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## The Gabriel Revelation (Hazon Gabriel): A Reused Masseba Forgery?

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**THE GABRIEL REVELATION (HAZON GABRIEL):  
A REUSED MASSEBA FORGERY?**

The Gabriel Revelation (*Hazon Gabriel*) is a large limestone stele that contains a lengthy Hebrew text in two columns.<sup>1</sup> The smooth side of the stone with the composition known as the Gabriel Revelation has forty-seven horizontal guidelines, four vertical lines bordering the columns, and eighty-seven lines of writing in ink on stone. Much of the composition is incomplete or partially preserved. The Gabriel Revelation is of unknown provenance. Its current owner purchased the artifact from a Jordanian antiquities dealer around the year 2000.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The stone is approximately 37 centimeters in width and 96 centimeters in length. For the first publication of the text, see A. Yardeni and B. Elizur, *A Hebrew Prophetic Text on Stone from the First Century BCE: First Publication*, “Cathedra” 123 (2007), pp. 55-66. For an updated English translation of the original publication, see A. Yardeni and B. Elizur, *A Hebrew Prophetic Text on Stone from the Early Herodian Period: A Preliminary Report*, [in:] M. Henze, ed. *Hazon Gabriel: New Readings of the Gabriel Revelation*, Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2011, pp. 11-29. Some significant improved readings have been suggested by the following: M. Ben-Asher, *On the Language of the Vision of Gabriel*, “Revue de Qumran” 23 (2008), pp. 491-524; T. Elgvin, “Notes on the Gabriel Inscription,” *Semitica* 54 (2012), pp. 221-32; E. Qimron and A. Yuditsky, *Notes on the So-Called Gabriel Vision Inscription*, [in:] *Hazon Gabriel*, pp. 11-29; G. Rendsburg, *Linguistic and Stylistic Notes to the Hazon Gabriel Inscription*, “Dead Sea Discoveries” 16 (2009), pp. 107-16; *idem*, *Hazon Gabriel: A Grammatical Sketch*, [in:] *Hazon Gabriel*, pp. 61-91.

<sup>2</sup> See the account of its discovery and purchase by its current owner, D. Jeselsohn, in *The Jeselsohn Stone: Discovery and Publication*, [in:] *Hazon Gabriel*, pp. 1-9. In this article, Jeselsohn writes that a deceased antiquities dealer from Irbid, in northern Jordan, sent him the Gabriel Revelation in a large wooden crate “about ten years ago” (p. 2). His account of how he acquired the object appeared in print in 2011. The concerns expressed

## I. Background

A glance at any of the published photographs of the Gabriel Revelation reveals that it has a striking resemblance to the Dead Sea Scrolls, which has led to it being called “a Dead Sea Scroll in stone.”<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the artifact initially attracted considerable press and was displayed for a time at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> The unusual nature of this intriguing object is almost as mysterious as its content and continues to fascinate laypersons and scholars alike. The preserved portions of the text appear to contain a dialogue between the revealer and the recipient of a revelation. In line 77, the speaker identifies himself as Gabriel. This angel is presumably the narrator of the revelation found in the previous columns. The Gabriel Revelation has generated much debate among scholars because of its apocalyptic elements, its description of an attack on Jerusalem, the city’s divine deliverance, an apparent false messiah, and a Davidic messiah who plays some role in the eschatological drama described in the text.<sup>5</sup> Because of its content, script, and to some extent its general appearance, the Gabriel Revelation has been dated to the late first century B.C.E. or the early first century

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in the present study do not imply that anyone involved in the acquisition or publication of the Gabriel Revelation believed they were working with a forged artifact or had any knowledge of its possible production (assuming it is a forgery).

<sup>3</sup> A. Yardeni, *A New Dead Sea Scroll in Stone?: Bible-like Prophecy Was Mounted in a Wall 2,000 Years Ago*, “Biblical Archaeology Review” 34/1 (2008), pp. 60-61. Cohen-Matlofsky and Hamidovic propose that the Gabriel Inscription is not an autograph but that it was copied from another document. See C. Cohen-Matlofsky, *Hazon Gabriel: A Social Historian’s Point of View*, “Bible and Interpretation,” September 2012 (<http://www.bibleinterp.com/opeds/coh368019.shtml>); D. Hamidovic, *La vision de Gabriel*, “Revue d’Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses” 54 (2009), pp. 149, 151-52.

<sup>4</sup> D. Estrin, *Mysterious Hebrew Stone Displayed in Jerusalem*, “Associated Press” 30 April, 2013 (Archived at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20130503093324/http://bigstory.ap.org/article/jerusalem-unveils-mysterious-hebrew-stone>). The author had the opportunity to view the Gabriel Revelation for a lengthy period of time at the Israel Museum. Some of the descriptions of the stone’s appearance are based on my observation. Jeselson’s (*The Jeselson Stone*, pp. 1-9) account of the stone’s purported provenance contains much information about the object’s public reception.

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed description of these elements in the Gabriel Revelation, see J. Collins, *Gabriel and David: Some Reflections on an Enigmatic Text*, [in:] *Hazon Gabriel*, pp. 99-112; I. Knohl, *Messiahs and Resurrection in the “Gabriel Revelation”*, New York, Continuum, 2009; *idem*, ‘By Three Days, Live’: *Messiahs, Resurrection and Ascent to Heaven in Hazon Gabriel*, “Journal of Religion” 88 (2004), pp. 147-58; *idem*, *The Apocalyptic and Messianic Dimensions of the Gabriel Revelation in Their Historical Context*, [in:] *Hazon Gabriel*, pp. 39-51.

C.E. This would make it contemporary with the period during which many of the Dead Sea Scrolls were produced and copied.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the Gabriel Revelation’s resemblance to the Dead Sea Scrolls, the absence of any distinctively sectarian language or motifs in its text makes it unlikely that the Qumran community produced it.<sup>7</sup> It is also unique for another reason. The use of ink on a stone of this length to record a Second Temple Period text is without any clear parallel. The most frequently cited evidence in favor of its authenticity is Yuval Goren’s micromorphologic examination. He determined that the stone upon which the Gabriel Revelation was written came from the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, east of the Lisan peninsula. Goren comments that the Gabriel Revelation shows no indication of modern treatment on its surface. Yet, he acknowledges that his examination does not indicate that the entire inscription, or even parts of it, is ancient.<sup>8</sup> Despite its problematic origin, the majority of scholars who have written on the Gabriel Revelation accept its authenticity as an ancient artifact from the Second Temple Period.<sup>9</sup> Årstein Justnes is the first major researcher to have raised some doubts in print concerning its genuineness. He highlights its uncertain origin, its novel use of ink on stone, its linguistic profile, and its uncertain genre to raise the possibility that it is a forgery.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> For the dates of the Dead Sea Scrolls, see B. Webster, *Chronological Index of the Texts from the Judaean Desert*, [in:] *The Texts from the Judaean Desert*, E. Tov et al. ed., Oxford, Clarendon, 2002, pp. 351-446. For the dating of the Gabriel Revelation, see the citations in note 14.

<sup>7</sup> Regardless of whether it is a forgery or a genuine artifact, its language and theological content is different from the Dead Sea Scrolls. See further M. Henze, *Some Observations on the Hazon Gabriel*, [in:] *Hazon Gabriel*, pp. 113-15; U. Schattner-Rieser, *Die Vision Gabriels (Hazon Gabriel-HazGab). Ein Steintext vom Toten Meer?* “Early Christianity” 2 (2011), pp. 517-36.

<sup>8</sup> Y. Goren, *Micromorphologic Examination of the “Gabriel Revelation” Stone*, “Israel Exploration Journal” 58 (2008), pp. 220-29, esp. 228. Goren cautions that further scientific investigation, especially the dating of the pigment, is necessary to verify its authenticity.

<sup>9</sup> For a concise summary of scholarly opinions, see T. Elgvin *Gabriel, Vision of*, [in:] *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, vol. 9, D. C. Allison et al. ed. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2014, pp. 877-78.

<sup>10</sup> Å. Justins, *Gabriels åpenbaring (Hazon Gabriel)—En modern forfalskning?* “Teologisk Tidsskrift” 2 (2015), pp. 120-33. Justins has written additional articles on the Gabriel Revelation and compiled an extensive bibliography of works, web links, and conference presentations on the artifact at his website, “The Lying Pen of Scribes: Manuscript Forgeries and Counterfeiting Scripture in the Twenty-First Century” (<https://lyingpen.com/>). Few of the items in his listing accept or examine in depth his doubts regarding the Gabriel Revelation’s authenticity.

Relatively little scholarship has been devoted to the possibility that the Gabriel Revelation is a forgery since Justnes first raised his concerns about its antiquity. Yet, the object has attracted considerable scholarly interest largely because of Israel Knohl's reconstruction of the missing portion of line 80 as a reference to resurrection from the dead. He proposes that the angel Gabriel summons a Messiah, the Messiah of Joseph, to come back to life three days after his death.<sup>11</sup> Because resurrection is a major theological belief of great importance to the study of Second Temple Judaism and nascent Christianity, it is not surprising that much of the early academic literature on the Gabriel Revelation dealt with Knohl's thesis. Scholars have then sought to determine the text's likely date of composition to highlight any possible parallels between it and other religious documents and historical events that could help us understand its enigmatic content, its sectarian provenance, and its genre. The discussion of the Gabriel Revelation's description of Davidic messianism continues to attract the greatest scholarly attention.

## II. Content

Because the Gabriel Revelation appears to describe some historical event involving Jerusalem (line 57), the Davidic messiah (line 16), and the angel Michael (line 28), it is of potential importance for understanding Davidic messianism of the Hasmonean and early Herodian periods. Israel Knohl proposes that this text espouses the notion of "catastrophic messianism," in which a king is defeated by his enemies, following which salvation will be brought through divine intervention.<sup>12</sup> Matthias Henze classifies the work as an "apocalypse of the historical type" that is concerned with the fate of Jerusalem in the end time.<sup>13</sup> Based on its content, especially its apocalyptic and messianic elements, the Gabriel Revelation has been dated to the period of Pompey's 63 B.C.E. siege of Jerusalem, to the suppression of the 4 B.C.E. revolt in Judea by

<sup>11</sup> See Knohl, *Messiah Before Jesus*, *idem*, *By Three Days Live*, 147-58. For dissenting opinions, see the arguments and sources cited in Collins, *Gabriel and David*, pp. 99-102. Jonathan Klawans has questioned the manner in which the Gabriel Revelation was made accessible to scholars and how this continues to influence its study in his insightful article on dubious artifacts. He especially focuses on the role Knohl's thesis contains to play in discussions of the Gabriel Revelation. See J. Klawans, *Deceptive Intentions: Forgeries, Falsehoods and the Study of Ancient Judaism*, "Jewish Quarterly Review" 108/4 (2018), pp. 489-501, esp. 498-500

<sup>12</sup> Knohl, *Apocalyptic*, pp. 454-45.

<sup>13</sup> Henze, *Some Observations*, p. 129.

Varus, or slightly later.<sup>14</sup> The problem with all efforts to date the Gabriel Revelation is that scholars have devoted little attention to determining its authenticity. What is perhaps even more perplexing in attempting to understand this unique artifact is its near absence in recent academic literature.

Despite the Gabriel Revelation's clear historical and theological significance, it is surprising that it rarely appears in studies of the Hasmonean and early Herodian periods.<sup>15</sup> This absence became apparent to me when I was researching my two recent books on the Hasmoneans, which also include discussions of the early Herodian era.<sup>16</sup> Although I always had some concerns about the Gabriel Revelation's authenticity since the first publication of its text, I became more skeptical of its genuineness when I noticed that the three most recent books on the Hasmonean period, all by esteemed scholars, do not mention the Gabriel Revelation despite its relevance for their studies.<sup>17</sup> Consequently,

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<sup>14</sup> For a discussion of the first dating, see Collins, *Gabriel and David*, pp. 111-12. For the second possibility, see Knohl, *Messiah Before Jesus*, pp. 45-51. Hamidovic is unique among scholars to date the script to after 50 C.E. and place its historical content to the time of Titus's siege of Jerusalem. See D. Hamidovic, *An Eschatological Drama in Hazon Gabriel: Fantasy or Historical Background?* "Semitica" 54 (2012), pp. 233-50. The widely accepted dating of the Gabriel Revelation is largely based on the paleographic classification of its script as "typical of the Herodian" period to the late first century B.C.E. or early first century C.E. See Yardeni and Elizur, *A Hebrew Prophetic Text on Stone*, pp. 25-29. The handwriting on the Gabriel Revelation is quite careless, although some consideration must be made for its rough surface.

<sup>15</sup> A web search and review of items in The Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature database (<http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/>) lists numerous publications, both popular and scholarly, on this artifact. Most date to the first few years after the initial publication of the Gabriel Inscription's text.

<sup>16</sup> K. Atkinson, *The Hasmoneans and Their Neighbors: New Historical Reconstructions from the Dead Sea Scrolls and Classical Sources*, London, Bloomsbury T and T Clark, 2018; *idem*, *A History of the Hasmonean State: Josephus and Beyond*, London, Bloomsbury T and T Clark, 2016.

<sup>17</sup> K. Berthelot, *In Search of the Promised Land?: The Hasmonean Dynasty Between Biblical Models and Hellenistic Diplomacy*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018; E. Dąbrowa *The Hasmoneans and their State: A Study in History, Ideology, and the Institutions*, Kraków, Jagiellonian University Press, 2010; E. Regev, *The Hasmoneans: Ideology, Archaeology, Identity*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013. Of all the recent books on this period, only the study of Sharon acknowledges the existence of the Gabriel Revelation. Nevertheless, he, only mentions it in a footnote in connection with his discussion of the Psalms of Solomon and appears to assume it is authentic. See N. Sharon, *Judea Under Roman Domination: The First Generation of Statelessness and Its Legacy*, Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2017, p. 317 n. 212.

I omitted all reference to this artifact in my recent books and articles on the Hasmonean era. Because of the potential importance of the Gabriel Revelation to our understanding of the Second Temple Period and its continued acceptance as an ancient artifact, I feel it imperative to share with the scholarly community some of my concerns that continue to cause me to exclude it from my publications.

### III. Concerns

Scholars have good reason to be suspicious of the Gabriel Revelation's authenticity. The publication of unprovenanced artifacts with unverifiable stories about their purported origins has only increased in recent decades.<sup>18</sup> This is especially true of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The appearance since 2002 of new "Dead Sea Scrolls" fragments, many of them obtained through the Kando family, and edited by reputable scholars that have been subsequently deemed by some of their editors to be inauthentic, should make us cautious in accepting the Gabriel Revelation as genuine.<sup>19</sup> Stephen Reed and Stephen Pfann have highlighted some

<sup>18</sup> The James Ossuary and the Jehoash (Yehoash) Inscription are the most prominent examples. The bibliography on both is voluminous. The final reports on the authenticity of these objects are available at "The Bible and Interpretation" ([http://bibleinterp.com/articles/Final\\_Reports.shtml](http://bibleinterp.com/articles/Final_Reports.shtml)). For an insightful discussion of the antiquities trade and biblical forgeries, which includes discussions of these artifacts, see the entertaining account of N. Burleigh, *Unholy Business: A True Tale of Faith, Greed, and Forgery in the Holy Land*, New York, Harper-Collins, 2008. Recent doubts concerning the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the famed Nag Hammadi Codices should urge academics to be cautious in accepting any story about the origin of artifacts that were not discovered in an excavation or by professional scholars. See further, N. D. Lewis and J. A. Blount, *Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, "Journal of Biblical Literature" 133/2 (2014), pp. 399-419; M. Goodacre, *How Reliable is the Story of the Nag Hammadi Discovery?* "Journal for the Study of the New Testament" 35/4 (2013), pp. 303-22. The debate over the so-called "Gospel of Jesus' Wife," which was the subject of an entire issue of *New Testament Studies* (volume 61, issue 3, 2015) devoted to its authenticity, provides another recent example of the perils in assuming the genuineness of any unprovenanced artifact. For an entertaining, and somewhat shocking, account of its actual provenance, see A. Sabar, *The Unbelievable Tale of Jesus's Wife*, "The Atlantic" July/August, 2016 (<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/07/the-unbelievable-tale-of-jesus-wife/485573/>). This article is important to the present discussion since it reveals that a person with excellent academic credentials and training in ancient languages produced a forged artifact. This raises the possibility that trained scholars were involved in the production of some of the forgeries mentioned in the present article.

