

The Qumran Library

The scrolls and scroll fragments recovered in the Qumran environs represent a voluminous body of Jewish documents, a veritable "library", dating from the third century B.C.E. to 68 C.E. Unquestionably, the "library," which is the greatest manuscript find of the twentieth century, demonstrates the rich literary activity of Second Temple Period Jewry and sheds insight into centuries pivotal to both Judaism and Christianity. The library contains some books or works in a large number of copies, yet others are represented only fragmentarily by mere scraps of parchment. There are tens of thousands of scroll fragments. The number of different compositions represented is almost one thousand, and they are written in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

There is less agreement on the specifics of what the Qumran library contains. According to many scholars, the chief categories represented among the Dead Sea Scrolls are:

Biblical

Those works contained in the Hebrew Bible. All of the books of the Bible are represented in the Dead Sea Scroll collection except Esther.

Apocryphal or pseudepigraphical

Those works which are omitted from various canons of the Bible and included in others.

Sectarian

Those scrolls related to a pietistic commune and include ordinances, biblical commentaries, apocalyptic visions, and liturgical works.

While the group producing the sectarian scrolls is believed by many to be the Essenes, there are other scholars who state that there is too little evidence to support the view that one sect produced all of the sectarian material. Also, there are scholars who believe there is a fourth category of scroll materials which is neither biblical, apocryphal, nor "sectarian." In their view, such scrolls, which may include "Songs of the the Sabbath Sacrifice", should be designated simply as contemporary Jewish writing.

Scroll Fragments from the Qumran Library

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[Library of Congress materials relating to the Qumran Library](#)

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Psalms Scroll

Tehillim

Psalms (Tehillim) 11QPs



Parchment

Copied ca. 30 - 50 C.E.

Height 18.5 cm (7 1/4 in.), length 86 cm (33 3/4 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority

This impressive scroll is a collection of psalms and hymns, comprising parts of forty-one biblical psalms (chiefly from chapters 101-50), in non-canonical sequence and with variations in detail. It also presents previously unknown hymns, as well as a prose passage about the psalms composed by King David.

One of the longer texts to be found at Qumran, the manuscript was found in 1956 in Cave 11 and unrolled in 1961. Its surface is the thickest of any of the scrolls—it may be of calfskin rather than sheepskin, which was the more common writing material at Qumran. The script is on the grain side of the skin. The scroll contains twenty-eight incomplete columns of text, six of which are displayed here (cols. 14-19). Each of the preserved columns contains fourteen to seventeen lines; it is clear that six to seven lines are lacking at the bottom of each column.

The scroll's script is of fine quality, with the letters carefully drawn in the Jewish book-hand style of the Herodian period. The Tetragrammaton (the four-letter divine name), however, is written in the paleo-Hebrew script.

Reference:

Sanders, J. A. *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPsa)*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, IV. Oxford, 1965.

English Translation of the Psalms Scroll (Tehillim) 11QPs

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority

Column 19: Plea for Deliverance (A Noncanonical Psalm)

1. Surely a maggot cannot praise thee nor a grave worm recount thy loving-kindness.
2. But the living can praise thee, even those who stumble can laud thee. In revealing
3. thy kindness to them and by thy righteousness thou dost enlighten them. For in thy hand is the soul of every
4. living thing; the breath of all flesh hast thou given. Deal with us, O LORD,
5. according to thy goodness, according to thy great mercy, and according to thy many righteous deeds. The LORD
6. has heeded the voice of those who love his name and has not deprived them of his loving-kindness.
7. Blessed be the LORD, who executes righteous deeds, crowning his saints
8. with loving-kindness and mercy. My soul cries out to praise thy name, to sing high praises
9. for thy loving deeds, to proclaim thy faithfulness--of praise of thee there is no end. Near death
10. was I for my sins, and my iniquities have sold me to the grave; but thou didst save me,
11. O LORD, according to thy great mercy, and according to thy many righteous deeds. Indeed have I
12. loved thy name, and in thy protection have I found refuge. When I remember thy might my heart
13. is brave, and upon thy mercies do I lean. Forgive my sin, O LORD,
14. and purify me from my iniquity. Vouchsafe me a spirit of faith and knowledge, and let me not be dishonored
15. in ruin. Let not Satan rule over me, nor an unclean spirit; neither let pain nor the evil
16. inclination take possession of my bones. For thou, O LORD, art my praise, and in thee do I hope
17. all the day. Let my brothers rejoice with me and the house of my father, who are astonished by the graciousness...
18. [] For e[ver] I will rejoice in thee.

Transcription and translation by J. A. Sanders

- Return the *Psalms Scroll* to [The Qumran Library](#)

Phylactery

Tefillin



Fragment A: height 17.7 cm (7 in.)
length 3 cm (1 3/16 in.)

Fragment B: height 3.8 cm (1 1/2 in.)
length 2.8 cm (1 1/8 in.)

Mur 4 Phyl

Parchment

Copied first century-early second century C.E.

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (3)

The command *"And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes"* (Deut. 6:8) was practiced by Jews from early times. In the Second Temple period the sages established that *tefillin* (phylacteries; amulets in Greek) would include four scriptural passages inscribed on parchment placed in box-like containers made of black leather. One of the phylacteries was worn one on the left arm and the other on the forehead. These served *"as a sign upon your hand and as a symbol on your forehead that with a mighty hand the Lord freed us from Egypt"* (Exodus 13:9, 16).

