history of the Biblical text, and to the history of the sect.

I have always regarded chapter 5, *The Essenes and the Primitive Church* as one of the special traits of the book which distinguishes it from similar books on Qumran studies. Cross demonstrates in this chapter that the communal and apocalyptic tradition in the primitive church can be traced back to a very concrete Jewish setting, namely the Essene community. In this chapter the author provides us with a frame of reference which enables us to trace certain peculiarities of the early church.

This book is still compelling reading for a broad readership of people who are interested in the documents of Qumran and their reflection on the history of the Jewish community of the late second templeperiod as well as the primitive Christian community.

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Resensent: Ds J M Strijdom

In hierdie welkome werk beoog Cees den Heyer, Gereformeerde Nuwe-Testamentikus te Kampen, om op nie-sensasionele wyse (p 10) 'n nugtere oorsig van die afgelope ongeveer 150 jaar se historiese Jesusnavorsing te bied. Deur die hoofstukke van die volle verhaal van kritiese Jesusondersoeke te vertel, hoop hy om die resente Amerikaanse oplewing in hierdie veld in breër perspektief te plaas (p 12) en om as Nederlander 'n moontlike 'brugfuskie' te vervul (oftewel, 'balans' daar te stel) tussen Duitse en Engelstalige Jesusnavorsing (p 192).

Die boek bestaan uit 'n inleiding en dertien hoofstukke. Lesers uit die Reformatories-Calvinistiese tradisie sal Den Heyer se inleiding en eerste twee hoofstukke besonder waardevol vind, aangesien hy hier — om die probleem van die historiese Jesus duidelik te maak — nie net 'n pre-kritiese en kritiese Skrifbeskouing met mekaar kontrasteer nie, maar ook hierdie spanning in historiese verband plaas. Vir eeue lank het Christene die dogma geglo dat 'die bijbel van de eerste tot de laatste bladzij “Woord van God” is' (p 9) en daarom geen historiese ononoukeurigheid kan bevat nie. Met die opkoms van die rasionalsme is hierdie fundamentalistiese siening van Skrifgesag egter toenemend bevraagteken, aangesien diskrepsies in die Bybel nou deur 'n vergelykende lees duidelik uitgewys is. Die soekte na die historiese Jesus kon dus eers begin toe hierdie probleem in die evangelies onontkenbaar geïdentiseer en geformuleer is. Sedert die 18/19de eeu het al hoe meer navorsers die evangelies as produkte van mense begin sien en teorieë begin ontwerp om verskille tussen die bronne histories te verklaar eerder as om dit te probeer harmoniseer.