<sup>19</sup> See Å. Justins and J. M. Rasmussen, *Soli Deo Gloria? The Scholars, the Market, and the Dubious Post-2002 Dead Sea Scrolls-like Fragments*, "The Bible and Inter-

problems with the presumed provenance of many Dead Sea Scrolls. Their observations are significant since this corpus is among the most widely studied collection of ancient documents in existence. Reed and Pfann have shown that of the nearly 600 fragmentary manuscripts identified as having come from Cave 4, less than one-fourth were found in an excavation and therefore can be definitively associated with this particular cave.<sup>20</sup> The "Scrolls Ledger" of the original publication team reveals that many fragments purchased during January-March 1953 came from "unknown caves," with a single exception. Yet, a significant proportion of these texts are identified as having originated from Cave 4.<sup>21</sup> Although there is no doubt that these Dead Sea Scrolls are authentic, scholars still accept the stories regarding their purported attribution to Cave 4 as certain and then create theories to explain the deposition of these texts in this and other caves that pose implications for reconstructing the history of the Qumran community.<sup>22</sup>

pretation," November 2017 (<http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/2017/11/jus418014.shtml>); K. Davis, *et al.*, *Nine Dubious "Dead Sea Scrolls" Fragments from the Twenty-First Century*, "Dead Sea Discoveries" 24/2 (2017), pp. 189-228. This article contains an extensive listing of major journals that have published some of these fragments. The authors of this study (p. 191, n. 4) also list many other collections with related unprovenanced fragments they suspect are forgeries. For additional likely questionable "Dead Sea Scrolls" fragments and doubts about their origin stories, see further K. Davis, *Caves of Dispute: Patterns of Correspondence and Suspicion in the Post-2002 'Dead Sea Scrolls' Fragments*, "Dead Sea Discoveries" 24/2 (2017), pp. 229-70. For a list of known unprovenanced fragments with comments on some that are likely not genuine, see further E. Tigchelaar, *A Provisional List of Unprovenanced, Twenty-First Century, Dead Sea Scrolls-like Fragments*, "Dead Sea Discoveries" 24/2 (2017), pp. 173-88.

<sup>20</sup> S. J. Pfann, *Sites in the Judean Desert Where Texts Have Been Found* [in:] E. Tov, ed. *The Dead Sea Scrolls on Microfiche: Companion Volume*, Leiden, Brill, 2007, pp. 109-19; S. A. Reed, *Find-Sites of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, "Dead Sea Discoveries" 14 (2007), pp. 199-21. For further discussion of this issue and its significance, see further Atkinson, *Hasmoneans and their Neighbors*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>21</sup> W. Fields, *Fields, The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Full History*, Leiden, Brill, 2009, p. 231. E. Tov suggests that several Cave 4 texts came from other sites. He notes that the Cave 4 text 4QGen<sup>b</sup>, as suggested by its editor, J. R. Davila, is similar to the medieval Masoretic Text and most likely originated from the Wadi Murabba'at. Tov also observes that 4Q347 and XHev/Se 32 (papDeed F) are part of the same document, which shows that the Bedouin mixed texts found at other places with the Qumran materials. See further E. Tov, *Some Thoughts at the Close of the Discoveries in the Judean Desert Publications* [in:] A. D. Roitman, et al., ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture*, Leiden, Brill, 2011, pp. 9-10.

<sup>22</sup> For the most prominent thesis that uses the purported findspots of the Dead Sea Scrolls to date their deposition to different times and uses this information to understand the history of Khirbet Qumran, see D. Stökl ben Ezra, *Wie viele Bibliotheken gab es in*

Photographs and later joins made between Dead Sea Scroll fragments clearly demonstrate that some of the texts not found by scholars came from the Qumran caves. Yet, the majority of Cave 4 Dead Sea Scrolls were not uncovered during the excavations of Khirbet Qumran and its vicinity. While many of the Cave 4 texts certainly came from this cave, we have no actual proof many of them did. I am not implying that these fragments are fakes; I am convinced the fragments in the *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series (DJD)* are genuine. However, I am less certain about the authenticity of Dead Sea Scroll-like fragments that have surfaced in recent decades, especially those that have appeared on the antiquities market after the completion of the *DJD* series. The uncertain origin of many genuine Dead Sea Scrolls attributed to Cave 4 shows that we should never assume we know the provenance of any unexcavated artifact. For other manuscript discoveries and items such as the Gabriel Revelation for which we only have stories about their purported provenance, often second hand from deceased or unavailable sources, we should be highly skeptical of their authenticity as well as their purported provenance.

Unprovenanced finds such as the Gabriel Revelation and the new Dead Sea Scroll fragments put scholars in an unfortunate situation. Scholars should assume that any unprovenanced object is a fake until scientists prove it is not genuine. Only objects obtained through archaeological excavations can be declared authentic. Even those artifacts found by reputable scholars in libraries or other places outside an archaeological excavation should be considered suspect. In other words, all artifacts require extraordinary proof they are ancient. In light of the recent appearance of many problematic texts and objects of unknown provenance, it is appropriate to question the Gabriel Revelation's authenticity particularly since its content is similar to many Dead Sea Scrolls whose authenticity is questioned.<sup>23</sup>

*Qumran?*," [in:] *Qumran und die Archäologie*, J. Frey, C. Claussen, and N. Kessler, ed., Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2011, pp. 327-46.

<sup>23</sup> In his insightful study of the controversial document known as Secret Mark, Stephen Carlson comments that successful fakes are tightly coupled to the time of their production and designed to deceive a contemporary. See S. Carlson, *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith's Invention of Secret Mark*, Waco, Baylor University Press, 2005, pp. 12-21. The recent appearance of many Dead Sea Scroll fragments that appear to be inauthentic raises the possibility that the Gabriel Revelation was created due to the increased market for these texts and the popularity of documentaries, books, and travelling exhibitions of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Gabriel Revelation bears many hallmarks of a suc-

The Gabriel Revelation contains all the features a scholar would want to find in a Hasmonean or Herodian period text, which could potentially change our understanding of the religious history of ancient Judaism and early Christianity. It describes an apparent attack on Jerusalem, the city's divine salvation, as well as a cast of intriguing characters including "my servant, David" and "Ephraim" (line 16), "Michael" (line 28), "David the servant of YHWY" (line 72), "three shepherds" (line 75), "Gabriel" (lines 77, 80, and 83), and "the Prince of Princes" (line 81), among others. The apocalyptic scene in the Gabriel Revelation is mainly found in lines 13-16, 24-29, and 41-42. If we simply take the major apocalyptic portions of the text and those sections that may contain historical allusions, we find it is largely a compilation of biblical citations and Scriptural allusions. The following partial list will suffice to support this comment: line 12 (Jer 33:3); lines 13-14 (Psalms 2; 48; Zech 14; 4 Ezra 13); lines 13-16 (Zech 14:4); line 14 (lacuna Isa 29:7; Zech 14:12); line 16 (Jer 31; 32:20; is similar to lines 17-18); line 19 (Jer 31:31; Dan 11:28, 30); line 20 (Dan 8:26); lines 21-22 (Gen 41:20, 27; 1QapGen 13:16; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zech 3:8; 6:9-25); line 22 (Deut 9:5; Dan 8:18; 10:13, 18-19; Isa 28:16); line 23 (Jer 23:5; 33:15 and used in eschatological contexts in the Dead Sea Scrolls, notably in 4Q285, 4Q252, and 4QpIsa<sup>a</sup>); line 24 (Zech 14:3-5; Ezek 3:12); lines 24-25 (quotation from Hag 2:6); line 27 (Jer 9:18; 20:8; 33:10; Zech 1:12; Ps 12:6); line 28 (Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1); line 31 (Isa 65:22; Amos 9:11); line 37 (Jer 24:1-10); line 41 (Zech 14:12); line 57 (Dan 8:26); lines 66-67 (Jer 17:5-7); line 70 (Jer 3:15; 23:1; Ezek 34:2-23); line 71 (Ezek 3:12); lines 72-45 (explicit use of Jer 32:17-18); line 75 ("three shepherds": Jer 3:15; 23:1; Ezek 34:2-23); line 80 (Exod 8:19); line 81 (Dan 8:25).<sup>24</sup> The amount of biblical citations, allusions, and biblical vocabulary is unprecedented for a text of this length.

successful forgery highlighted in Carlsons's perceptive study (p. 4), namely that a forger has to catch the attention of the intended victim while making the object's details reflect a much earlier period. Of all ancient artifacts, a simple web search reveals that the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly because they contain the world's oldest portions of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), are of considerable interest to the public and scholars alike.

<sup>24</sup> I have compiled this list from the various articles in Henze's edited volume (*Hazon Gabriel*) cited above. Because portions of the text are unclear, and since the contributors to this book sometimes recognize different allusions or quotations, it is not exhaustive as it excludes many proposed Scriptural citations and influences. I also focus on the most complete lines of the text; partially preserved portions not included here also contain biblical vocabulary and/or Scriptural allusions. I exclude later Jewish literature possibly reflected in the text.

Unlike the Dead Sea Scrolls or other ancient Jewish documents, the Gabriel Revelation is largely a mixture of biblical quotations, wordings, and paraphrases of Scripture with no interpretation.<sup>25</sup> It is, moreover, a unique literary composition that contains numerous quotations and expressions from the several biblical books with apocalyptic content, most notably Haggai, Zechariah 14, and Daniel 8-9, and Jeremiah 31-33, often juxtaposed together.<sup>26</sup> The text's linguistic profile is as unique as its enigmatic content. Yardeni and Elitzur place its language closer to Mishnaic Hebrew than Biblical Hebrew since there is no use of the *waw* consecutive in the past or future uses and because of its clear Aramaic influences.<sup>27</sup> Ben-Asher comments that its orthographic practices, most notably its defective spellings, are generally comparable to the Hebrew Bible, the Bar Kokhba letters, as opposed to the Qumran texts and Mishnaic Hebrew.<sup>28</sup> Based on its linguistic features and content, the Gabriel Revelation is generally dated to the late first century B.C.E. or the early first century C.E. Yet, several scholars in their study of the inscription highlight its numerous parallels with the later medieval Jewish apocalypses, particularly *Sefer Zerubbabel* and the Talmudic text *b. Sukkah* 52a.<sup>29</sup> The problem in understanding the text's content and linguistic profile is that the Gabriel Revelation is largely a compilation of passages from Scripture and possibly other Jewish texts, which means that it to some extent is not an original composition. Consequently, its linguistic makeup should reflect the language and grammar of verses

<sup>25</sup> In their study, Yardeni and Elitzur (*A Hebrew Prophetic Stone*, pp. 19-23) include a lengthy list of words and/or phrases in the Gabriel Inscription that appear in the Hebrew Bible or resembles biblical terms as well as expressions not appearing in Scripture. For the latter, they include many references to parallels from much later rabbinic literature in their footnotes. Like the Hebrew Bible, all these later Jewish texts are readily available in printed editions easily accessible to anyone wishing to cut and paste from them to create a new composition that appears ancient. See further the extensive listing of biblical quotations, allusions, and paraphrases in the Gabriel Inscription in Knohl *Messiahs*, pp. 1-30; 2011; 39-59; Collins, *Gabriel and David*, pp. 99-112; Elgvin *Gabriel, Vision of*, pp. 5-25.

<sup>26</sup> See further Collins, *Gabriel and David*, pp. 99-112; Knohl, *Apocalyptic*, pp. 39-59; Henze, *Some Observations*, pp. 113-29.

<sup>27</sup> Yardeni and Elitzur, *A Hebrew Prophetic Text*, pp. 11-29.

<sup>28</sup> Ben-Asher *On the Language*, pp. 515-16.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, the extensive discussion in Elgvin *Gabriel, Vision of*, pp. 5-25. Yardeni and Elitzur (*A Hebrew Prophetic Text*, p. 24) also notes many similarities between the Gabriel Revelation and the late text called *Ma'ase Dani'el alaw ha-Shalom*.

of different dates from the Hebrew Bible and possibly other Jewish writings from which the author has copied passages.

The apparent combination of materials taken from a variety of biblical books merged with imagery, and possibly language, derived from or inspired by later Jewish literature makes the Gabriel Revelation a Rorschach test on stone. It contains something for anyone interested in Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity: messianic images blended with historical content and apocalyptic imagery with anomalous linguistic features.<sup>30</sup> The text, moreover, is difficult to decipher because of its numerous partially preserved lines; scholars tend to read into its enigmatic content what they want to find. However, there is a major problem with all interpretations of this intriguing artifact. The Gabriel Revelation is largely unintelligible. Although the major Second Temple Period texts that espouse Davidic messianism contain many citations and allusions to the Hebrew Bible, they are written in clear and concise language.<sup>31</sup> It is difficult to explain what the Gabriel Revelation's author expected readers to comprehend in the text given that modern scholars find much of it perplexing if not incomprehensible. Yet, what is largely absent from the discussion of this unique artifact is the medium upon which its text is written. It looks like a masseba!

#### IV. A Reused Masseba?

The Gabriel Revelation is similar to many massevot that have been discovered in the Negev dating to the prehistoric to the Islamic Periods. These stones are generally from 1 to 1.5 meters, although some were several meters in height and likely represented deities.<sup>32</sup> Those dat-

<sup>30</sup> Its linguistic examiners generally consider the text's language unique. See, for example, G. A. Rendsburg (*Hazon Gabriel: A Grammatical Sketch*, [in:], *Hazon Gabriel*, pp. 90) who highlights several anomalous linguistic features.

<sup>31</sup> The following six documents make up the known Second Temple Period pre-Christian writings that espouse Davidic messianism: the Psalms of Solomon, 4Q161, 4Q285, 4Q246, 4Q252, and 4Q174. For a detailed discussion of Davidic messianism in these and other writings of the Second Temple Period, see further, K. Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord: A Study of the Psalms of Solomon's Historical Background and Social Setting*, Leiden, Brill, 2004, pp. 129-79.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, the discussions and photos in U. Avner, *Current Archaeological Research in Israel: Ancient Agricultural Settlement and Religion in the Uvda Valley in Southern Israel*, "The Biblical Archaeologist" 53 (1990), pp. 125-41; M. Haiman, *Agriculture and Nomad-State Relations in the Negev Desert in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods* "Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research" 297 (1995), pp. 29-53. See also Deut. 26:6; 27:6; Josh. 8:31; 24:26-27; 1 Kgs 6:6. I am using the

ing to the Nabatean Period are remarkably similar in their appearance to the Gabriel Revelation. Many have the same smooth surface and shape and were also embedded in the earth.<sup>33</sup> Similar, although much smaller, funerary stela have been discovered at Khirbet Qazone at the southeastern end of the Dead Sea, including some with ink on stone.<sup>34</sup> The Nabatean massebot and funeral stela, moreover, are from the same region where Goren believes the Gabriel Revelation originated. His scientific examination of the Gabriel Revelation concluded that the limestone upon which it was written is coated by a very thin veneer of caliche. Yet, Goren comments that he was unable to determine whether this film was deposited over or underneath the pigment of the inscription.<sup>35</sup> Given the uncertain provenance, the lack of definitive scientific proof that it is ancient, and the masseba-like appearance of

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word masseba in a broad sense as there is no standard criteria for identifying massebot. Some items identified as massebot may have been used for other purposes such as tables or structural supports. This is possibly true of the Gabriel Inscription; it could also have been a table or an architectural fragment of some sort. Nevertheless, all these objects have a similar appearance to known massebot. For this reason, I am using the word masseba since it best describes the Gabriel Revelation's appearance and because I believe it was possibly once a masseba. When such finds appear without any provenance, they are often difficult, or impossible, to classify. See further E. Bloch-Smith, *Will the Real Massebot Please Stand Up: Cases of Real and Mistakenly Identified Standing Stones in Ancient Israel*, [in:] *Text, Artifact, and Image: Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion*, G. Beckman and T. J. Lewis, ed. Providence, Brown Judaic Studies, 2010, pp. 64-79.

<sup>33</sup> J. Patrich, Patrick, *The Formation of Nabatean Art*, Leiden, Brill, 1990, pp. 59-70. 76 and plate III.11.

<sup>34</sup> K. D. Politis, The Discovery and Excavation of the Khirbet Qazone Cemetery and its Significance Relative to Qumran, [in:] K. Galor, et al. ed. *Qumran, the Site and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeological Interpretation and Debates*, Leiden, Brill, 2006, pp. 213-19. For ink on stone from Qumran, see the finding from locus 129 in R. de Vaux's excavation of Qumran published in *Fouilles Khirbet Qumrân et 'Ain Feshkha I*, J.-B. Humbert and A. Chambon, ed., Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994, p. 332 (Locus 129 photo on p. 65); A. Lemaire, *Inscriptions du khirbeh, des grottes et de 'Ain Feshkha*, [in:] *Khirbet Qumrân et 'Ain Feshkha II*, ed. J.-B. Humbert and J. Gunnaweg, ed., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003, pp. 360-62.