The Dead Sea region has now yielded the earliest phylactery remains, both of the leather containers and the inscribed strips of parchment. As a rule, phylacteries include the same four selections, two from the book of Exodus (Exod. 13:1-10; 13:11-16) and two from Deuteronomy (Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21). The scriptural verses were penned in clear minuscule characters on the elongated writing material, which was folded over to fit the minute compartments stamped into the containers.

References:

Milik, J. T. "Textes Hebraux et Arameens." In *Les Grottes de Murabba`at, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, II*, pp. 80- 85. Oxford, 1961.

Yadin, Y. "Tefillin (Phylacteries) from Qumran [XQ Phyl 1-4]" (in Hebrew), *Eretz-Israel 9* (1969):60-83 and plates.

English Translation of the Phylactery (Tefillin) Scroll

Mur 4 Phyl

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (3)

Exod. 13:1-3

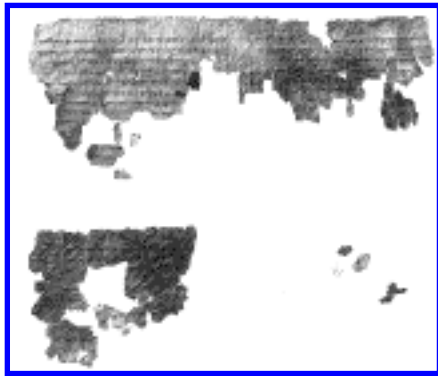
1. (1)And spoke
2. the Lord to
3. Moses
4. saying, (2)"Consecrate
5. to Me every first-born
6. the first issue of every womb of the
7. Israelites, man
8. and beast is Mine."
9. (3)And Moses said to the people,
10. "Remember this day
11. on which you went (free)
12. from Egypt, the house of bondage,
13. how with a mighty hand
14. the Lord freed you from it; no
15. leavened bread shall be eaten. (4)This day

Transcription by J. T. Milik; translation adapted from "Tanakh," pp. 103-4. Philadelphia, 1985.

- Return the *Phylactery* to [The Qumran Library](#)

The Community Rule

Serekh ha-Yahad



Height 8.8 cm (3 7/16 in.), length 21.5 cm (8 7/16 in.)

4Q258 (Sd)

Parchment

Copied late first century B.C.E.–early first century C.E.

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (7)

Originally known as The Manual of Discipline, the Community Rule contains a set of regulations ordering the life of the members of the "yahad," the group within the Judean Desert sect who chose to live communally and whose members accepted strict rules of conduct. This fragment cites the admonitions and punishments to be imposed on violators of the rules, the method of joining the group, the relations between the members, their way of life, and their beliefs. The sect divided humanity between the righteous and the wicked and asserted that human nature and everything that happens in the world are irrevocably predestined. The scroll ends with songs of praise to God.

A complete copy of the scroll, eleven columns in length, was found in Cave 1. Ten fragmentary copies were recovered in Cave 4, and a small section was found in Cave 5. The large number of manuscript copies attests to the importance of this text for the sect. This particular fragment is the longest of the versions of this text found in Cave 4.

Reference

Qimron, E. "A Preliminary Publication of 4QSd Columns VII-VIII" (in Hebrew). *Tarbiz* 60 (1991):435-37.

English Translation of The Community Rule

And according to his insight he shall admit him. In this way both his love and his hatred. No man shall argue or quarrel with the men of perdition. He shall keep his council in secrecy in the midst of the men of deceit and admonish with knowledge, truth and righteous commandment those of chosen conduct, each according to his spiritual quality and according to the norm of time. He shall guide them with knowledge and instruct them in the mysteries of wonder and truth in the midst of the

members of the community, so that they shall behave decently with one another in all that has been revealed to them. That is the time for studying the Torah (lit. clearing the way) in the wilderness. He shall instruct them to do all that is required at that time, and to separate from all those who have not turned aside from all deceit.

These are the norms of conduct for the Master in those times with respect to his loving and to his everlasting hating of the men of perdition in a spirit of secrecy. He shall leave to them property and wealth and earnings like a slave to his lord, (showing) humility before the one who rules over him. He shall be zealous concerning the Law and be prepared for the Day of Revenge.

He shall perform the will [of God] in all his deeds and in all strength as He has commanded. He shall freely delight in all that befalls him, and shall desire nothing except God's will...

Transcription and translation by E. Qimron.

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- Return *The Community Rule* back to [The Qumran Library](#)

Calendrical Document

Mishmarot



Height 13.4 cm (5 1/4 in.), length 21.1 cm (8 1/4 in.)

4Q321 (Mishmarot Ba)

Parchment

Copied ca. 50-25 B.C.E.

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (10)

A significant feature of the community was its calendar, which was based on a solar system of 364 days, unlike the common Jewish lunar calendar, which consisted of 354 days. The calendar played a weighty role in the schism of the community from the rest of Judaism, as the festivals and fast days of the group were ordinary work days for the mainstream community and vice versa.

According to the calendar, the new year always began on a Wednesday, the day on which God created the heavenly bodies. The year consisted of fifty-two weeks, divided into four seasons of thirteen weeks each, and the festivals consistently fell on the same days of the week. It appears that these rosters were intended to provide the members of the "New Covenant" with a time-table for abstaining from important activities on the days before the dark phases of the moon's waning and eclipse (duqah).

References

Jaubert, A. "Le Calendrier de Jubiles et de la Secte de Qumran: Ses origines Bibliques," *Vetus Testamentum* 3 (1953):250-64.

Talmon, S. "The Calendar of the Judean Covenanters." In *The World of Qumran from Within: Collected Studies*, pp. 147-85. Jerusalem, 1989.

Talmon, S. and I. Knohl. "A Calendrical Scroll from Qumran Cave IV -- Miṣ Ba (4Q321)" (in Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 60 (1991):505-21.

English Translation of the Calendrical Document (Mishmarot)

1. [on the first {day} in {the week of} Jedaiah {which falls} on the tw]elfth in it {the seventh month}. On the second {day} in {the week of} Abiah {which falls} on the twenty- f[fifth in

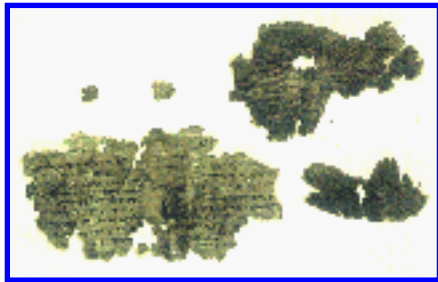
- the eighth {month}; and duqah {is} on the third] {day}
2. [in {the week of} Miyamin {which falls} on the twelfth] in it {the eighth month}. On the third {day} in {the week of} Jaqim {which falls} on the twen[ty-fourth in the ninth {month}; and duqah {is} on the fourth] {day}
 3. [in {the week of} Shekania {which falls} on the eleven]th in it {the ninth month}. On the fifth {day} in {the week of} Immer {which falls} on the twe[n]ty-third in the te[n]th {month}; and duqah {is} on the sixth {day} in {the week of} Je]shbeab {which falls}
 4. [on the tenth in] it {the tenth month}. On the [si]xth {day} in {the week of} Jehezkel {which falls} on the twenty-second in the eleventh month [and duqah {is on the} Sabbath in] {the week of} Petahah {which falls}
 5. [on the ninth in it {the eleventh month}]. On the first {day} in {the week of} Joiarib {which falls} on the t[w]enty-second in the twelfth month; and [duqah {is} on the seco]nd {day} in {the week of} Delaiah {which falls}
 6. [on the ninth in it {the twelfth month}. vacat The] se[cond] {year}: The first {month}. On the sec[on]d {day} in {the week of} Malakiah {which falls} on the tw[entieth in it {the first month}; and] duqah {is}
 7. [on the third {day} in {the week of} Harim {which falls} on the seventh] in it {the first month}. On the fou[r]th {day} in {the week of} Jeshua {which falls} [on] the twentieth in the second {month}; and [duqah {is} on the fifth {day} in {the week of}] Haqqos {which falls} on the seventh
 8. [in it {the second month}. On the fifth {day} in {the week of} Huppah {which falls} on the nine]teenth in the third {month}; and duqa[h] {is} on the six[th {day} in {the week of} Happisses {which falls}

Translation and transcription by S. Talmon and I. Knohl

- Return the *Calendrical Document* back to [The Qumran Library](http://www.qumran.org)

Some Torah Precepts

Miqsat Ma`ase ha-Torah



Fragment A: height 8 cm (3 1/8 in.)
length 12.9 cm (5 in.)
Fragment B: height 4.3 cm (1 11/16 in.)
length 7 cm (2 3/4 in.)
Fragment C: height 9.1 cm (3 9/16 in.)
length 17.4 cm (6 7/8 in.)

4Q396(MMTc) Parchment Copied late first century B.C.E.-early first century C.E. Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (8) This scroll, apparently in the form of a letter, is unique in language, style, and content. Using linguistic and theological analysis, the original text has been dated as one of the earliest works of the Qumran sect. This sectarian polemical document, of which six incomplete manuscripts have been discovered, is commonly referred to as MMT, an abbreviation of its Hebrew name, Miqsat Ma`ase ha-Torah. Together the six fragments provide a composite text of about 130 lines, which probably cover about two-thirds of the original. The initial part of the text is completely missing.

Apparently it consisted of four sections: (1) the opening formula, now lost; (2) a calendar of 364 days; (3) a list of more than twenty rulings in religious law (Halakhot), most of which are peculiar to the sect; and (4) an epilogue that deals with the separation of the sect from the multitude of the people and attempts to persuade the addressee to adopt the sect's legal views. The "halakhot," or religious laws, form the core of the letter; the remainder of the text is merely the framework. The calendar, although a separate section, was probably also related to the sphere of "halakhah." These "halakhot" deal chiefly with the Temple and its ritual. The author states that disagreement on these matters caused the sect to secede from Israel.

References

Strugnell, J., and E. Qimron. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, X. Oxford, forthcoming.

Sussman, Y. "The History of 'Halakha' and the Dead Sea Scrolls -- Preliminary Observations on Miqsat Ma`ase Ha-Torah (4QMMT)" (in Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 59 (1990):11-76.