<sup>35</sup> Goren, *Micromorphologic*, p. 227. The lower portion of the Gabriel Revelation is discolored and appears to have been partially buried like a masseba. It is difficult to understand how anyone could have read the Gabriel Revelation if it had been embedded in the earth at floor level, unless it was somehow mounted above the ground. Yet, if it was elevated, it is hard to explain the object's lower portion that appears to have been embedded in the earth. For similar observations and a photo of the stone's lower section, see Knohl, *Messiahs*, p. 101 (photo 1).

the Gabriel Revelation, it cannot be excluded that it was produced by a modern forger who reused an ancient masseba.

In addition to its masseba-like appearance, a close look at the Gabriel Revelation makes one suspicious of its authenticity because it also looks like an actual Dead Sea Scroll.<sup>36</sup> Yet, the language of the inscription is problematic. The repeated use of the relative  $\omega$  rather than  $\gamma\text{ש}$ , and the feminine singular demonstrative pronoun  $\omega$  instead of  $\omega\text{א}$ , are, as Ian Young observes, marked non-Classical forms. Unlike the Dead Sea Scrolls, which show that Jewish writers of the Hasmonean could write in good Classical Hebrew, it is difficult to explain the linguistic forms of the Gabriel Revelation. Ian Young concludes that the question to be asked is why this is the case?<sup>37</sup> Given the inconsistent handwriting of the inscription, and the recent appearance of what are likely forged Dead Sea Scrolls that sometimes display different scripts, it is best to be cautious. The Gabriel Revelation's linguistic features appear to reflect the texts from which its author has copied material.<sup>38</sup> It does not read like an original composition. This alone should make us suspicious of its content.

## V. Conclusion

A forger cutting and pasting together passages and significant vocabulary from the Hebrew Bible, and possibly from several later Jewish writings, would have produced a text that is both linguistically diverse and difficult to understand like the Gabriel Revelation. The Gabriel Revelation's text, moreover, makes little sense unlike the genuine Dead Sea Scrolls. It appears to be a "cut and paste" product largely copied

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<sup>36</sup> The author spent considerable time examining the Gabriel Revelation in the Israel Museum. Because the stone is broken into three pieces, it was displayed horizontally during its exhibition. The glass protecting the item was just above the surface, which allowed for very close viewing of the actual text. The text not only appears to be an imitation of a Dead Sea Scroll, but it is suspiciously has sections missing—a possible attempt to imitate wear—in some of its most important lines. Most notably, the ambiguous remains of letters in line of 80 that Knohl (*Messiahs*, 97-99) proposed is a reference to resurrection in three days. This has led scholars to focus largely on the inscription's content rather than its authenticity.

<sup>37</sup> I. Young, Review of *Hazon Gabriel: New Readings of the Gabriel Revelation*, edited by M. Henze, 2003 [in:]. *Review of Biblical Literature* (<http://www.bookreviews.org>).

<sup>38</sup> For an attempt to explain the careless handwriting on the Gabriel Revelation, see Elgvin, *Gabriel, Vision of*, p. 877. Justnes (Justins, *Gabriels åpenbaring*, pp. 126-27) calls attention to this feature to doubt its authenticity.



from Scripture with no interpretation or discussion of its Scriptural citations and allusions. Consequently, it is often unintelligible because the amount of its content not derived from Scripture is minimal. These and other concerns about the Gabriel Revelation's authenticity first raised by Årstein Justnes, namely its lack of provenance, its unique writing surface, its incoherent content, and its hybrid language, among others, should be taken seriously.<sup>39</sup> For this reason, the Gabriel Revelation should not be included among the ancient witnesses to historical events and Jewish messianic beliefs of the Hasmonean and Herodian periods.

Although scientists may one day establish that the Gabriel Revelation is a forgery, it is doubtful whether anyone can prove it is authentic. Such is the peril of working with items obtained from the antiquities market. Scholars should no longer use any newly acquired ancient item of unknown provenance in their research despite the artifact's apparent importance for scholarship.<sup>40</sup> We are, unfortunately, in a situation in which it is doubtful, given the cleverness of modern forgers, that we can ever establish the authenticity of any unprovenanced item purported to be ancient.<sup>41</sup> This is unfortunately true for both the recently published

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<sup>39</sup> See the previously cited references to his publications and his website listed in note 10.

<sup>40</sup> I add this qualification to my statement. If any unprovenanced object is clearly of momentous importance to scholarship, it should be published. However, it must be identified with some special notation in its name that clearly indicates to all its unknown origin. Scholars who use such an object should confine their discussions of it to footnotes in which they acknowledge the implications of the artifact for their study assuming it is genuine. This will protect both scholars and readers should science later demonstrate the artifact is forged as only the footnotes need be ignored as the remainder of the study will be unaffected by the fake artifact.

<sup>41</sup> Robert R. Cargill, editor of the semi-popular magazine *Biblical Archaeology Review*, announced in the September/October 2018 issue of this publication that he will join other professional societies (i.e., Archaeological Institute of America, American Schools of Oriental Research, Society of Biblical Literature, and the Association of Art Museum Directors) and no longer publish unprovenanced archaeological objects. He also highlights the role of the antiquities market in the acquisition and distribution of these items to emphasize that even genuine objects sold by licensed dealers encourages further looting, thereby denying archaeologists and scholars the opportunity to discover them and learn about their origin. Older items such as the Dead Sea Scrolls were often discovered and/or acquired before the modern widespread production of forged artifacts began. In the case of the Dead Sea Scrolls, many were found by archaeologists and the general provenance of the majority of the unexcavated items in the collection to Khirbet Qumran and its vicinity is almost certain. The debate over the authenticity of the famed marble Getty kouros, acquired for ten million dollars in 1985 by the J. Paul Getty Museum of Los Angeles should make all scholars skeptical of the Gabriel Revelation. Despite

Dead Sea Scroll fragments and the Gabriel Revelation. The debate over their authenticity may never be resolved.

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scientific verification of its patina and the aging of its marble, subsequent experts have produced ancient weathering and patina on marble using modern methods. Consequently, because scholars and scientists are unable to prove the statue is authentic or a fake, the display note for the object in the museum identifies it as "Greek, about 530 B.C., or modern forgery." See further the various articles on this statue in A. Kokkou, et al. ed. *The Getty Kouros Colloquium*, Athens, Nicholas P. Goulandris Foundation, 1992.

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**THE JUDAEAN CULTURAL CONTEXT  
OF COMMUNITY OF GOODS  
IN THE EARLY JESUS MOVEMENT**

Part IV

**IV. The Jesus Movement and Holy Community of Life  
and Property amongst the Poor of Judaea**

The first three parts of this study have argued that the community of goods attested in Acts 2–6 of the earliest Jerusalem congregation of followers of Jesus after his death, resurrection and ascension should be understood as a form of virtuoso religious life bearing close similarities with the life of the monastic echelon of Essenes resident in the towns and villages of the populous heartland of Judaea and in their more socially separate community by the Dead Sea. This part of my study will further ground my emphatic acceptance of the extreme historical value of the Acts report, and extend my interpretation of the original character of the events reported in Luke's Acts of the Apostles as revealing an Essene-like form of virtuoso religion within earliest Jerusalem Christianity by further depicting the interlocking wider context which connects the common purse of Jesus' travelling party, the Judaeian practice of formal property-sharing, and the sharing of the first believers in Jerusalem and by close consideration of some philological aspects of the account of Ananias and Sapphira's property-donation in Acts 5:1–11.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this part of my study appeared as 'Holy community of life and property and amongst the poor: A response to Steve Walton', *Evangelical Quarterly* 80, 2 (April 2008), pp. 113–27, a brief exploration of the dimensions outlined above, written at the request of the editors, the late I. Howard Marshall, and Anthony N. S.

### 1. Jesus' travelling party: consecration in community of goods to proclamation of God's kingdom and care for the poor.

Jesus' travelling party of disciples apparently held their money in common; Judas administered their common purse (John 12:6; 13:29). We may assume that the monetary support of Jesus' wealthy and high status women patrons (Luke 8:1–3) was received into this purse. Disbursements for the poor appear to have been made from this common purse during Jesus' ministry. According to Mark, some present at Jesus' anointing at Bethany imagined that the costly perfumed oil poured over Jesus might have been sold and the proceeds donated to the poor, probably through the auspices of Judas as the group's treasurer (14:4–5). Matthew tells us these detractors were disciples (26:8–9), while John identifies Judas as the lone, or perhaps principal, scolding voice. John tells us that at Jesus' last supper some of his disciples, after Judas' departure following Jesus' cryptic words to him, thought Jesus had instructed him to make purchases for the group's needs at the feast, or to give alms to the poor, suggesting a pattern of both common expenditure and disbursements for the poor from the common purse (12:4–6). When Jesus asked Philip where bread might be purchased to feed a large crowd near Passover, Philip exclaimed that two hundred *denarii* would not suffice. Jesus' question was intended to test Philip (John 6:5–7), perhaps because it was not usually beyond the financial resources of the common purse to aid the needy in Jesus' audience.

We may assume that Jesus frequently sanctioned expenditures for the needy outside his immediate group from the common purse. Very substantial benefactions were within the means of Jesus' elite women patrons. Jesus often appears in the Gospels dining and teaching at meals; the existence of the common purse suggests that his travelling party did not always dine at others' expense. Rather, the needy probably received assistance at open meals financed from the travelling group's purse, though certain meals were private to Jesus and his travelling group. We may assume that Jesus was able to offer more assistance to the needy than food alone, through the resources of the common purse, and to precipitate generosity from benefactors when resources proved too little to

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Lane, in response to Dr. Walton's 'Primitive communism in Acts? Does Acts present the community of goods (Acts 2:44–45; 4:32–35) as mistaken?', *Evangelical Quarterly* 80, 2 (April 2008), pp. 99–111. I here repeat my sincere thanks Dr. Walton for his careful consideration and thoughtful critique of my work to resist the sceptical view of earliest Christian community of goods.

meet all legitimate needs. The complete consecration to service in God's Kingdom of Jesus' mobile party of disciples was expressed, in part, by their possessionless travel and generous common life.

The Gospels, then, bear witness to receipts from wealthy patrons into the common purse of Jesus' disciple-group, and probably both to disbursements for the needs of Jesus' travelling party and the needy outside this group. We probably find, early in Acts, a continuation of this pattern. All who believed and joined the expanding group of Jesus' disciples 'had all things in common'. Believers sold their possessions; distributions were made to meet the needs of all (2:44–45). We learn that 'as many as owned lands or houses sold them', laying the proceeds at the apostles' feet (4:34–35). These events occurred only weeks after Jesus' death and resurrection. Since these accounts appears in Acts, it is easy to conceive them primarily as part of 'Church History', and to look forward to the later chapters of Acts and the letters of Paul for analogies to help us understand their pattern, rather than to look back to the ministry of Jesus in order to find their direct root in the practice of his travelling party. It is, however, the contexts of long-established, Judaean virtuoso religion (the life of the Essene religious orders) and of the common purse created by Jesus for his travelling party of disciples which most help in understanding the communal economic life of the earliest Jerusalem congregation of Jesus' followers. During the period between Jesus' last Passover and Pentecost, his disciple-group, according to Luke-Acts, settled in Jerusalem and followed a life of intense, continuous prayer and worship. The group of Jesus' followers, gathered from Galilee and planted in Jerusalem, were somehow billeted together in the guest premises of 'the room upstairs where they were staying', probably close by, or even within, a community of Jerusalem Essenes resident by the 'Gate of the Essenes' on the southwest hill of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> There, they lived a communal life together, 'constantly de-

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<sup>2</sup> Rainer Riesner wrote the only book-length treatment of the Essene Quarter and the early Jesus community of the 'Upper Room' on Jerusalem's southwest hill, *Essener und Urgemeinde in Jerusalem: Neue Funde und Quellen* (Giessen/Basel: Brunnen Verlag, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1998). See also Bargil Pixner, 'Jerusalem's Essene Gateway. Where the Community Lived in Jesus' Time', *Biblical Archaeology Review* 23.3 (1997), pp. 22–31, 64–66; idem, *Paths of the Messiah and Sites of the Early Church from Galilee to Jerusalem* (ed. Rainer Riesner; San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2010), pp. 192–219, 239–252 and 360–368; Rainer Riesner, 'Jesus, the Primitive Community, and the Essene Quarter of Jerusalem', in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 198–234.

voting themselves to prayer’, and so continued the communal sharing initiated by Jesus, their now heavenly master (Acts 1:13–14; cf. Luke 24:49–52; Acts 1:1–5). Their economic pattern of life – based around a common purse into which large donations were received from wealthy patrons, a common purse from which the group lived, a common purse from which the needy might receive support – was not a *novum*. This way of life bore the stamp of Jesus’ own authority and practice, and expressed the continued consecration to him of those who proclaimed him as heavenly Lord.

## 2. Holy community of life and property amongst the poor: the unique Judaeian solution to the problems of agrarian economy

I have come to believe that the common life of Jesus’ travelling party had its ultimate roots with *Judaeian* practice. Jesus was linked to a Judaeian group immediately before bursting onto the Galilean scene in public ministry (cf. Mark 1:1–20 and parallels; John 1:19–43). He appears to have ‘taken north’ the Judaeian concept and practice of an intensely integrated social and religious life. He gathered, through the extraordinary force of his own person, a group of chosen Galileans into a travelling party which every day shared meals and received instruction. Such ‘common life’ appears not to have been a Galilean practice. There are no other attested contemporary examples. By contrast, the practice of common life is very well attested for Judaea, amongst the Essenes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Philo limits the Essene movement to Judaea, *Apology for the Jews* 11.1. On this see Brian J. Capper, ‘Essene Community Houses and Jesus’ Early Community’, in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *Jesus and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), pp. 472–502, esp. 473–479. Philo’s account seems to be dependent upon a source shared by Josephus, who also numbers the celibate male Essenes to over 4000 but does not mention Judaea. Roland Bergmeier identifies this common source as a distinctly Pythagoreanising earlier writer, *Die Essener-Berichte des Flavius Josephus: Quellenstudien zu den Essenertexten im Werk des jüdischen Historiographen* (Kampen, Pharos, 1993). Ultimately our judgment as to exactly how to understand Philo’s geographical reference to Judaea (whether the Jewish heartland region, notably the habitable highlands close to Jerusalem and the Shephelah, or a more extended region) may have to depend on such general factors allowing interpretation as are available to us since the habitual geographical reference style of this unknown author is not recoverable. For a variety of reasons, the breadth of which will become apparent through my entire study, I am inclined to understand this reference to Judaea to refer to the Jewish heartland region rather than to interpret it more widely as, say, referring to the whole area once under the control of Herod the Great, who in 40 BC was granted the title “King of the

Closely communitarian forms of living had developed in Judaea because its social, economic and religious world was rather different from that of Galilee. The community of property of the early Jerusalem church reflects this specifically Judaeian social milieu and the ways through which many Judaeians had long responded to the economic problems of the age. The land of Galilee was more fertile than Judaea, and afforded more opportunities for economic expansion. Galilee lay on major trade routes, and was well connected to the coast. By contrast, Judaea was a land-locked, rugged, semi-arid inland region. A relatively small area geographically, off the major trade routes, its religious, social and economic world was dominated by its massive Temple. It had a long history as a Temple state, ruled by its clergy.<sup>4</sup> In consequence, ideals of holiness and consecration dominated the Judaeian religious and social world in an almost totalitarian fashion, far more extensively than they did the Galilean milieu, while the economic harshness of Judaeian life posed the problems of survival in a subsistence economy more sharply than the more ‘open’ economy of Galilee.