English Translation of Some Torah Precepts (Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah)

4Q396 (MMTc)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (8)

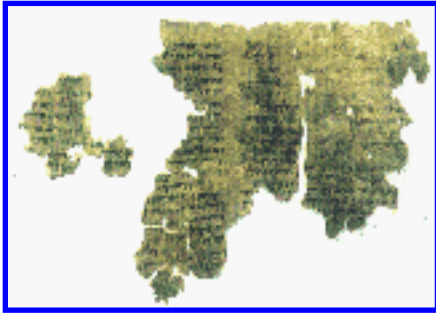
1. until sunset on the eighth day. And concerning [the impurity] of
2. the [dead] person we are of the opinion that every bone, whether it
3. has its flesh on it or not--should be (treated) according to the law of the dead or the slain.
4. And concerning the mixed marriages that are being performed among the people, and they are sons of holy [seed],
5. as is written, Israel is holy. And concerning his (Israel's) [clean] animal
6. it is written that one must not let it mate with another species, and concerning his clothes [it is written that they should not]
7. be of mixed stuff; and one must not sow his field and vineyard with mixed species.
8. Because they (Israel) are holy, and the sons of Aaron are [most holy.]
9. But you know that some of the priests and [the laity intermingle]
10. [And they] adhere to each other and pollute the holy seed
11. as well as their (i.e. the priests') own [seed] with corrupt women. Since [the sons of Aaron should...]

Transcription and translation by J. Strugnell and E. Qimron

- Return *Torah Precepts* to [The Qumran Library](#)

Enoch

Hanokh



Fragment A height 17.5 cm (6 7/8 in.), length 17.5 cm (6 7/8 in.)

Fragment B height 6.4 cm (2 1/2 in.), length 6.9 cm (2 11/16 in.)

4Q201(En ara)

Parchment

Copied ca. 200-150 B.C.E.

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (11)

One of the most important apocryphic works of the Second Temple Period is **Enoch**. According to the biblical narrative (Genesis 5:21-24), Enoch lived only 365 years (far less than the other patriarchs in the period before the Flood). Enoch "walked with God; then he was no more for God took him."

The original language of most of this work was, in all likelihood, Aramaic (an early Semitic language). Although the original version was lost in antiquity, portions of a Greek translation were discovered in Egypt and quotations were known from the Church Fathers. The discovery of the texts from Qumran Cave 4 has finally provided parts of the Aramaic original. In the fragment exhibited here, humankind is called on to observe how unchanging nature follows God's will.

The **Book of Enoch** is a pseudoepigraphal work (a work that claims to be by a biblical character). The **Book of Enoch** was not included in either the Hebrew or most Christian biblical canons, but could have been considered a sacred text by the sectarians. The original Aramaic version was lost until the Dead Sea fragments were discovered.

Reference

Milik, Jazef. T., ed. **The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4** (Oxford, 1976) Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress.

English Translation of Enoch (Hanokh)

4Q201(En ara)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (11)

Ena I ii

12. ...But you have changed your works,
13. [and have not done according to his command,
and tran]sgressed against him; (and have spoken)
haughty and harsh words, with your impure mouths,
14. [against his majesty, for your heart is hard].
You will have no peace.

Ena I iii

13. [They (the leaders) and all ... of them took
for themselves]
14. wives from all that they chose and
[they began to cohabit with them and to defile
themselves with them];
15. and to teach them sorcery and [spells and
the cutting of roots; and to acquaint them
with herbs.]
16. And they become pregnant by them and
bo[re (great) giants three thousand cubits high ...]

Transcription by J. T. Milik, amended by J. C. Greenfield; translation by J. C. Greenfield

- Return the *Enoch Scroll* to [The Qumran Library](#)

Hosea Commentary

Pesher Hoshe`a



4Q166 (4QpHosa)

Parchment

Copied late first century B.C.E.

Height 17.5 cm (6 7/8 in.), length 16.8 cm (6 5/8 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (6)

This text is a commentary, or "pesher," on the prophetic biblical verses from the book of Hosea (2:8-14). The verse presented here refers to the relation of God, the husband, to Israel, the unfaithful wife. In the commentary, the unfaithful ones have been led astray by "the man of the lie." The document states that the affliction befalling those led astray is famine. Although this famine could be a metaphor, it may well be a reference to an actual drought cited in historical sources of that time.

The manuscript shown here is the larger of two unrelated fragments of the Hosea Commentary found in Cave 4. The script, which is identical to that of a commentary on Psalms, belongs to the rustic, semiformal type of the Herodian era.

The Hosea Commentary Scroll was first published by J. Allegro as the fifth volume of the official publication series, "Discoveries in the Judaean Desert."

In 1979, M. Horgan completed a work on all the "pesharim," or commentaries, which included an extensive treatment of the Hosea Commentary fragments. The "pesharim" interpreted the biblical text in light of events of the late Second Temple Period--seeing within the text prophecies and messages relevant to the community's beliefs and practices.

References

John Marco Allegro **Qumran Cave 4. DJD V** (Oxford, 1968) Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress

Maurya Horgan **Pescharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books** (Washington, D.C., 1979) Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress

English Translation of Hosea Commentary (Peshar Hoshe`a)

4Q166 (4QpHosa)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (6)

Hos. 2:10-14

1. (10)[SHE DID NOT KNOW THAT] I MYSELF HAD GIVEN HER THE GRAIN [AND THE WINE]
2. [AND THE OIL, AND] (THAT) I HAD SUPPLIED [SILVER] AND GOLD ... (WHICH) THEY MADE [INTO BAAL. The interpretation of it is]
3. that [they] ate [and] were satisfied, and they forgot God who [had fed them, and all]
4. his commandments they cast behind them, which he had sent to them [by]
5. his servants the prophets. But to those who led them astray they listened, and they honored them []
6. and as if they were gods, they fear them in their blindness.
7. vacat
8. (11)THEREFORE, I SHALL TAKE BACK MY GRAIN AGAIN IN ITS TIME AND MY WINE [IN ITS SEASON,]
9. AND I SHALL WITHDRAW MY WOOL AND MY FLAX FROM COVERING [HER NAKEDNESS.]
10. (12)I SHALL NOW UNCOVER HER PRIVATE PARTS IN THE SIGHT OF [HER] LO [VERS AND]
11. NO [ONE] WILL WITHDRAW HER FROM MY HAND.
12. The interpretation of it is that he smote them with famine and with nakedness so that they became a disgra[ce]
13. and a reproach in the sight of the nations on whom they had leaned for support, but they
14. will not save them from their afflictions. (13)AND I SHALL PUT AN END TO ALL HER JOY,
15. [HER] PIL[GRIMAGE,] HER [NEW] MOON, AND HER SABBATH, AND ALL HER FEASTS. The interpretation of it is that
16. they make [the fe]asts go according to the appointed times of the nation. And [all]
17. [joy] has been turned for them into mourning. (14)AND I SHALL MAKE DESOLATE [HER VINE]
18. [AND HER FIG TREE,] OF WHICH SHE SAID, "THEY ARE THE HIRE [THAT MY LOVERS HAVE GIVEN] ME."
19. AND I SHALL MAKE THEM A FOREST, AND THE W[ILD BEAST OF THE FIELD] WILL DEVOUR THEM.

Transcription and translation by M. Horgan

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- Return the *Hosea Commentary* to [The Qumran Library](http://www.qumran.org)

Prayer For King Jonathan

Tefillah li-Shlomo shel Yonatan ha-Melekh



4Q448

Parchment

Copied between 103–76 B.C.E.

Height 17.8 cm (7 in.), length 9.5 cm (3 3/4 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (2)

The King Jonathan mentioned in this text can be none other than Alexander Jannaeus, a monarch of the Hasmonean dynasty who ruled Judea from 103 to 76 B.C.E. The discovery of a prayer for the welfare of a Hasmonean king among the Qumran texts is unexpected because the community may have vehemently opposed the Hasmoneans. They even may have settled in the remote desert to avoid contact with the Hasmonean authorities and priesthood. If this is indeed a composition that clashes with Qumran views, it is a single occurrence among 600 non-biblical manuscripts. However, scholars are exploring the possibility that Jonathan-Jannaeus, unlike the other Hasmonean rulers, was favored by the Dead Sea community, at least during certain periods, and may explain the prayer's inclusion in the Dead Sea materials.

This text is unique in that it can be clearly dated to the rule of King Jonathan. Three columns of script are preserved, one on the top and two below. The upper column (A) and the lower left (C) column are incomplete. The leather is torn along the lower third of the right margin. A tab of untanned leather, 2.9 by 2.9 cm, folds over the right edge above the tear. A leather thong, remains of which were found threaded through the middle of the leather tab on the right edge, probably tied the rolled-up scroll. The form of the tab--probably part of a fastening--seems to indicate that the extant text was at the beginning of the scroll, which was originally longer. Differences between the script of Column A and that of B and C could indicate that this manuscript is not the work of a single scribe.

This small manuscript contains two distinct parts. The first, column A, presents fragments of a psalm of praise to God. The second, columns B and C, bear a prayer for the welfare of King Jonathan and his kingdom. In column A lines 8-10 are similar to a verse in Psalm 154, preserved in the Psalms Scroll (11QPsa) exhibited here. This hymn, which was not included in the biblical Book of Psalms, is familiar, however, from the tenth-century Syriac Psalter.

Reference:

Eshel, E., H. Eshel, and A. Yardeni. "A Qumran Scroll Containing Part of Psalm 154 and a Prayer for the Welfare of King Jonathan and His Kingdom," *Israel Exploration Journal*, forthcoming.

English Translation of Prayer For King Jonathan (Tefillah li-Shlomo shel Yonatan ha-Melekh)

4Q448

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (2)

Column A

1. Praise the Lord, a Psalm [of
2. You loved as a fa[ther(?)
3. you ruled over [
4. vacat [
5. and your foes were afraid (or: will fear) [
6. ...the heaven [
7. and to the depths of the sea [
8. and upon those who glorify him [
9. the humble from the hand of adversaries [
10. Zion for his habitation, ch[oo]ses

Column C

1. because you love Isr[ael
2. in the day and until evening [
3. to approach, to be [
4. Remember them for blessing [
5. on your name, which is called [
6. kingdom to be blessed [
7.]for the day of war [
8. to King Jonathan [
- 9.

Column B

1. holy city
2. for king Jonathan
3. and all the
congregation
of your people
4. Israel
5. who are in the four
6. winds of heaven
7. peace be (for) all
8. and upon your kingdom
9. your name be blessed

Transcription and translation by E. Eshel, H. Eshel, and A. Yardeni

- Return the *Prayer for King Jonathan Scroll* to [The Qumran Library](#).

Leviticus

Va-Yikrah



11Q1 (PaleoLev)

Parchment

Copied late second century - early first century B.C.E.

Height 10.9 cm (4 1/4 in.), length 100.2 cm (39 1/2 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (4)

This scroll was discovered in 1956, when a group of Ta`amireh Bedouin happened on Cave 11, but it was first unrolled fourteen years later, at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Inscribed in the scroll are parts of the final chapters (22-27) of Leviticus, the third book in the Pentateuch, which expounds laws of sacrifice, atonement, and holiness. This is the lowermost portion (approximately one-fifth of the original height) of the final six columns of the original manuscript. Eighteen small fragments also belong to this scroll. The additional fragments of this manuscript are from preceding chapters: Lev. 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18-22.