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Jews” by the Roman senate (Josephus, *Jewish War*, 1.14.4 §284; Antiquities 14.14.4 §385). The wider understanding of Judaea would include all the Palestinian regions of Jewish settlement along with Samaria and intervening and associated gentile-occupied territories such as the coastal plain. Philo is known to have visited the Jerusalem Temple at least once in his lifetime (*Prov.* 2.64). Since this visit will have involved overland travel through the densely settled Judaeian heartland, Philo may have had pointed out to him Essene community houses in the towns and villages through which he passed, or himself sought out examples. His interest in the community of ‘Therapeuts’ by Lake Mareotis near Alexandria, indicated by his extensive and laudatory treatment of these ascetics in his *On the Contemplative Life*, suggests that he would have been interested to learn what he could of the specialist religious houses of Judaea. Berndt Schaller may therefore be quite incorrect to assume that Philo’s knowledge of the number of Essenes of Judaea may only have depended on literary sources rather than personal observation and enquiry, cf. Berndt Schaller, ‘4000 Essener — 6000 Pharisäer: Zum Hintergrund und Wert antiker Zahlenangaben’, in B. Kollmann, W. Reinbold, and A. Steudel (eds.), *Antikes Judentum und Frühes Christentum: Festschrift für Hartmut Stegemann zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), pp. 172–182, see p. 174. Similarly, it is clear that Josephus had personal knowledge of the religious groupings of the region and may, therefore, not have based his knowledge of the number of celibate Essene males merely on his literary source.

<sup>4</sup> The consequences of this socio-geographic differentiation were worked out by my student, Timothy J. M. Ling, *The Judaeian Poor and the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), see esp. pp. 78–97; cf. also his ‘Virtuoso Religion and the Judaeian Social World’, in Louise J. Lawrence and Mario I. Aguilar, *Anthropology and Biblical Studies: Avenues of Approach* (Leiden: Deo Publishing, 2004), pp. 227–258.

The particular Judaeian response to the problems of subsistence in the ancient agrarian world took, because of these unusual circumstances, a unique form. In Judaea, the Essene movement developed widespread and well understood forms of regulated economic sharing. This local, uniquely Judaeian pattern of social organisation was long established by the first century AD. There existed in Judaea a prestigious ‘upper echelon’ of more than four thousand celibate male Essenes, who lived with each other in full community of property.<sup>5</sup> On most days they worked

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<sup>5</sup> Philo, *That Every Good Man is Free*, §75; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.1.5 §§20–21. Although these texts clearly enumerate only *male celibate* Essenes, they are often wrongly taken to number the *whole* Essene movement at ‘over four thousand’. This misreading drastically diminishes appreciation of the scale and importance of Essenism in the Judaeian social and religious world. Timothy J. Murray, *Restricted Generosity in the New Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), pp. 124–125, has recently challenged my acceptance of the validity of the explicit count of ‘over four thousand’ celibate male Essenes given by Josephus and Philo. He begins from Berndt Schaller’s claim that ‘the numbers 4000 and 6000 are *topoi* of ancient historiography and cannot be taken as numerically accurate, but indicate instead ‘ideale Gruppentypen’, relating particularly to military groupings. He goes on to adduce other reasons why these numbers may drastically exaggerate the numbers of celibate Essenes. The argument of Berndt Schaller’s ‘4000 Essener — 6000 Pharisäer: Zum Hintergrund und Wert antiker Zahlengaben’, in B. Kollmann, W. Reinbold, and A. Steudel (eds.), *Antikes Judentum und Frühes Christentum: Festschrift für Hartmut Stegemann zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), pp. 172–182, suffers in my view from profound methodological deficiency since he makes no statistical comparison with other numbers given for numbers of troops in ancient sources, for if 4000 and 6000 are *topoi*, we should expect them to be more frequent than figures such as 2000, 3000, 5000, 7000, and 8000 (etc.). Some years ago I used the Perseus search tool (Tufts University) to survey numbers given for troops in ancient historiographers and found no higher frequencies for 4000 and 6000 in the many accounts of military forces than for other round figures in the thousands. This shows that 4000 and 6000 are not *topoi*. Moreover, neither Murray or Schaller spot that by avoiding an enumeration of the whole Essene movement, instead merely citing the known number of the celibates, Josephus distorted the facts to make them appear in line with his tendency to emphasise the importance of the Pharisees (whom he numbers at 6000 in total, *Antiquities*, 17 §41). He neglected to enumerate the obviously larger total number of the Essene movement, which also included marrying members, probably much more numerous than the ‘over 4000’ celibate males since celibacy in the more difficult choice for human beings. By not giving a figure for the ‘second order Essenes’, who marry but whose lifestyle he indicates as otherwise the same as that of the celibate males, Josephus succeeded in making the Pharisees, whom he advocated as the best leaders of Judaism, appear larger in number than the Essenes, though the Pharisees were patently the smaller grouping (a narrow retainer class, smaller than a widespread movement amongst the ordinary population). Philo mentions only the ascetic male echelon of the Essene movement, in line with his philosophical interest. Thus the issue of the ‘over four thousand’ Essenes is not one of exaggeration, but, for different reasons on the

as labourers and artisans in the fields of local estate owners.<sup>6</sup> They shared common meals with each other in the evenings,<sup>7</sup> open-handedly entertaining members of the order from elsewhere, who may have travelled to find work or disseminate news.<sup>8</sup> This ‘holy core’ of Essene monks was distributed through the perhaps two hundred villages and towns of the Judaeian landscape in small communities of ten or more.<sup>9</sup> It seems also to have occupied an important centre on the southwest hill of Jerusalem.<sup>10</sup> It was associated with a ‘second order’ of marrying Essenes,<sup>11</sup> which was probably much larger. The ancient sources give us no figures for this group, but since celibacy is always a less popular option than marriage, it probably numbered several tens of thousands, perhaps more.

Hartmut Stegemann, one of the principal early researchers on the Dead Sea Scrolls, came to conclude that the Essene movement was the ‘main Jewish union of the second Temple period’.<sup>12</sup> I have argued, in

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part of Philo and Josephus, one of minimalization. My ‘maximalist’ reading of the scale and influence of the Essene movement and its social caring amongst the ordinary mass of the population recovers historical reality from the tendencies (deliberate oversight or suppression) of the elite ancient Jewish authors. I hope in the future to write a more extensive defence of my understanding of the whole Judaeian Essene movement as numbering perhaps several tens of thousands or more.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Philo, *Apology for the Jews* 11:4–9; cf. Brian J. Capper, ‘The New Covenant in Southern Palestine at the Arrest of Jesus’ in James R. Davila (ed.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003), pp. 90–116, see pp. 95–98.

<sup>7</sup> Philo, *Apology for the Jews*, 11.10–11.

<sup>8</sup> Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.8.4 §§124–125.

<sup>9</sup> IQS VI.3–4; Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.8.9 §146.

<sup>10</sup> See in general the scholarly treatments cited in note 2 above and Otto Betz and Rainer Riesner, *Verschwörung um Qumran. Jesus, die Schriftrollen, und der Vatikan* (Munich: Knaur, 2007), pp. 226–238; Riesner, ‘Essener und Urkirche auf dem Südwesthügel Jerusalems (Zion III)’, in Nikodemus C. Schnabel (ed.), *Laetere Jerusalem* (Münster: Aschendorf, 2006), pp. 200–234; Brian J. Capper, ‘The Palestinian Cultural Context of Earliest Christian Community of Goods’, in Richard J. Bauckham (ed.), *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995; volume 4 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*), pp. 323–356, see pp. 341–350; Capper, ‘“With the Oldest Monks...” Light from Essene History on the Career of the Beloved Disciple?’, *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 49 (1998), pp. 1–55, see pp. 19–36.

<sup>11</sup> Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.8.13 §§160–161.

<sup>12</sup> Hartmut Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 140–153; idem, ‘The Qumran Essenes – Local Members of the Main Jewish Union in Late Second Temple Times’, in J. Trebolle Barrera and L. Vegas Montaner (eds.), *The Madrid Qumran Congress* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), Vol. 1, pp. 83–166.

earlier parts of this study as well as elsewhere, by a statistical method, that Essenism was probably the dominant social and religious force amongst the labourers, artisans and needy of the villages and towns of rural Judaea. I would also suggest that the Essenes were very well represented amongst the poor urban population of Jerusalem.<sup>13</sup>

Overpopulation and scarcity of resources characterised the ancient agrarian economy. The needy were frequently compelled to migration, perhaps to seek work in the large coastal cities, to soldiering, or to work on large estates as servants or slaves. Women were frequently forced into prostitution. Essenism offered different options for the needy of Judaea. Children who could not be fed in poor local families could be adopted into Essene communities, where they received training in work, economic security, and education in holy tradition.<sup>14</sup> By this route many male children of the poor came as adults to renounce the pleasures and social standing of normal family life, enjoying instead highly honoured status as Essene monks and a replacement form of fictive kinship in an extensive and loving brotherhood.<sup>15</sup> Since numerous males did not father children, but cared for those of others, Essene male celibacy and communal life came to function, in the Judaeian heartland, as economically important compensating mechanisms against the dangers of overpopulation and undernourishment. There may also have been honoured Essene orders for widows and life-long celibate women.<sup>16</sup>

The population of Jerusalem in the first century AD was c. 60,000–80,000.<sup>17</sup> The population of rural Judaea was of a similar size, the two hundred or so villages and towns averaging a few hundred souls each, including children.<sup>18</sup> The more than four thousand celibate male Essenes were sufficient in number to form communities of between ten and twenty in most, if not all, the towns and villages of the region. This powerful, firmly united ‘core’ of over four thousand skilled, educated

<sup>13</sup> See my pieces cited in notes 3 and 6 above.

<sup>14</sup> Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.8.2 §120.

<sup>15</sup> Josephus tells us that the Essenes were ‘lovers of each other’ (φιλόλληλοι) more than other Jewish groups, *Jewish War* 2.8.2 §119. Philo emphasizes mutual service in menial tasks, care of the sick, and care of the old by the young, *That Every Good Man is Free*, §§79, 87–88.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. the ‘mothers’ of the community in 2Q270 VII i lines 13–14.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Reinhardt, ‘The Population Size of Jerusalem and the Numerical Growth of the Jerusalem Church’, in Richard J. Bauckham (ed.) *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), pp. 237–265.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Capper in Charlesworth (ed.), *Jesus and Archaeology*, see pp. 473–476 and pp. 492–493.

and highly disciplined male celibates was supported by, I would suggest, at least several thousand families whose male heads belonged to the second Essene order. For every male child adopted by the Essenes, a reciprocally grateful local family may have attached itself to the Essene movement. Indeed, the reciprocal obligations typically inherent in gift-giving, honour and patronage in agrarian societies suggest that the care afforded to the economically weaker elements of Judaeian rural society caused considerable numbers of the families of the poorer rural population of Judaea to become integrated into the Essene movement as permanently associated and economically contributing members of the Essene New Covenant. It would not be at all surprising if in fact, over the century and more before the birth of the Jesus movement, most rural clans and families in Judaea had come to express gratitude to the Essene movement by such permanent secondary association. I would argue that the two Essene orders, acting in concert, probably dominated the social, political and religious world of Judaea’s towns and villages. Both Jesus and the early community of his followers in Jerusalem therefore had to acknowledge and evaluate the care offered by the Essene community houses of the region’s towns and villages and to reckon with the consequent Essene domination of the Judaeian rural scene. The longstanding, honoured presence of the celibate male Essene order throughout Judaea, its intimate connections through adoption with the local population, and its willingness to assist rural families facing economic crisis when there were too many mouths to feed,<sup>19</sup> may indeed mean that a substantial proportion of those who laboured in the city of Jerusalem itself, the urban artisan population who dwelt within the city walls or in the nearer villages, had been absorbed into the second Essene order by the time of Jesus.

When we find, therefore, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, the early church of Jerusalem sharing their property and joining together in daily common meals, we are observing a well-established and widespread feature of Judaeian cultural and economic life, practised by the primary Essene order. Full sharing of property and daily life was, of course, only practised by a minority of Judaea’s inhabitants. None the less, it was a mode of life, expressive of complete personal consecration and holiness, which most Judaeians certainly respected and understood, and with which many had personal connections through membership in the

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.8.2 §120 (adoption) and 2.8.6 §134 (almsgiving and assistance outside the individual Essene’s group).

secondary Essene order. This form of holy, communal life had been lived out, before the eyes of all, by the influential, venerable order of celibate male Essene monks for approaching two centuries at the time the Christian church began. Shared property and common meals, along with regular prayer and study at the feet of esteemed teachers who held no personal property, were aspects of a widespread local Judaeen social form which expressed an ideal of complete holiness and personal consecration. The earliest post-Easter group of Jesus' followers had, according to Acts, experienced a massive outpouring of God's Spirit, enjoying across its whole community inspirations of prophecy and glossolalia (2:1–41). It is hardly surprising that we find the expanding community of believers, recently impressed with an extraordinary sense of God's holiness and powerful presence, implementing the local Judaeen ideal of communalised, holy living, renouncing personal possessions and devoting themselves, after their working day, to prayer, study and common meals (Acts 2:42–47; cf. 1QS VI.2–3, 6–7), a way of life which spilled over into care for the indigent to the extent that these could be included through secondary association. This development was both the appropriate way to continue the common life initiated by Jesus in a local, permanently settled context and a viable way to express his social concern for the poor of the wider Jewish community.

### 3. Ananias and Sapphira: breach of holy community

When Ananias and Sapphira breached the fellowship and trust of their community, which was aspiring to an ideal of perfect holiness and consecration, their actions were probably viewed by all with horror. There are three suggested explanations of the true nature of the couple's crime.

First, it is suggested that they had made some dedication of their property in advance of sale, and were therefore culpable when they failed to bring the whole sum before the apostles.<sup>20</sup> This explanation fails because it does not correspond with Peter's question at the beginning of Acts 5:4. Had the couple dedicated their property in advance of sale, Peter would have emphasised that after its sale they were obliged to surrender its full value. Yet he emphasises that the sum they had obtained was entirely their own, to do with as they pleased.

Second, some have proposed that Ananias and Sapphira surrendered

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, *The Beginnings of Christianity I, The Acts of the Apostles*, IV (London: Macmillan, 1933), p. 50.

their property as a supererogatory gift, and were condemned for their pretence in seeking to emulate others who had made unusually large donations, while deceptively retaining a part of their property.<sup>21</sup> This interpretation of the couple's crime cannot explain their drastic punishment, which surely implies that they had perpetrated a quite heinous deception, a glaringly obvious breach of the community's fundamental practice. It would surely have been nugatory for the couple to have fallen into deception out of fear for their own security when making an unusually generous, indeed highly sacrificial, gift of alms. The proposal of a supererogatory gift can also furnish no clear explanation as to the timing of the couple's expression of intent to donate all their property. They had clearly made no such declaration before its sale, since Peter emphasised they could have disposed of it after its sale as they chose. They seem also not to have made such a declaration after the sale and before bringing a part of the sum obtained to the apostles. Had they verbally declared their intent following the sale, it would also be pointless for Peter to refer back to the sale and to emphasise by doing this their free disposal over their assets after it. Had they committed them following the sale, he would most likely have referred to this declaration ('You promised to give all the proceeds from the sale of your property') rather than to emphasise their free disposal over their assets. Ananias appears not to have made any verbal declaration at the point of laying his money at the feet of the apostles. No declaration on his part is recorded, only his participation in the ritual. Before condemning Sapphira, Peter has to pry from her such a false declaration (Acts 5:8), implying that she also made none up to that point. Ananias' deception appears only to have consisted in going through a community ritual of laying property before the apostles without surrendering all his property, perhaps as only one of a line of non-speaking aspirants.

This action of laying property at the apostles' feet, without words or declaration, appears to have had the quite unambiguous meaning that those who laid property at the apostles' feet were surrendering its full value. No declaration on Ananias' part was required. A context of mere almsgiving, no matter how generous and inspired, cannot account for such ceremonial meaning. This ritual, which carried the implication of full renunciation of property, seems clearly to have arisen from a cultural context in which individuals embarked upon a life of renun-

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Richard Belward Rackham, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London: Methuen, 1901), p. 65.

ciation and complete devotion to communities of effectively monastic type. Individuals surrendered, according to a recognised rule, all their property into the control of the holy community they aspired to join. Since such full community of life is well attested for the Judaeian cultural and religious milieu by the classical accounts of the Essenes and the *Rule of the Community* discovered at Qumran, I have repeatedly argued in my earlier publications that this local, effectively regulated form of property-sharing is the right context for understanding Peter's words in Acts 5:4. It is through a process of elimination of *failing* explanations of Ananias and Sapphira's crime that I have come to propose this third explanation, that Ananias and Sapphira breached the rules of a well understood process of provisional surrender of property on their entry into the final phase of their novitiate.<sup>22</sup> This system of provisional surrender of property is revealed to us in column VI of the *Rule of the Community* discovered at Qumran. It regulated novices' surrender of property not only in the Qumran community, but also in the c. 200 small communities of Essene male celibates in the towns and villages of rural Judaea, and in the Essene community located on the southwest hill of Jerusalem too.