The Leviticus Scroll was written in an ancient Hebrew script often referred to as paleo-Hebrew. The almost uniform direction of the downstrokes, sloping to the left, indicates an experienced, rapid, and rhythmic hand of a single scribe. The text was penned on the grain side of a sheep skin. Both vertical and horizontal lines were drawn. The vertical lines aligned the columns and margins; the horizontal lines served as guidelines from which the scribe suspended his letters. Dots served as word-spacers.

Reference

Freedman, D. N., and K. A. Mathews. *The Paleo-Hebrew Leviticus Scroll*. Winona Lake, Indiana, 1985.

English Translation of Leviticus (Va-Yikrah)

11Q1 (PaleoLev)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (4)

Lev. 23:22-29

1. (22)[...edges of your field, or] gather [the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger; I the LO]RD [am]

2. your God.
3. (23)The LORD spoke to Moses saying: (24)Speak to the Israelite people thus: In the seventh month
4. on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion commemorated with load blasts.
5. (25)You shall not work at your occupations; and you shall bring an offering by fire to the LORD.
6. (26)The LORD spoke to Moses saying: (27)Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day
7. of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you: you shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring an offering
8. by fire to the LORD; (28)you shall do no work throughout that day. For
9. [it is a Day of Atonement on which] expiation is made on your behalf [before the LO]RD your God. (29)Indeed, any person who

Translation from "Tanakh," p. 192. Philadelphia, 1985.

- Return the *Leviticus Scroll* to [The Qumran Library](#)

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Shirot `Olat ha-Shabbat



4Q403 (ShirShabbd)

Parchment

Copied mid-first century B.C.E.

Height 18 cm (7 in.), length 19 cm (7 1/2 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (9)

The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, also known as the "Angelic Liturgy," is a liturgical work composed of thirteen separate sections, one for each of the first thirteen Sabbaths of the year. The songs evoke angelic praise and elaborate on angelic priesthood, the heavenly temple, and the Sabbath worship in that temple.

The headings of the various songs may reflect the solar calendar. Although the songs bear no explicit indication of their source, the phraseology and terminology of the texts are very similar to those of other Qumran works.

Eight manuscripts of this work were found in Qumran Cave 4 (4Q400 through 407) and one in Cave 11, dating from the late Hasmonean and Herodian periods. One manuscript of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice was found at Masada, a Zealot fortress.

References

Newsom, Carol. *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition*. Atlanta, 1985. *This is the definitive translation and analysis of these distinctive hymns.*

Strugnell, J. "The Angelic Liturgy at Qumran--4QSerek Shirot `Olat Hassabbat." In *Congress Volume*, Oxford 1959. *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, vol. 7, pp. 318-45. Leiden, 1960.

English Translation of Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (Shirot `Olat ha-Shabbat)

4Q403(ShirShabbd)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (9)

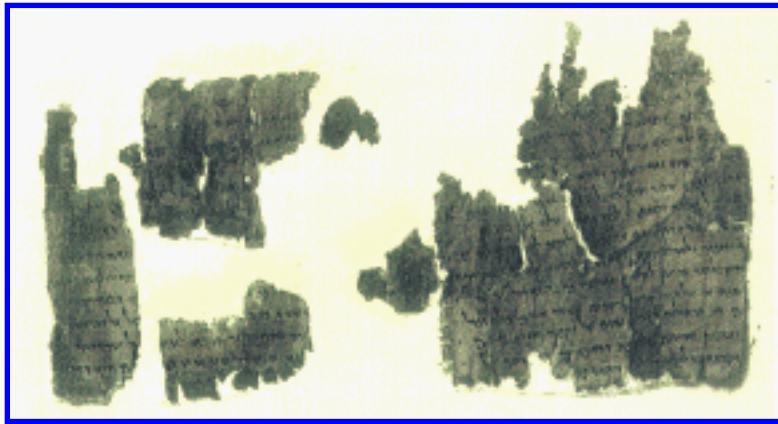
30. By the instructor. Song of the sacrifice of the seventh Sabbath on the sixteenth of the month. Praise the God of the lofty heights, O you lofty ones among all the
31. elim of knowledge. Let the holiest of the godlike ones sanctify the King of glory who sanctifies by holiness all His holy ones. O you chiefs of the praises of
32. all the godlike beings, praise the splendidly [pr]aiseworthy God. For in the splendor of praise is the glory of His realm. From it (comes) the praises of all
33. the godlike ones together with the splendor of all [His] maj[esty. And] exalt his exaltedness to exalted heaven, you most godlike ones of the lofty elim, and (exalt) His glorious divinity above
34. all the lofty heights. For H[e is God of gods] of all the chiefs of the heights of heaven and King of ki[n]gs] of all the eternal councils. (by the intention of)
35. (His knowledge) At the words of His mouth come into being [all the lofty angels]; at the utterance of His lips all the eternal spirits; [by the in]tention of His knowledge all His creatures
36. in their undertakings. Sing with joy, you who rejoice [in His knowledge with] rejoicing among the wondrous godlike beings. And chant His glory with the tongue of all who chant with knowledge; and (chant) His wonderful songs of joy
37. with the mouth of all who chant [of Him. For He is] God of all who rejoice {in knowledge} forever and Judge in His power of all the spirits of understanding.

Transcription and translation by C. Newsom

- Return the *Songs of the Sabbath Scroll* to [The Qumran Library](#)

Damascus Document

Brit Damesek



4Q271 (Df)

Parchment

Copied late first century B.C.E.

Height 10.9 cm (4 1/4 in.), length 9.3 cm (3 5/8 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (1)

The Damascus Document is a collection of rules and instructions reflecting the practices of a sectarian community. It includes two elements. The first is an admonition that implores the congregation to remain faithful to the covenant of those who retreated from Judea to the "Land of Damascus." The second lists statutes dealing with vows and oaths, the tribunal, witnesses and judges, purification of water, Sabbath laws, and ritual cleanliness. The right-hand margin is incomplete. The left-hand margin was sewn to another piece of parchment, as evidenced by the remaining stitches.

In 1896, noted Talmud scholar and educator Solomon Schechter discovered sectarian compositions which later were found to be medieval versions of the Damascus Document. Schechter's find in a synagogue storeroom near Cairo, almost fifty years before the Qumran discoveries, may be regarded as the true starting point of modern scroll research.

References

Baumgarten, J. "The Laws of the Damascus Document in Current Research." In *The Damascus Document Reconsidered*. Edited by M. Broshi. Jerusalem, 1992. *Written by Baltimore Hebrew University scholar Joseph Baumgarten, this 1992 imprint includes an analysis of the Damascus Document and its relation to Jewish Law, or halakhah.*

Rabin, C. *The Zadokite Documents*. Oxford, 1958.

Schechter, S. *Fragments of a Zadokite Work: Documents of Jewish Sectaries*, vol. 1. Cambridge, England, 1910.

English Translation of Damascus Document (Brit Damesek)

4Q271 (Df)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (1)

1. ...with money...
2. ...[his means did not] suffice to [return it to him] and the year [for redemption approaches?]....
3. ...and may God release him? from his sins. Let not [] in one, for
4. it is an abomination....And concerning what he said (Lev. 25:14), ["When you sell
5. anything to or buy anything from] your neighbor, you shall not defraud one another," this is the expli[cation...]
6. ...] everything that he knows that is found...
7. ...and he knows that he is wronging him, whether it concerns man or beast. And if
8. [a man gives his daughter to another ma]n, let him disclose all her blemishes to him, lest he bring upon himself the judgement
9. [of the curse which is said (Deut. 27:18)] (of the one) that "makes the blind to wander out of the way." Moreover, he should not give her to one unfit for her, for
10. [that is Kila'yim, (plowing with) o]x and ass and wearing wool and linen together. Let no man bring
11. [a woman into the holy] who has had sexual experience, whether she had such experience
12. [in the home] of her father or as a widow who had intercourse after she was widowed. And any woman
13. [upon whom] there is a bad name in her maidenhood in her father's home, let no man take her, except
14. [upon examination] by reliable [women] who have clear knowledge, by command of the Supervisor over
15. [the Many. After]ward he may take her, and when he takes her he shall act in accordance with the law ...and he shall not tell...
16. [] L []

Transcription and translation by J. Baumgarten

- Return the *Damascus Document* to [The Qumran Library](#).

The War Rule

Serekh ha-Milhamah



4Q285 (SM)

Parchment

Copied early first century C.E.

Height 4 cm (1 1/2 in.), length 5 cm (2 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (12)

This six-line fragment, commonly referred to as the "Pierced Messiah" text, is written in a Herodian script of the first half of the first century C.E. and refers to a Messiah from the Branch of David, to a judgement, and to a killing.

Hebrew is comprised primarily of consonants; vowels must be supplied by the reader. The appropriate vowels depend on the context. Thus, the text (line 4) may be translated as "and the Prince of the Congregation, the Branch of David, will kill him," or alternately read as "and they killed the Prince." Because of the second reading, the text was dubbed the "Pierced Messiah." The transcription and translation presented here support the "killing Messiah" interpretation, alluding to a triumphant Messiah (Isaiah 11:4).

In September 1992, "Time Magazine" published an article on the War Rule fragment displayed here (object no. 12) exploring the differing interpretations. A "piercing messiah" reading would support the traditional Jewish view of a triumphant messiah. If, on the other hand, the fragment were interpreted as speaking of a "pierced messiah," it would anticipate the New Testament view of the preordained death of the messiah. The scholarly basis for these differing interpretations--but not their theological ramifications--are reviewed in "A Pierced or Piercing Messiah?"

References

Vermes, G. "The Oxford Forum for Qumran Research: Seminar on the Rule of the War from Cave 4 (4Q285)," **Journal of Jewish Studies** 43 (Spring 1992):85-90.

Richard N. Ostling *Is Jesus in the Dead Sea Scrolls?* **Time** (September 21, 1992) Unbound serial. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

James D. Tabor *A Pierced or Piercing Messiah? -- The Verdict is Still Out* **Biblical Archaeology Review** 18 (November - December 1992) Unbound serial. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

English Translation of The War Rule (Serekh ha-Milhamah)

4Q285 (SM)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (12)

1.]Isaiah the prophet: [The thickets of the forest] will be cut [down
2. with an axe and Lebanon by a majestic one will f]all. And there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse [
3.] the Branch of David and they will enter into judgement with [
4.] and the Prince of the Congregation, the Bran[ch of David] will kill him [
5. by stroke]s and by wounds. And a Priest [of renown (?)] will command [
6. the s]lai[n] of the Kitti[m]

Transcription and translation by G. Vermes

- Return *The War Rule* to [The Qumran Library](#).