Commentators usually find the strongest argument against the historicity of the Acts account of the community of property of the earliest disciples in the apparent contradiction between the statements of Acts 2:44–45 and 4:32, 34, indicating a universal sharing of property, and Peter's implication to Ananias and Sapphira at Acts 5:4 that their property donation was voluntary. Despite the extraordinarily frequent rehearsal of this argument, it is fallacious. Community of property is usually entered upon on a fully voluntary basis (as in all forms of monasticism). Peter's point was that Ananias and Sapphira were not compelled to join the common purse, but that since they had sought to do this, they should have abided by the general rule, which applied to all who wished to join; they could withhold nothing. One possible way to understand the earliest community's structure is that it contained an 'inner group', and that only transition into this inner core required full renunciation of property. I have contemplated this 'inner circle' possibility carefully, especially since within Essenism full community of property was practised by only a sector of the movement, and have in-

<sup>22</sup> For my most extensive argument concerning the inadequacy of other explanations of Ananias and Sapphira's misdeed, see still 'The Interpretation of Acts 5.4', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 19 (1983), pp. 117–131.

deed fully supported it in print.<sup>23</sup> I now incline to a modified view<sup>24</sup>, in order to give the summary statements of Acts 2:44–45 and 4:32, 34 regarding community of property full weight.

The author of Acts probably had reason to claim that the whole of the earliest Jerusalem community of believers in Jesus after Pentecost practised full community of property. His reason was, I suspect, the preservation in tradition of the simple truth of an originally comprehensive community of property, which was due in part to the peculiar origins and intentions of the three thousand converts at Pentecost (2:41). It appears that many of these converts, already gathered for the festival, were from the widespread Judaeian 'communitarian stream', i.e. from the Essene movement, which had its centre on the southwest hill, where the early Jerusalem church appears to have begun.<sup>25</sup> Essenism regularly advanced many to the next phase of their novitiate at its annual Pentecost covenant renewal festival.<sup>26</sup> It appears that Jesus had successfully 'implanted' his disciple-group into the Jerusalem Essene Quarter as its leading echelon; hence the close-knit community of Galileans loyal to him was able to grow very rapidly indeed in Jerusalem, as Acts records, and immediately to express local Judaeian institutions and processes in its structure. Many of the first three thousand converts were, I suspect, already living in a common life on the southwest hill or elsewhere in Jerusalem and Judaea. Others were preparing to surrender their property and to advance to the final stage of the Essene novitiate at Pentecost, AD 30. I suspect this group also included some older Jews

<sup>23</sup> Capper, 'Palestinian Cultural Context' in Bauckham (ed.), *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting*, p. 355. The 'inner group' view was a feature of some early comparisons of 1QS with the Acts account of earliest Christian community of goods, cf. Sherman E. Johnson, 'The Dead Sea Manual of Discipline and the Jerusalem Church of Acts', in Krister Stendahl (ed.), *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1958), pp. 129–142, see p. 131; Johannes P. M. Van der Ploeg, *The Excavations at Qumran* (London: Longmans, 1958), p. 208.

<sup>24</sup> As Steve Walton observed, 'Primitive communism in Acts? Does Acts present the community of goods (Acts 2:44–45; 4:32–35) as mistaken?', *Evangelical Quarterly* 80, 2 (April 2008), pp. 99–111, see p. 101 note 11. 28.

<sup>25</sup> For the traditions locating the upper room on Jerusalem's southwest hill see the literature cited above in notes 2 and 10; my own treatments are in Capper, 'Palestinian Cultural Context' in Bauckham (ed.), *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting*, pp. 345–349 and ' "With the Oldest Monks..." ' *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 49 (1998), pp. 36–42.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Allen Lane/Penguin, 1997), pp. 79–81 and 150–153.



from abroad, ‘devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem’ (Acts 2:5). These, I would propose, had been seeking to retire to an already existent pattern of common life and worship based on the Essene Quarter of the southwest hill and attendance at the Temple.<sup>27</sup> Some may have already been using guest facilities adjacent to the guest premises used by Jesus’ disciple group. They did not anticipate the extraordinary events and preaching of the first Christian Pentecost, but they received them gladly. The novices amongst these converts continued in their resolve to enter fully into a holy common life.

Others from the Essene orders (or perhaps similarly intensely socially integrated, ascetic Judaean groups not known to us by name) may have responded to Peter and John’s preaching in the Temple at 4:4, probably at some point in the first year of the Galilean disciples’ leadership in Jerusalem. Acts continues to describe a thoroughgoing community of property at 4:32 and 34, in advance of Ananias and Sapphira’s deception at perhaps the group’s second celebration of Pentecost (either in AD 31, if Jesus’ crucifixion is to be dated to the year 30, or in AD 34, if Jesus’ crucifixion is to be dated to the year 33). I suspect that thereafter the numbers of those who joined the common life started to diminish, and permanently ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ groups emerged for the first time. In the second year of the community’s life large numbers of Jews from Jerusalem’s Greek-speaking synagogues of Jerusalem may have been converted to the apostles’ message but not joined the common life, leading to problems with the care of their widows (cf. Acts 6:1–6).<sup>28</sup> This

<sup>27</sup> I suspect, too, that Ananias and Sapphira were an older couple, who, like many others, sought to consecrate their latter years to prayer, communal life and service in this community and worship at the Temple. In acting thus they may therefore have operated within a well-established form of socio-economic exchange (reciprocity) common within the cultural environment of Judaea, in which the elderly gave over their resources to a town or village ‘community house’ (*beth-ha-chever*, see CD XIV lines 12–17 and 4Q266 I lines 5–13) in exchange for a promise of all needed care and provision, while agreeing to become servant-workers and educator-elders of the community house, according to their ability, for example helping with food preparation, clothing production, work in vegetable and herb gardens, maintenance and cleaning of the community premises, care of the sick and of the infirm elderly, and with the education of children and youth. This staff of local elder-educators in the Essene community houses is visible as the ‘fathers’ and mothers’ to whom obedience is enjoined in 4Q270 VII i lines 13–14.

<sup>28</sup> For argument that Stephen’s martyrdom, which follows at Acts 6:7–8:1, to which Paul was a witness and willing assistant shortly before his conversion, should be dated to in AD 31 or 32, see Rainer Riesner, *Paul’s Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 59–74. Some recent scholars have preferred understandings of Pauline chronology which begin from a somewhat later

hypothetical reconstruction allows us to take seriously the Acts report of earliest Christian community of goods, which lasted as a universal practice for perhaps the first year of the community’s life. While this early community stands in Christian historical perspective as the first Church, it resembled in its social form a large religious order, embracing both men and women. It appears to have utilized, in addition to its large site on the southwest hill, a number of other houses in Jerusalem (Acts 2:46); these may have been community houses and guest facilities of the Essene movement and/or similar groups nearby and elsewhere in Jerusalem. In these locations, a common life was expressed through the sharing of daily wages to finance a common meal each evening. Property owners who held ‘houses and lands’ (Acts 4:34, cf. 2.45) seem either to have sold all these, or to have sold surplus assets, surrendering their value to the community. Premises may have been transferred whole for community use as accommodation or meeting places.<sup>29</sup> Ananias and Sapphira departed from whatever was general practice.

#### 4. Ananias and Sapphira ‘embezzled’ their own property

As Steve Walton has noted,<sup>30</sup> I have in my various treatments of the

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date for Paul’s conversion, subsequent to the AD 33 dating of Jesus’ crucifixion. Colin Humphreys, Professor of Materials Science at Cambridge University, has renewed the argument that the astronomical evidence points to AD 33 as the year of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection, *The Mystery of the Last Supper* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>29</sup> The form of the courtyard house lent itself to multiple occupancy. Qumran ostraccon 1 (KhQ1) seems to be a draft of a novice’s transfer of a whole estate to the Qumran community, indicating that in the Judaean cultural and legal context of the community of goods of Acts 2–6 legal documents may have been drawn up when estates were donated to the congregation. See Ada Yardeni, ‘A Draft of a Deed on an Ostraccon from Khirbet Qumran’, *Israel Exploration Journal* 47 (1997), pp. 233–37; Philip R. Callaway, ‘A Second Look at Ostraccon No. 1 from Khirbet Qumran’, *Qumran Chronicle* 7 (1997), 145–170; Norman Golb, ‘Qadmoniot and the ‘Yahad’ claim’, *Qumran Chronicle* 7 (1997), pp. 171–173; Greg Doudna, ‘Ostraca KhQ1 and KhQ3 from the Cemetery of Qumran: A New Edition’, *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 5 (2004–2005) [online at <http://www.jhsonline.org/cocoon/JHS/a035.html>]; Frank Moore Cross, and Esti [Esther] Eshel, ‘Ostraca from Khirbet Qumran’, *Israel Exploration Journal* 47 (1997), pp. 17–28, and ‘KhQOstraccon 1’, in Philip Alexander et al., *Qumran Cave 4, XXIV, Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part I*, DJD 36 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), pp. 497–507; Frederick H. Cryer, ‘The Qumran Conveyance: A Reply to F. M. Cross and E. Eshel’, *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 11 (1997), pp. 232–40.

<sup>30</sup> Steve Walton, ‘Primitive communism in Acts? Does Acts present the community of goods (Acts 2:44–45; 4:32–35) as mistaken?’, *Evangelical Quarterly* 80, 2 (April

story of Ananias and Sapphira emphasised in my exegesis the meaning of the verb *νοσφίζομαι* (5:2, 3). In my view this verb always means ‘purloin, pilfer, embezzle’, and is a ‘smoking gun’ pointing to the true nature of Ananias and Sapphira’s crime as having to do with their retention of their property, not merely their deception. Since they desired to enter the common life, they had no right to subtract any sum from the money they gained from the sale of their property, although it would not have become community property until a year later, had they been finally accepted into the community. Numerous translations inadequately translate this verb as ‘keep back’. In my view, this is because without understanding of the process of provisional property surrender, translation as ‘embezzle’ may seem to contradict Peter’s assertion that their property remained fully their own.

The other New Testament usage of this verb, in Titus 2:10, clearly describes stealing. Slaves are exhorted ‘not to pilfer (μὴ νουφισαμέvous), but to show perfect and complete fidelity’ (NRSV). If we look back to the Greek Old Testament, we find only uses indicating theft. In the Apocrypha, at 2 Maccabees 4:32, we learn that the corrupt and hellenising High Priest Menelaus ‘*stole* some of the gold vessels of the Temple (χρυσώματα τινα τῶν τοῦ ἱεροῦ νουφισάμενος)’ (NRSV). At Joshua 7:1, ‘the children of Israel committed a great trespass, and purloined [part] of the accursed thing (καὶ ἐνοσφίσαντο ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀναθέματος); and Achar... took of the accursed thing (καὶ ἔλαβεν Ἀχαρ...).’<sup>31</sup> Biblical usage therefore sets pilfering slaves, an embezzling High Priest and the purloining Achan alongside Ananias and Sapphira, suggesting that in their case too we are dealing with a matter of ‘theft’, i.e. that they had no right to retain any part of the proceeds from the sale of their property as they embarked upon the final phase of their novitiate.

Steve Walton sought to emphasise that neither the Liddell-Scott-Jones nor Bauer-Danker-Arndt-Gingrich lexica suggest the translation ‘pilfer/embezzle’ for this verb in Acts 5:2–3. In my view, in the case of LSJ, Dr. Walton has found a little more in the entry than is present. Section II.3 notes that the middle voice is used with active sense in the Hellenistic period to indicate ‘put aside for oneself, appropriate, purloin’. It cites towards its end LXX Joshua 7:1, a little later Acts 5:2, and finally Titus

2008), pp. 99–111, see p. 106 note 28.

<sup>31</sup> The Greek is here cited within the translation of Lancelot C. L. Brenton, *The Septuagint LXX*, (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1844).

2:10, defining the meaning of none of these texts more closely. It does not emphasise that the actions they describe are illegitimate; yet neither does it suggest any restriction of their meaning to ‘put aside for oneself’ in a morally neutral sense.<sup>32</sup>

Usage shows that all actions described with the verb in the middle voice in the Hellenistic period are illegitimate. In their commentary on Acts, Lake and Cadbury carefully considered Hellenistic Greek usage of the verb,<sup>33</sup> concluding:

‘Achan took from the spoil of Jericho dedicated to Jehovah, Ananias retained private property dedicated to the Christian community. The word [νουφίσασθαι] would therefore seem to imply that Ananias stole money which did not belong to him, or, in other words, that he had no right to keep any part of his property. No other explanation is possible in view of the evidence as to its use. It occurs not infrequently in Hellenistic prose... and always implies (a) that the theft is secret; (b) that part of a larger quantity is purloined, hence it is followed by ἐκ... or ἀπο... as well as by other constructions; (c) it is to be noted further that the verb is less commonly used of theft from one individual by another than of taking to oneself (the lexica use for it ἰδιοποιεῖσθαι) what is handled as a trust.’

My examination of many examples of this verb has merely repeated Lake and Cadbury’s work and convinced me that they were correct. It always implies an illegitimate action – stealing, embezzlement, purloining, or pilfering.<sup>34</sup> It is of particular interest to compare the story of

<sup>32</sup> Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. Henry Stuart Jones et al. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), p. 1182.

<sup>33</sup> Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, *The Beginnings of Christianity I, The Acts of the Apostles*, IV (London: Macmillan, 1933), p. 50.

<sup>34</sup> Xenophon tells of commanders admitting their power to *embezzle* (νουφίσασθαι) from their camp’s war booty, ‘though common property (κοινῶν ὄντων) with those who helped get it’ (*Cyropaedia* 4.2.42). Polybius explains the Roman rule of warfare that no soldiers *embezzle* (νουφίσασθαι) from booty but keep instead their pre-campaign oath (10.16.6). Philo writes that Joseph, averting famine, appointed inspectors of high character so that no farmer should *embezzle* (νουφίσασσαι) and eat the seed corn provided from the public granaries (*Joseph* 43 §260). Joseph’s own high character was shown by not *pilfering* a single drachma (οὐδεμίαν δραχμὴν νουφισάμενος) of Pharaoh’s wealth (43 §258). The Israelites purloined none of the dedicated spoil (οὐδὲν ἐκ τῆς λείας νουφισάμενοι, *Moses* 1.45 §253). Plutarch tells us that Pompey, tried for theft of public property, established that most of the embezzling (νενοσφισμένον) had

Ananias and Sapphira with Diodorus of Sicily's account (first century BC) of a shared, tribal system of cultivation found in Spain, cited by Lake and Cadbury:

'Of the tribes neighbouring upon the Celtiberians the most advanced is the people of the Vaccaei, as they are called; for this people each year divides among its members the land which it tills and making the fruits the property of all (τοὺς καρποὺς κοινοποιούμενοι) they measure out his portion to each man, and for any cultivators who have misappropriated some part for themselves (καὶ τοῖς νοσφισαμένοις τι γεωργοῖς) they have set the penalty as death.' (5.34.3)

Here we find a number of resonances with Acts: a system of shared property described with the κοιν- root, distributions, the case of misappropriation, and the consequence of death for such misappropriation. The common nexus ideas and terms revealed by this comparison implies that the verb νοσφίζομαι was the most natural choice for an author who sought to catch a tone of secret breach of trust in respect of publicly or commonly held property. The extended parallel thus revealed supports the view that the author of Acts used the verb νοσφίζομαι because he understood Ananias and Sapphira's retention of part of their property to be illegitimate in view of their goal of joining a fully communal economy.<sup>35</sup>

been done by another (*Pompey* 4.620D, cf. 664C). Part of Themistocles' poor reputation was embezzlement of much state wealth (πολλὰ τῆς πολέως νενοσφισαμένους, *Praec. ger. reip.* 13.809A). Themistocles proved that his fellow officials had embezzled much (πολλὰ νενοσφισαμένους, *Aristides* 4.3). Demosthenes was wronged by his guardians' *purloining* of his property (νοσφισαμένων, *Demosthenes* IV.847D). Mark attacked Lucullus for *embezzling* much (πολλὰ νενοσφισαμένω) from state funds (*Lucullus* 37.2) Athenaeus writes of one Gyllipus starving himself to death because convicted of *embezzling* (νοσφισαμένων) public funds (*Deipnosophists* 6.234a). The examples in the papyri are to the same effect.

<sup>35</sup> Christopher Hays responded to my use of this passage with an unpersuasive argument in his interesting and wide-ranging published Oxford DPhil thesis, *Luke's Wealth Ethics: A Study in Their Coherence and Character* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010). On the one hand, Hays agrees with me that the verb νοσφίζομαι always indicates an illegitimate act, in his words 'it is clear in each context that the named appropriation of goods is morally repugnant' (p. 214). However, in his accompanying footnote (n. 50), while he acknowledges that the parallel cited above of the verb being used of the inappropriate false appropriation of goods 'is certainly eye-catching, especially since the punishment for the embezzlement described by Diodorus was also death', continuing 'but Capper has engaged in what James Barr calls an "illegitimate totality transfer."' The mere oc-

I am content to oppose the opinion of the Bauer-Danker-Arnt-Gingrich lexicon, which in this case appears merely derivative of conventional exegesis and translation rather than a useful guide; it mistranslates Acts 5:2, 3 because it has neither heeded Lake and Cadbury's observation and freshly surveyed usage, nor understood the relevance of the *Rule of the Community* for unravelling the true nature of Ananias and Sapphira's crime. Kurt and Barbara Aland's revision of Walter Bauer's *Wörterbuch*, by contrast, accepts Lake and Cadbury's observations and translates ἐνοσφίσσατο in Acts 5.2 'er unterschlug', i.e. 'he embezzled'.<sup>36</sup>

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currence of ἐνοσφίσσατο in such a context does not corroborate that it likely means the same thing in the Lukan context.' This is not the proposal I made; I was commenting on the character of the context in which the verb (of known meaning) was used rather than on the meaning of the verb. I base my understanding of the verb on its use in numerous other contexts to indicate 'embezzle, purloin, pilfer', the meaning it also has in this passage of Diodorus as well as in Acts 5:2, 3. My point is much the same as Hays' own observation: the parallel is striking because of the similar combination of elements, my 'system of shared property described with the κοιν- root, distributions, the case of misappropriation, and the consequence of death for such misappropriation.' I base my understanding the meaning of the verb in this passage in Diodorus, and also its meaning in Acts 5: 2, 3 and elsewhere in the New Testament simply on its uniform, universal meaning in Hellenistic usage (as I wrote before citing the passage, 'it always implies an illegitimate action — stealing, embezzlement, purloining or pilfering'). I then cited the results of my survey in the accompanying footnote to this statement (as here, above), before proceeding to cite Diodorus only as a particularly interesting comparative example. I cite Diodorus as an interesting example because he shows us something more about the reasons for Luke's choice of the verb, not to base my understanding of the verb's meaning in Acts 5, 2, 3 in on this example. The point I seek to gain from citing the Diodorus passage is how the verb is such a natural choice in Hellenistic Greek when seeking to denote the act of purloining in the context of systems of shared property. Luke himself speaks of the sharing of property, providing the common context (which is thus not 'transferred'). The parallel is pertinent as evidence of a common nexus of ideas and terminology in both authors, what I have called 'a number of resonances.' This extended nexus of ideas does makes it likely that a similar, rather than a markedly different, legal reality of community of property is being described by Luke in Acts (2:44–45 and) 4:32–5:11.

<sup>36</sup> Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland (eds.), *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, 1988), column 1100. I thank my friend and patron Herr Ulrich Wippermann of Bonn, my colleague Prof. Bee Scherer, and my former student Annette Borchert for confirming that *unterschlagen* always denotes an illegitimate action, when used in reference to money, 'embezzle, misappropriate'; cf. Peter Terrell et al. (eds.), *Collins German Dictionary* (Glasgow: Collins, 1980), p. 691.

### 5. 'Sold' or 'Handed Over'?

I close this part of my study with suggestions concerning Peter's first question in Acts 5:4, οὐχὶ μένον σοὶ ἔμενε καὶ προθὲν ἐν τῇ σῆ ἐξουσίᾳ ὑπῆρχεν; For Steve Walton a 'key weakness' of my view is that Peter asserts *prima facie* through this rhetorical question that *prior* to handing his money over to the apostles it remained his own; according to my view Peter should say that Ananias retained title to his property *after* he handed it over to the apostles, since it would be preserved for him in a 'blocked account.'<sup>37</sup> I observe first that it may be possible to read the participle προθὲν with the sylleptic sense 'sold and handed over', allowing it to include the idea of delivering over as well as that of sale. Peter's question is clearly concise in its expression, as are nu-

<sup>37</sup> I note that Craig Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, Vol 2 (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2013) p. 1187, observes that my suggestion that the phased entrance procedure of 1QS VI 16–22 should be understood as the relevant cultural background and 'model' for understanding the account of Ananias and Sapphira 'offers a plausible account of the dynamics behind this narrative.' He continues: 'The text, however, refers to the funds being their own after the sale, not after their donation (5:4).' This is exactly the objection that Steve Walton brought against the exegesis I suggest. In my first treatment of Acts 5:4 (in *JSNT* 19 (1983) pp. 117–131) I grappled at length with a related problem that the text poses, namely that while Peter seems to presuppose the right to discuss the status of the property before and after the event of sale, there is no indication within the account as we have it that Ananias made any verbal declaration that what he brought was the full sum obtained from the sale of his piece of land. To achieve a satisfactory exegesis of the account, which pays attention to all difficulties, it is necessary both to assume that the ritual of property-donation through which Ananias was passing was a fixed cultural form with the unambiguous meaning that the whole of a person's assets were, through this action, being passed into the keeping of the community (hence Ananias could be accused of deception without having uttered a false declaration), and to emphasise that Peter referred to the event of sale (if this was the only semantic reference of his words) as preparatory for the event of donation in this unambiguous ritual form. If, on the one hand, the unambiguous meaning of the verb νοοφίζομαι is allowed to stand — it is a point of exegesis which must not be suppressed — and on the other, Peter is held to be referring only to the status of the land after sale, but before Ananias' depositing of it at the apostles' feet, there seems to be simply no possible intelligible exegesis of the passage which accounts for all its detail. It is on this ground, I would argue, that we are compelled to work from the known cultural model, the progressive entrance procedure of 1 QS VI 16–20, which offers the plausible solution to the problem of Ananias' crime (as Keener acknowledges) that he had no meritorious reason to withhold any part of his property nor to deceive the congregation by his actions since his property remained his own after passing into the care of the apostles. The interpretation of Peter's participle προθὲν by reference to the broader semantic range of its semitic equivalent *m-k-r* in niph'al offered here is a plausible way to a complete solution of what without it remains an intractable impasse.

merous Rabbinic rulings on matters of sale and acquisition. Since his statement was first made, in my view, in a context in which all Peter's hearers understood the conditions of the Essene novitiate, it is possible that he expressed the ideas of sale and surrender with a single word, and that when he spoke of Ananias' property before it was 'sold', he implied, because of the context understood by his hearers, 'sold and handed over'.

However, we must investigate further on this point, since it is striking that the common Hebrew and Aramaic words for 'sell' (Semitic root *m-k-r*) mean semantically 'hand over' in their original sense, coming to mean in common usage 'sell' because sale often involves the physical handing over of property. It is possible, therefore, that the Greek of Acts, in having Peter say 'After it was *sold*, it was still in your power', may restrict the sense in which Peter used this Semitic lexeme, giving an ultimately limited and therefore perhaps even technically incorrect rendering of the Semitic verb used by Peter. It is clear that Peter's question was originally posed in a Semitic language. The Essene officer may, indeed, have emphasised, to a deceptive novice, the protection afforded him during the last phase of his novitiate by saying: 'After you *handed over* your property, it was still in your power.' Yet transmission between languages sometimes yields an inaccurate rendering, or perhaps, rather, a limited rendering which could only be made properly comprehensive by extensive paraphrase. The Greek of Acts conveys Peter's essential point (Ananias' free disposal over his property), but may render a verb which was used to denote 'sell and hand over', rather than simply 'sell', or may have been used originally only in the sense of 'hand over'.

The usual Hebrew word for 'sell' is מָכַר (*makhar*). Edward Lipinski has shown that the ancient Semitic root *m-k-r* 'signifies a transfer of possession which can, but must not necessarily, amount to a sale.'<sup>38</sup> Sale was 'originally understood in the Semitic world' as 'just a particular case of delivery of possession, a rather comprehensive notion denoted by the root *mkr*'; 'a scrutiny of the verbal and nominal use of the root *mkr* in the older texts shows that it does not apply specifically to sale, but designates delivery of possession... with or without the intent of passing ownership.' He demonstrates the meaning 'hand over' in many

<sup>38</sup> Edward Lipinski, art. *mkr*, in G. Johannes Botterweck and K. V. Helmer Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 8 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), pp. 291–296. The quotation is from p. 292.

legal passages.<sup>39</sup> In the usage of the Hebrew Bible, *m-k-r* means properly the transfer of an object, which may be, but is not always, the object of an act of sale. When we turn to study usage in post-biblical law, we find that the seminal lexicographer Jacob Levy<sup>40</sup> explained exactly the same point, namely that *makhar* in the *Talmudim* and *Midrashim* ‘properly’ denotes ‘exchange, hand over’ (*tauschen, übergeben*). He acknowledged that *makhar* ‘usually’ indicates ‘sell’ (*verkaufen*), but insisted that even in this usage the root ‘properly’ indicates ‘hand over the sold, exchanged object’ (*den gekauften, eingetauschten Gegenstand übergeben*).<sup>41</sup>

In my view, Peter had to emphasise precisely that Ananias was yielding his possession (i.e. control) of his property, but not his ownership of it, to the community. Peter may have expressed ‘handed over’ with *m-k-r* in niphil. Or, his word may have been so remembered early in the tradition. According to Michael Wise’s sociolinguistic model of Judaea, both high and dialect forms of Hebrew were in use there in the first century AD. Wise also argues that Jesus probably knew both high and at least one dialect form of Hebrew.<sup>42</sup> Jesus’ disciple Peter could probably express himself in dialect Hebrew. It is possible that a niphil form of *m-k-r* was rendered into Greek with *πράθην* on the mistaken assumption that Peter was referring back to Ananias’ earlier act of selling his property rather than speaking of his current action of handing over the proceeds from the sale. If the party responsible for rendering the account into Greek did not understand the practice of preserving the

<sup>39</sup> Edward Lipinski, ‘Sale, Transfer, and Delivery in Ancient Semitic Terminology’, in H. Klengel (ed.), *Gesellschaft und Kultur im alten Vorderasien*, (*Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients*, 15, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1982), pp. 173–185, quotations from p. 176. See pp. 174–178 for his studies of Deuteronomy 15:12; Leviticus 25:13–16, 29–31, 34, 39–42; Ruth 4:3–5; Exodus 21:7–8, 37 and 22:2 (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* 4.8.27 §272); Isaiah 50:1; 52:3–5; Amos 2:6 and Esther 7:4. In all of these texts ‘hand over’ is the proper translation.

<sup>40</sup> From whose progressively published *Wörterbuch* (1876–1889), for example, the German born American Marcus Jastrow’s *A Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Talmud Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature* (1886–1903) drew much.

<sup>41</sup> Jacob Levy, *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963 [originally Leipzig, 1876–89]), Vol. 3, p. 115. Here ‘properly’ is my translation of Levy’s ‘eig.’ (= *eigentlich*), ‘usually’ my rendering of his ‘gew.’ (= *gewöhnlich*).

<sup>42</sup> M. O. Wise, art. ‘Languages of Palestine’, in Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight (eds.), *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL/Leicester, InterVarsity Press), pp. 434–444, see esp. pp. 441 and 443.

novice’s funds in a blocked account, this mistranslation would actually be highly likely.

Bible readers familiar with the language of any of the English translations in the line of descent from the ‘Authorised Version’ (or ‘King James Version’ / ‘KJV’) to the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) will be familiar with apparent usage in the book of Judges, according to which Israel’s God repeatedly ‘sold’ his people into the hands of their enemies (Judges 2:14 [in parallel with *n-t-n*, ‘give’]; 3:8; 4:2; 10:7). At 1 Samuel 12:9 Israel is ‘sold’ into the hand of Sisera; at Judges 4:9 the prophetess Deborah informs Barak that ‘the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman’. Similarly, at Deuteronomy 32:30, Moses’ song tells that Israel could not have been routed by their enemies ‘unless their Rock had *sold* them, [unless] the Lord had given them up’ (NRSV). Here *makar* is set in synonymous parallel with *סגר* (*s-g-r*) in hiphil (‘shut up’ or ‘deliver up’). Elijah declares to Ahab, in an idiomatic reflexive usage characteristic of the books of Kings, ‘you have given yourself up [NRSV ‘sold yourself’] to do what is evil’ (1 Kings 21:20, cf. v. 25 and 2 Kings 17:17). Of course, none of these texts envisage the payment of a price. Lipinski’s studies show that *m-k-r* does not mean ‘sell’ in any of them, but carries only its essential root meaning, ‘hand over’, ‘deliver up’. All translations of these texts with ‘sell’ are mistaken. Since a whole tradition of modern Bible translation has misunderstood *makar* to mean ‘sell’ in many passages, despite the awkwardness of this rendering,<sup>43</sup> it is possible that such a misunderstanding may also have occurred in the transmission from Hebrew (or Aramaic) into Greek of Peter’s question about the status of Ananias’ property in the next phase of his novitiate.

After sale, and after being handed over to the congregation under the authority of the apostles, by being laid at their feet, Ananias’ property would nonetheless remain his own, as he passed to the next phase of a

<sup>43</sup> My late colleague, the highly esteemed teacher of English language Dr. Stephen Bax, applied his keen sense for language usage to my observations above and pointed out to me that in early English ‘sell’ could mean ‘to give’ in various senses, including ‘to hand over (something, esp. food, a gift)’, ‘to deliver up (a person, esp. a hostage)’, and ‘to give up (a person) treacherously to his enemies; to betray’. ‘Sell’ in English therefore originally had a similar semantic range to the Hebrew root *makar*. This may imply that the first English translations of the Bible sometimes used ‘sell’ to denote ‘hand over’, ‘deliver up’. Cf. art. ‘sell’ in J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. XIV (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), pp. 934–936. The definitions cited here are from sections B1 and B2, cf. also B3e.

progressive procedure through which he might in future, at the conclusion of the whole process, actually be allowed to divest himself of his property, finally joining the possessionless life of the apostles' circle. In the Jerusalem and Judaeon social and cultural context in which this process was fully understood, and had indeed been practised amongst the Essenes for more than a century at the time of the events recounted in Acts, indeed within a within a particular Essene religious community in Jerusalem which employed this process, a community into which, as we have argued in the earlier parts of this study, Jesus had himself sought to integrate his travelling group of disciples with its common purse, at a moment when others too were seeking to make the same social transition to a closer relationship to the apostles' common purse as applicant participants, Peter may have used a form of *m-k-r* in niph'al to indicate the present moment of handing over, rather than the recently and immediately past event of sale, of Ananias' property. Or, he may have used *m-k-r* in niph'al in momentary sylleptic wise, denoting both ideas, 'sold and handed over' with a single word, a linguistic usage possible because both the wider meaning 'hand over' as well as the more specific meaning 'sell' were inherent in the verb *m-k-r*, and because, in the rhetorical context of his utterance, the point that Ananias' property remained as much his own before being 'sold and handed over' as afterwards was clear to all his original hearers, allowing concise expression in which one word denoted both ideas simultaneously. It is possible that Peter expressed himself in an overly concise way, and that this was authentically remembered, resulting in the puzzle which interpreters of Luke's story of Ananias and Sapphira's deceptive property-donation have often detected, and sought to solve by various means. Certainly, outside the original Judaeon social context in which the Essene procedure of phased entry over a prolonged period into membership of a fully property-sharing communal life were not readily understood, Peter's words to Ananias might easily be misunderstood, resulting in an apparent reference to the more easily understood, and known, preparatory event of sale rather than the less readily understood phenomenon of the physical transfer to the apostles' management of the sum generated by Ananias' sale of his asset, while it remained, legally, still his own property.

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### POLISH BIBLIOGRAPHY ON THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS FOR THE YEARS 2017-2019

#### Abbreviations:

Anabasis – “Anabasis” (Rzeszów)

AnnalesP – “Centre Scientifique de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences a Paris. Annales” (Warszawa)

BAn – “The Biblical Annals” (Lublin)

BibliaK – “Biblia Krok po Kroku” (Kraków)

BŻST – “Bielsko-Żywieckie Studia Teologiczne” (Bielsko-Biała)

CT – “Collectanea Theologica” (Warszawa)

FOr – “Folia Orientalia” (Kraków)

PJBR – “The Polish Journal of Biblical Research” (Kraków-Mogilany)

RT – “Rocznik Teologiczny Chrześcijańskiej Akademii Teologicznej” (Warszawa)

SJC – “Studia Judaica Cracoviensia” (Kraków)

SPelp – “Studia Pelplińskie” (Pelplin)

TiC – “Teologia i Człowiek” (Toruń)

Znak – “Znak” (Kraków)

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tions of 'blessing' or 'praising'. Blessing is not only a speech-act, since it has some results in ritual context, believed to be effective. Several Qumran texts are analyzed to show this aspect of the blessing.