Library of Congress Materials Relating to the Qumran Library

These items were on display in the exhibit at the Library of Congress, May - August 1993. Images of these objects are not included in the online version of the exhibit, but these exhibit captions are included to provide some additional background on the scholarly work surrounding the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Qumran Community, and its Library.

Psalms Scroll

J. A. Sanders published his findings on the Psalms Scroll first in 1965, as the fourth volume of "Discoveries in the Judaean Desert," the official publication series. This is a later version published in the United States.

J.A. Sanders **The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll** (Itacha, 1967). Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress.

The First Hebrew Printed Book of the Bible: The Psalms

Hand-written books of the Bible were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. This Psalter is the first book of the Bible printed in Hebrew. This edition of the Psalms includes the commentary of David Kimhi and was printed in 1477, probably in Bologna. The commentary on the Psalms was heavily censored by Church authorities. The owner of the book, however, inserted by hand each word that had been expunged.

Psalms (Bologna, 1477) Printed book. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

The Aleppo Codex

Until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, the Aleppo Codex, which dates to the tenth century C.E., was the oldest known Bible codex. This facsimile was published in 1976.

Aleppo Codex (Jerusalem, 1976) Printed book. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

The Complutensian

This is the earliest of the great polyglot editions of the Bible and includes texts in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin. Produced under the patronage of Cardinal Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros (1436-

1517), it was believed to have cost 50,000 gold ducats. Psalm 145 is a hymn arranged according to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. It is interesting to note that today's biblical text does not include a verse for the letter "nun," the fourteenth letter of the alphabet. The fragment of the Psalm Scroll displayed here does include a missing verse for this letter.

Psalms [Complutensian] (1514-1517) Printed polyglot Bible. Rare and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress.

The Community Rule

A complete version of the Community Rule was uncovered in Cave 1. It was photographed by J. Trever, an archaeologist at the American Schools of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. This manuscript is one of three that were exhibited at the Library of Congress in 1949. The fragment of the Community Rule on display here is from Cave 4.

John Trever **Scrolls from Qumran Cave I** (Jerusalem, 1972) Printed book. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress

Torah Scroll

This eighteenth-century Torah scroll was written in North Africa. It is rolled to Leviticus, 23:22-29, which corresponds to the Leviticus Scroll from Cave 4 displayed here (object no. 4). Note the "wandering peh" (a Hebrew letter) which occurs frequently in the displayed column.

Torah Scroll (North Africa, c. 18th century) Parchment. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

Leviticus Scroll

The large paleo-Hebrew fragment of Leviticus on display here was published in 1985 by D.N. Freedman and K.A. Mathews. The authors transliterated the paleo-Hebrew script into modern Hebrew characters.

D.N. Freedman and K.A. Mathews **The Paleo-Hebrew Leviticus Scroll** (11 Qpaleo Lev) (Winona Lake, Indiana, 1985) Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress

First Maccabees

Displayed here is the opening page of the First Book of Maccabees from the Walton Polyglot Bible. First Maccabees describes the rule of the early Hasmonean princes who freed Judea from the yoke of the Syrian rulers in 168 B.C.E. It is included in the Roman Catholic scriptural canon, but was removed from the Protestant canon after the Reformation and relegated to the Apocrypha.

First Maccabees [Walton's Polyglot] (London, 1655-1657) Printed book. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress

Samaritan Bible

The modern descendant of the paleo-Hebrew script of the Leviticus Scroll (object no. 4) is the Samaritan script. This biblical manuscript, written in the Samaritan script, is opened to Leviticus 23:22-29. Note the similarity between the paleo-Hebrew script of the Leviticus Scroll written in the late second century B.C.E. and this Samaritan manuscript from the late nineteenth century.

Leviticus [Samaritan Pentateuch] (1880) Manuscript book. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress

Dead Sea Scrolls from the Third Century C.E.

In his ecclesiastical history, Eusebius relates the story of Origen, who consulted scrolls found in caves near Jericho for his "Hexapla," a comprehensive redaction of the Hebrew Scriptures completed in the first half of the third century C.E.

In the . . . edition of the Psalms . . . [Origen reported] again how he found one of [the translations] at Jericho in a tunnel in the time of Antoninus the son of Severus.

Eusebius **Auncient ecclesiasticall histories** ... (London, 1585) Printed book. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

The First "Dead Sea Scroll": The Damascus Document

Scholar and educator Solomon Schechter's discovery in 1896 of a sectarian document--which turned out to be a medieval version of the Damascus Document--among the Cairo Genizah trove was first published in 1910 as "Fragments of a Zadokite Work." Displayed here is a reprint of this first Dead Sea Scroll publication, published 37 years before the discovery.

Solomon Schechter **Documents of Jewish Sectaries** (New York, 1970) Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress.

Ecclesiasticus: The Wisdom of Ben Sirah

Included among the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus extols wisdom and ethical conduct. A Hebrew version of the book, which was known only in Greek after the tenth century, was discovered by Solomon Schechter in the Cairo Genizah in the late nineteenth century. Fragments of the original Hebrew version were discovered in Cave 2.

Displayed here are Greek (from the Septuagint), and Latin versions of Ecclesiasticus from the second

of the great polyglot Bibles, the "Antwerp" or "Plantin" Polyglot.

Ecclesiasticus [Plantin's Polyglot] (Antwerp, 1569-1572) Printed book, volume 3. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress.

- Return to [The Qumran Library](#)