Rodney A. Werline then examines *The Imprecatory Features of Psalms of Solomon 4 and 12* (p. 48-62). Curses express the participation of the righteous to God's judgment against the wicked; they imply the belief in the power of the spoken word, and can also have an educational function. Carol A. Newsom then presents his approach *Toward a Genealogy of the Introspective Self in Second Temple Judaism* (p. 63-79). In his essay, the Author deals in particular with passages of 4Q436 (DJD XIX, p. 299), of 4Q444, and 4Q511. In the following article, Angela Kim Harkins deals with *The Function of Prayers of Ritual Mourning in the Second Temple Period* (p. 80-101). The study is based on Daniel's prayer in Dan. 9, 1b-19 and on the subsequent visionary experience of the archangel Gabriel in Dan. 9, 20-27. This chapter of the Book of Daniel dates from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.

The first article of Part II is written by Else K. Holt, *'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean'. Psalm 51, Penitential Piety, and Cultic Language in Axial Age Thinking* (p. 105-121). The Author offers an interesting analysis of this penitential psalm that would be 'a postexilic latecomer among Old Testament texts' (p. 113), a dating accepted by E.K. Holt (p. 119-120). The next article by Ingunn Aadland deals with a *Qumran text: Prayer and Remembrance in 4Q Sapiential Work (4Q185)* (p. 122-136). Its analysis shows how the author of the *Sapiential Work* adapts standardized liturgical formulas to an instruction on prayer, petition, and praise. The next article by Corinna Körting is entitled *Lamentations: Time and Setting* (p. 137-152). This analysis of the biblical Book of Lamentations leads to the conclusion that an early liturgical setting (*Sitz im Leben*) is doubtful.

The first article of Part III is written by Kipp Davis, *Structure, Stichometry, and Standardization: An Analysis of Scribal Features in a Selection of the Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls* (p. 151-184). The codicological analysis is based on six scrolls from Qumran and one scroll from Masada: 4Q84, 4Q86, 4Q88, 4Q90, 4Q93, 4Q98a, Mas1e,f. An appendix provides a table of Psalms scrolls from the Judaean Desert (p. 172-184). The next article by Joseph L. Angel is entitled *Reading the Songs of the Sage in Sequences: Preliminary Observations and Questions* (p. 185-211). This is a study of the *Songs of the Sage*, a collection of hymns for protection from demonic harm, represented at Qumran by two manuscripts, 4Q510-511, both of which can be dated around the turn of

the era. The Author offers two appendices with sixteen reconstructed columns of 4Q511 (p. 203) and with their transcription and translation (p. 204-211). This important article is followed by a study of Ps. 147 by David Willgren: *Did David lay down His Crown? Reframing Issues of Deliberate Juxtaposition and Interpretative Contexts in the 'Book' of Psalms with Psalm 147 as a Case in Point* (p. 212-228). An interesting feature of the article is the study of the sequence of Ps. 146-150 not only in the *textus receptus*, but also in the Septuagint (Ps. 145-151), in 4Q86 (Ps. 106 → 147 → 104), and in 11Q5 (Ps. 104 → 147 → 105). It results from the analysis that the formation of the Book of Psalms cannot be explained by simply comparing the contents of juxtaposed compositions.

Part IV begins with a study of Jesper Høgenhaven on *Psalms as Prophecy: Qumran Evidence for the Reading of Psalms as Prophetic texts and the Formation of the Canon* (p. 231-251). The Author stresses that this is only one of the possible interpretations of older psalms at Qumran, not excluding their different understanding. The next article by Mika S. Pajunen deals with *Exodus and Exile as Prototypes of Justice: Prophecies in the Psalms of Solomon and Barkhi Nafshi Hymns* (p. 252-276). The *Barkhi Nafshi* ('Bless, O my Soul') hymns are preserved by five fragmentary Qumran manuscripts (4Q434-438: DJD XXIX), that are described by their editors as hymns of thanksgiving. According to the Author, however, these hymns refer to an elect group of people, perceiving themselves as performing the Law correctly, like the Qumran community, and as being in the midst of a second perfected Exodus. Their expectation was that other prophecies will be fulfilled in their forthcoming future, viz. the granting of Jerusalem and of the Holy Land. Their highly respected ancestral traditions were found in the Law and the Prophets, while the Psalms were regarded as prophetic writings, just as done in the Psalms of Solomon.

Part V begins with an article of Marc Zvi Brettler, *Those who pray together stay together: The Role of Late Psalms in creating Identity* (p. 279-304). The Author stresses that common recitation of psalms and prayers reinforces the identity of the community and that some psalms contribute to 'community formation'. The next article by George J. Brooke concerns Dead Sea Scrolls: *Praying History in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Memory, Identity, Fulfilment* (p. 305-319). The first part of this essay aims at showing that historical psalms, like Ps. 105 and 106, play a notable part in the interplay of memory and identity. A similar role is played by the re-presentation of the Covenant promise of the past in the Temple Scroll 29, by the present blessing in the Rule of the Community

2, and by the eschatological hope in 4Q174. Anja Klein then deals with *Fathers and Sons: Family Ties in the Historical Psalms* (p. 320-338). The argument focuses on four prayers stressing the importance of the relationship between fathers and sons, in a positive or negative way, viz. Ps. 78, 105, 106; Neh. 9.

Part VI begins with a contribution of Adele Berlin, *Speakers and Scenarios: Imagining the First Temple in Second Temple Psalms (Psalms 122 and 137)* (p. 341-355). The article deals with Ps. 122 and 132, which create scenarios with the First Temple or preexilic Jerusalem as central figures. A short excursus concerns music and mourning (p. 354-355). The next article by Marko Marttila deals with *Ben Sira's Use of Various Psalm Genres* (p. 356-383). The Author analyzes Sir. 36, 1-17 and 51, 12a-o. The following contribution by Marika Pulkkinen is entitled '*There is no one righteous*': *Paul's Use of Psalms in Romans 3* (p. 384-409). The Psalms used are, according to the Septuagint: Ps. 115, 2; 50, 6; 13, 1-3.5.10; 139, 4; 9, 28; 35, 2, or parallel passages in other books. The last article by Årstein Justnes deals with *Philippians 2:6-11 as a Christological Psalm from the XX<sup>th</sup> Century* (p. 410-426), arguing that the author of the 'Psalm' of Phil. 2, 6-11 was neither Saint Paul nor a nameless pre-Pauline figure, but Ernst Lohmeyer, whose form-critical exegesis led to a hymnic interpretation of the Christological passage dating, as the whole epistle, from the beginning of the 60s. A.D.

The articles are not followed by a general conclusion, which would have been indeed difficult, but there is a rich bibliography (p. 427-466), an index of ancient sources (p. 467-500), including Dead Sea scrolls, other Judaeen Desert manuscripts, pseudepigraphs, ancient Greek and Latin texts, and Rabbinic literature. There is also an index of modern authors quoted in the book (p. 501-506), which is undoubtedly an important study of biblical and non biblical psalms and prayers of the late Second Temple period.

One aspect of the questions raised by the authors seems to be overlooked or rather not clearly formulated, viz. the Christian prophetic interpretation of psalms. Considering the date of some sources used, one might refer, for instance, to the Epistle of Pseudo-Barnabas, which has been placed by some historians as early as the reign of Vespasian (A.D. 70-79), while others date it from the early second century, about fifty years after the destruction of the Temple. Now, Pseudo-Barnabas attempts a three-fold reading of the Psalms, viz. prophetic, typological, and spiritual. Thereby he tries to show that only Christians know how to read the Old Testament, especially the Psalms. He urges them to avoid

falling into the alleged error of the Jews which in his opinion consisted in interpreting the Bible literally. Reading the Psalms as prophetic writings, Christians will discover, according to Pseudo-Barnabas, that the Psalter reveals the main aspects of the Christian mystery. This is a topic that could be studied in the spirit of the workshops that led to the writing of the present volume on *Functions of Psalms and Prayers in the Late Second Temple Period*.

The organizers of the workshops, the redactors, and all the Authors should be warmly congratulated for the accomplished work. Let us hope that they will continue their researches in the same spirit and with the same scholarly precision.

EDWARD LIPIŃSKI

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**THE ENCYKLOPEDIA OF JEWISH MESSIANISMS**

(Review article)

David HAMIDOVIĆ, Xavier LEVIEILS, and Christophe MÉSANGE (eds.), *Encyclopédie des messianismes juifs dans l'Antiquité* (Biblical Tools and Studies 33), Peeters, Leuven 2017, 527 pp. Bound. ISBN 978-90-429-3554-9.

Jewish messianic movements begin to appear in the late Second Temple period, but the origins of messianic beliefs can be found in the Hebrew Bible. The field of the subject is thus very large and, no surprise, ten authors deal with its various aspects. The present volume is probably the first recent book dealing with this subject in such a large way. The introduction written by the three editors (p. 1-11) presents the topics of the ten chapters and briefly indicates their connection.

As expected, the large first chapter by Christophe Nihan examines the origins of the messianism or utopian royalty in the Hebrew Bible (p. 13-82). According to the author, messianism is a key-concept establishing a connection between the Old and the New Testament in the biblical studies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Messiah appears there as an eschatological figure, acting as judge at the end of the present world. Now, such a figure is missing in biblical eschatological texts, although the expectation of a royal personage is attested in the prophetic literature of the Bible.

The author admits the pre-exilic origin of the conception of Yahweh's kingship, but he does not explain how this belief can be connected with the divine features or origin of the human kingship, expressed by the common title "Yahweh's anointed", applied to Saul and to David, and extended to Cyrus in Isa. 45:1. He is inclined to date utopian ideas linked to human kingship from the Second Temple period, but also notices a

tendency of attributing royal prerogatives to the high-priest, although a continuation of the Davidic dynasty was expected at the same time. This general overview of the Hebrew Bible is followed by a bibliography (p. 72-82), where publications dealing with Yahweh's kingship are missing<sup>1</sup>.

The second chapter by Cécile Dogniez deals with the problem of messianism in the Septuagint (p. 83-121). A general presentation of the Septuagint and of its context, as well as a brief explanation of messianism are followed by an analysis of passages interpreted as messianic, thus Gen. 3:15; 49:9-11; Numb. 24:7, 17; Ps. 44 (45); 109 (110); Isa. 7:14; 9:5-6. A few terms related to messianism are then explained, i.e. χριστός, ῥάβδος (Isa. 11:1; 44:7; 109:2); ἄνθρωπος (Numb. 24:7, 17; Isa. 19:20), ἀνατολή (Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12). This detailed analysis of some passages and words is followed by a useful bibliography (p. 115-121). The third contribution by Appolline Thomas analyzes the *Sibylline Oracles* III as example of royal messianism in Jewish Hellenistic literature (p. 123-151). Book III is the oldest and the most interesting of the Jewish parts of the *Oracles*. The general presentation of the *Sibylline Oracles* is followed by an analysis and a French translation of Book III, 162-195.286-294.608-623.635-656. These four passages concern the end of the present world and the coming of God's kingship. Among the royal figures appearing in these passages, the role of three kings is examined in order to see whether their intervention corresponds to a messianic expectation: the seventh king, the solar king, the great king of Asia. According to the author, these figures have eschatological features, which reflect ideas spread in Egypt about the first century B.C. This analysis is followed by a useful bibliography (p. 148-151).

The next chapter by Patrick Pouchelle deals with the Psalms of Solomon, in particular with Psalms 17 and 18, presenting a "Messiah, which was studied too much" (p. 153-203). The detailed author's analysis reaches the conclusion that the royal personage of Psalm 17 lacks properly messianic features, while the one of Psalm 18 appears as an eschatological figure. There is a large bibliography (p. 190-203). The following study by David Hamidović deals with the diversity of mes-

<sup>1</sup> A substantial review of these publications up to 1962 is provided by E. Lipiński, *Les Psaumes de la royauté de Yahvé dans l'exégèse moderne*, in R. De Langhe (ed.), *Le Psautier, ses origines ses problèmes littéraires, son influence*, Leuven 1962, p. 133-172; id., *La Royauté de Yahvé dans la poésie et le culte de l'ancien Israël*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Brussel 1968.

sianic expectations in the Palestinian Jewry, especially according to Qumran texts (p. 205-286). He notes that the element common to the Qumran texts and other Palestinian sources are the expectations, inclusive that of a key-figure with some eschatological features. This figure is called sometimes "Israel's Messiah", but the word *mšyḥ* does not appear everywhere and can be replaced, for instance, by "Prince of the community" or the like. Qumran texts reveal a variety of expressions examined by the author, who thinks that a royal or national Messiah was less important in an eschatological perspective than the figure of the "anointed priest" (4Q375, 4Q376), a high-priest. Hamidović assumes that the Essenes expected two Messiahs, "the Messiah of Aaron", thus a high-priest and a "Messiah of Israel" (p. 234-235). Besides, they also expected a prophetic figure: "until the coming of the prophet and of Aaron's and Israel's Messiahs" (1QS IX, 11). This prophet will be an eschatological figure like Moses (cf. Deut. 18:18-19 and p. 249 ff.). Also Melchisedeq belongs to this eschatological ambience. Expected messianic figures can also have supernatural or celestial characteristics, like "God's son" mentioned in 4Q246 (p. 261-264). Also parables of I Enoch 37-71 contain eschatological elements, like other apocrypha and the recently discovered *Ḥazon Gabriel*. This large review of messianic expectations in Palestinian Jewry ends with a bibliography (p. 276-286).

The next contribution by Jean Riaud deals with messianism according to Philo of Alexandria (p. 287-302). The latter does not even use the word χριστός ("messiah") and his messianism can be regarded as an expectation of terrestrial felicity. However, Philo does not seem to attach much importance to this expectation. A short bibliography is added to the article (p. 300-302). The following contribution by Christophe Mésange deals with messianism according to Josephus Flavius (p. 303-331), who never uses the word χριστός, just like Philo of Alexandria. He refers nevertheless to messianic expectations in the *Jewish War* VI, 312, writing about Jews fighting against the Romans. They trusted in "the Holy Scriptures predicting that in those days someone coming from their country will govern over the whole earth". In various places Josephus describes wonders, interpreted by people as signs announcing victory over Rome, a better future, and a messianic era. Mésange also comments in detail on Josephus' reports on Simeon bar Giora, a Jewish military leader in the war against Rome in 66-70 A.D. He may have been regarded as messiah, even by himself.

The following article by Xavier Levieils deals with messianism in Christian Judaism (p. 333-390). This long contribution does not concern

the messianic re-interpretation of Old Testament texts – a subject missing in the book – or the role of John the Baptist, who is just mentioned four times. The author presents Jesus' messianism under different aspects: Jesus, a political Messiah, an ethical Messiah a Messiah who cannot be found, a prophetic Messiah, a crucified Messiah, the herald of a kingdom without Messiah, the expected Messiah. The question is raised about Jesus' messianic self-consciousness in a political and a religious context. Messianic references are analyzed in the Canonical Gospels, as well as the messianic titles attributed to Jesus: the Son of Man, the Messiah, the Lord, the Son of God, the Son of David. Disputations between Jews and Christians about Jesus' messiahship are examined, as well as the presence of concurrent messiahs and the change of Messiah into Logos under Greek philosophic influence. A bibliography is added to the text (p. 381-390).

The next contribution by José Costa concerns the messianism in rabbinic and synagogal Judaism (p. 391-427). Its general presentation is followed by several questions about the lack of a coherent, unified concept of the Messiah in the rabbinic tradition. The ideology of the Bar Kochba revolt, despite the latter's unsuccess, may be the background of the belief that the Messiah is the king who will redeem and rule Israel at the klimax of human history. He will also be the instrument by which the kingdom of God will be established. A bibliography is provided at the end of the article (p. 423-427). The last contribution by Thierry Legrand deals with messianism in the Targums (p. 429-463). A general presentation of the Targums is followed by an examination of Targumic passages mentioning a messianic figure. This is the case of the enigmatic Shiloh from Gen. 49:10b, quoted according to the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan (p. 437), which several times mentions "the king Messiah". The Messiah is clearly related to Judah in the Targums to Gen. 49:8-12, but he is called "Messiah of Israel" in the Targums to Numb. 24:17. The Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan to Ex. 40:11 calls him "Messiah, son of Ephraim". Other passages show that the Messiah will come as a liberator. His coming is nevertheless no central theme of the Targums to the Pentateuch. The same can be said about the Targum to the Former Prophets, although Messianic elements occur in the Targum to the Canticles in I Sam. 2:1-10 and II Sam. 22, also to II Sam. 23:1-7. More messianic elements appear in the Targum to the Later Prophets, especially in the Targum to the Book of Isaiah. Several passages are recorded and commented by the author, who nevertheless admits that

no clear image of the Messiah appears in the Targums. A useful bibliography is added to the article (p. 460-463).

The short conclusion by the three editors (p. 465-469) stresses that the messianic idea is continuously in development and that the figure of the Messiah acquires different characteristics, mainly ethical or eschatological, depending on the circumstances in which the Jewish communities were living. The book certainly brings a lot of useful information for historians and biblical scholars, especially those dealing with the New Testament and the early Church history. In fact, except the article on messianism in the Hebrew Bible, all the contributions examine sources dated between the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. and the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The discussion on messianism in the Hebrew Bible does unfortunately not stress the differences between the ancient sources and their presentation by Deuteronomistic historians writing *ca.* 500 B.C., by post-Deuteronomistic redactors, by editors of the Later Prophets or by the Chronicler, dated *ca.* 300 B.C.

Even the doctrine that Yahweh had chosen David and his descendants to reign over Jerusalem dates from a period much later than the age of David. Some psalms, like Ps. 45 or 72, concern the Kingdom of Israel, not Judah. The Judaeen monarchy needed a divine legitimating after the period of 845-730 B.C. All the sons of king Jehoshaphat have been murdered *ca.* 845 B.C.<sup>2</sup> A few years later, at king's behest, some people stoned Zechariah, son of the high-priest Jehoiada (II Chron. 24:20-22), who had been buried with the kings (II Chron. 24:15-16). King Joash was then murdered *ca.* 802 B.C. by two men bearing yahwistic names (II Kings 11:21; II Chron. 24:25). His son Amasiah was assassinated in turn, *ca.* 776 B.C. (II Kings 14:19; II Chron. 25:27). He was succeeded by his son Azariah, who became leprous, and the latter's son Jotham, "Fatherless", was supposed to govern the country, the name of which was changed from Beth-David into Judah. The internal situation was apparently stabilized with the accession of Ahaz, although his mother's name is not given (II Kings 16:14; II Chron. 28:1), contrary to the usual practice. The divine support is nevertheless proclaimed in Isa. 9:5-6, two verses that may date from the reign of Ahaz. This might then be the earliest text asserting the election of the Davidic dynasty, although doubts about its real continuity raise when one considers the events of 845-730 B.C.

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<sup>2</sup> II Chron. 21:1-4. Cf. E. Lipiński, *A History of the Kingdom of Israel* (OLA 275), Leuven 2018, p. 96.

The book ends with an index of modern authors (p. 471-481), an important index of ancient sources (p. 483-518), and an index of subjects (p. 519-527).

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### REVIEWS

Lorenzo DITOMMASO, *The Dead Sea New Jerusalem Text. Contents and Contexts*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2005, in 8\*, pp. XV, 228. Bound. [= Text and Studies in Ancient Judaism, vol. 110]. Price: € 84.00. ISSN 0721-8753. ISBN 3-16-148799-0.

The book under this delayed review is a corrected version of a Ph.D. dissertation written in 2001 under the direction of Professor Elileen Schuller, a nun who is an esteemed Qumran scholar, and publisher of numerous texts from Qumran caves. The subject of the dissertation is the Aramaic manuscripts of a document preliminarily called the New Jerusalem (abbreviated as NJ). Badly damaged manuscript fragments of NJ were found in a succession of caves 1,2,4, 5, and 11. Of the seven manuscripts of the NJ texts, still missing in 2005 was the official publication of the texts from Cave 4. And it was these texts (4Q554, 554a, and 4Q555) that were dealt with in detail in the dissertation of DiTommaso.

Only one publication has appeared so far whose main aim was to put in order the material contained in the quoted manuscripts of NJ. Its author was M. Chyutin (*The New Jerusalem Scroll from Qumran. A Comprehensive Reconstruction*, Sheffield 1997), a professional architect, who brilliantly identified the architectural elements found in the apocryphon. Unfortunately, as a critical edition of manuscripts from Cave 4 was missing, his reconstruction of the original scroll turned out to be inaccurate. It was necessary to wait for a decade for the official publication of the second volume of Aramaic texts from Cave 4 (cf. E. Puech, *DJD* vol. 37, Oxford 2009). Therefore, in the first chapter of his dissertation (pp. 13-76) DiTommaso presented his own reconstruction and translation of the three manuscripts of NJ (4Q554, 4Q554a, and 4Q555). Added as an important appendix are remarks on the numerical representation and measurement of distance in 4QNJ, and reproductions of fragments preserved in Cave 4 (pp. 83-88).



The second chapter of the book (pp. 89-149) includes an English translation of the document, but with no information given on the criteria which the author followed in determining the sequence of six manuscripts of NJ. Incidentally, the fragment from Cave 1 was completely omitted. In the introduction (pp. 89-90) it was only mentioned that no logical arrangement of the contents of the document was possible because of numerous fragments missing. This approach is better than that adopted by M. Chyutin, who went so far as to suggest even the number of columns in a hypothetical original document. DiTommaso presented justification of the order he accepted after he gave his own proposed translation of the text NJ. His translation is based mainly on the arguments used by E. Cook in his edition of the text in M. O. Wise, M. Abbege, and E. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. A New Translation*, San Francisco 1996, pp. 181-184. Assuming that NJ is an apocalypse, DiTommaso suggests that it is more of a “historical” than an “other-worldly” type (p. 102). That assumption enables him to date the origin of the apocryphon in the priestly circles and before the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple by the Roman army (p. 149).

In the last chapter of his book (pp. 151-194) DiTommaso tries to locate the text of NJ in the context of the Qumran scrolls. As comparative material he uses mainly the Temple Scroll, which also speaks about the monumental dimensions of New Jerusalem and the Temple. However, DiTommaso does not see direct similarities between the two documents. Even if M. O. Wise suggested that the Aramaic text of NJ constituted the source of the Temple Scroll, it is better to accept that the two shared a common tradition, exploited by both (p. 161). At least that view is confirmed by a comparison of the names of twelve gates, which occur in both documents (p. 161).

In the subsequent part of the chapter (pp. 169-186) the author analyses the contents of NJ in the context of the eschatology of the Qumran community. He concludes that the Aramaic document does not share the sectarian views on the last battle which will decide the future of the world. The book ends with a summary of DiTommaso’s cautious suggestions made in the course of his study. New Jerusalem is a literary answer to circumstances of Jewish life at the beginning of the second century B.C., just before the Maccabean uprising. The panorama of the world monarchies reveal an ideal picture of the future Jerusalem as a city free of the yoke of hostile powers. The holy city here is the centre of the world and an augury of the future reality. New Jerusalem was presented as an ideal city, which owes its beauty and greatness to the Temple and the priesthood.

Lorenzo DiTommaso closes his dissertation with an extensive bibliographical list (pp. 195-214) and indexes of sources and authors. These greatly facilitate the reading of this important book, which constitutes a turning point in studies on New Jerusalem. The Aramaic document from the beginning of the second century B.C. became the point of departure for the eschatology of the Qumran sect and for the creation of later pseudepigraphic literature (2-4 Baruch). The exemplary Ph.D. dissertation presented by DiTommaso in 2001 later drew the author to the study of pseudapocrypha and apocalyptic literature.

[Translated from Polish by Z. J. Kapera]

ANTONI TRONINA

Heinz-Dieter NEEF, *Arbeitsbuch Biblisch-Aramäisch. Materialien, Beispiele und Übungen zum Biblisch-Aramäisch*, 3. Durchgesehene und verbesserte Auflage, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2018, in 8\*, pp. XVIII, 208. Paperback. Price: € 29.00. ISBN 978-3-16-156012-5.

H.-D. Neef, professor of the Old Testament at the Evangelical Theological Faculty of Tübingen University, has prepared a new edition of his useful handbook of Biblical Aramaic. Its previous editions appeared in 2006 and 2009. The first edition was presented by the undersigned in “The Polish Journal of Biblical Research” 5, 2 (Dec. 2006), pp. 151-152, so there is no need to repeat the general description of the book. We should only note that in the case of this edition Prof. Neef has basically checked the previous editions and corrected misspellings and other mistakes. He took into consideration remarks made by colleagues included and all the improvements into this publication. It is a very useful handbook, and it has exceptionally clear Hebrew characters, good examples and a practical key to exercises. In my previous review I regretted that we did not have such a modern handbook in Polish. Now we have one, written by Prof. Marek Parchem (*Biblijny język aramejski, gramatyka, kompletne preparacje, słownik [Biblical Aramaic Language. Grammar. Complete Commentary. Dictionary]*, Bernardinum, Pelplin 2016).

Once again let me turn to the description of Aramaic in Prof. Neef’s introduction. It is surprising that he presents his students with Aramaic texts from inscriptions of Palmyre, Hatra and other places, while the Qumran texts deserve only to a mention, even now, after the publication

of these all Aramaic texts in the DJD series. It would of course be very important for a student to know that Aramaic fragments of the Books of Daniel, Ezra, and Jeremiah were found in the Qumran caves, and how about over a hundred other texts, e.g. the Testament of Aramaic Levi (1Q21, 4Q213-214) and other Testaments, or the Aramaic Apocalypse, 4Q246 known as the Son of the God Text? Of course, despite this minor deficiency the handbook of Prof. Neef remains an excellent tool for, I hope not only German, students of Aramaic language.

ZDZISŁAW J. KAPERKA

Eugene ULRICH, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Developmental of Composition the Bible*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2015, in 4\*, pp. XXI, 346. [Paperback edition of vol. 169 in the series *Vetus Testamentum Supplements*]. ISBN 978-90-04-34918-6.

Prof. Eugen Ulrich from the University of Notre Dame is the main editor of the biblical texts from the Dead Sea and author of numerous books popularizing the results of that laborious research. His previous work, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls* (vols. 1-3, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2012), contained a synthesis of forty years of his research on the texts of biblical manuscripts from Qumran. The book which is presented here is a supplement to the previous one. The title itself betrays the intentions of the author, who set out to acquaint the modestly educated readers with the current state of knowledge on how the Bible was born. Preserved among the scrolls found in the caves around Qumran were over two hundred biblical manuscripts over two thousand years old. Their thorough analysis has enabled us to understand better the phenomenon of creation of the Hebrew Bible, and of its Samaritan, Greek and Latin versions.

For clarity of presentation Prof. Ulrich divided his book into nineteen chapters, which centre around three major topics. The book opens by with a long introduction (pp. 1-27) and closes with a brief conclusion (pp. 309-316). The introduction consists of two chapters, which in a way that is both accessible and fascinating tell the reader about the great changes in our perception of the Bible due to the Dead Sea Scrolls. The first chapter presents “the developmental composition of the Hebrew biblical text” (pp. 1-14). So far the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) has been

treated as a monolith comprising three segments (Torah, Nebiim, and Ketubim) gradually combined into a collection of canonic literature. Today such a static presentation must give way to a dynamic model. That is dealt with in the second introductory chapter (pp. 15-27), in which Prof. Ulrich demonstrates the insufficiency of the old division into ‘biblical’ and non-biblical’ texts.

The first section of Ulrich’s book comprises chapters 3 to 10. The author, as the Chief Editor of biblical scrolls from Qumran in an understandable way acquaints the reader with the Holy Scripture texts discovered in the Judean Desert. He presents in succession the development of the Pentateuch in the period of the Second Temple (pp. 29-46), the problem of the first altar in the Book of Joshua (pp. 47-66), the question of the brief and longer versions of the Judges and Kings (pp. 67-72), and the exceptionally fascinating history of the scrolls of the Books of Samuel (pp. 73-108). This last text is especially dear to Prof. Ulrich, as he occupied himself with it from the beginning of his scholarly career. But he has also prepared a new edition of the two scrolls of Isaiah from Cave 1 (*DJD*, vol. 32). He devotes the next two chapters of the present book to these Isaiah manuscripts (pp. 109-130 and 131-140), painstakingly tracing their relations to the Masoretic text. In the next chapter (No. 9) Ulrich discusses the additions to and successive editions of the Book of Jeremiah (pp. 141-150), and in chapter 10 he studies the Septuagint scrolls preserved at Qumran.

Those analyses of particular biblical scrolls are followed by a synthesis of the conclusions presented in the preceding section. He points to the fact that among the Hebrew Bible scrolls from Qumran there are no ‘sectarian variants’ such as those we meet later in the Samaritan Pentateuch (chapter 11, pp. 169-186). The next chapter (No. 12: “Nonbiblical” Scrolls Now Recognized as Scriptural, pp. 187-200) concentrates on the scrolls preliminarily designated as ‘non-biblical’ scrolls (4QRP and 11QPsalms), which are now accepted as biblical ones. The same problem, concerning the ‘frontiers of the Holy Scripture’ is taken up in the next chapter [“Pre-Scripture”, Scripture (Rewritten), and “Rewritten Scripture] (pp. 201-214). In the subsequent chapters of the central part of the book Ulrich analyses three kinds of biblical writings: the Samaritan Pentateuch (pp. 215-228), the Septuagint (pp. 229-250), and the holy scrolls from Masada (pp. 251-263).

The last part of Prof. Ulrich’s new book is entitled “The Road Toward Canon: From Collection of Scrolls to Canon.” This set of articles is especially important for biblical scholarship, in which the notion of “can-

on” was neglected until recently. Ulrich starts by establishing “the notion and definition of canon” (chapter 17, pp. 265-280), to follow with reflection on the gradual extension of holy scripture’s authority (chapter 18: “From literature to scripture”, pp. 281-298). The final chapter of the book (chapter 19: “The Scriptures at Qumran and the Road toward Canon”, pp. 299-308) presents an attempt to establish a hierarchy of importance among the books regarded as authoritative in the Qumran society. The importance of a particular book, according to Prof. Ulrich, is determined by the number of preserved copies. By that rule, the Book of Daniel would have had a lower status than the Jubilees or 1 Henoch. This reader notes that this criterion of evaluation of particular books is unreliable. The Book of Daniel was simply in the phase of final redaction, while the other books quoted had already a long history behind them.

The brief conclusion of the book (pp. 309-316) sums up entire material of the three parts presented above. In the last sub-section (“Current Views and Critique”) Prof. Ulrich presents his evaluation of contemporary theories which aim at explaining the process of ‘birth’ of the Hebrew Bible. First, he takes a critical look at the theory of local text formulated by F. M. Cross. Instead of assuming a hypothetical ‘Urtext’ (the original text), one should speak of ‘a series of original texts’ which gave rise to three “confessional” ‘text types’: the Masoretic text, the Septuagint, and the Samaritan Pentateuch. He also brings up S. Talmon’s theory of three socio-religious “Gruppentexte.” The history of the biblical texts can be traced only from the middle of the third century B.C, and it does not confirm Talmon’s proposal of the existence of multiple forms of the original text.

At the end Prof. Ulrich compares his own position with the earlier view of Emanuel Tov about four categories of the biblical text: Proto-Masoretic, Pre-Samaritan, Vorlage of the Old Greek and non-aligned one. Ulrich adopts that Tov’s categories, even if somewhat anachronistic, are useful. He himself proposes to classify manuscripts according to their successive literary editions. Influential religious leaders or scribes sometimes included their own commentaries into the biblical text. The four scholars referred to here, Cross, Talmon, Tov and Ulrich, have created a basis for further research on the history of the biblical text. Prof. Ulrich’s book is the latest compendium of that research and an indispensable aid in the study of manuscripts from the Dead Sea, which allow us in a way to touch the moment when the Bible “was born.”

[Translated from Polish by Z. J. Kapera]

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### FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS’ SILENCE ON THE QUMRAN PHENOMENON: A DISCUSSION BY E-MAIL IN APRIL 2015 BETWEEN CLAUDE COHEN-MATLOFSKY (CCM) AND STEVE MASON (SM)

CCM: Has anyone ever wonder why Josephus does not mention the „Dead Sea Scrolls phenomenon”?

SM: I suspect that the answer is ‚Yes, many people’, but more implicitly than explicitly. The question why Josephus *doesn’t mention* any particular X (e.g. in *War*: Jesus, John the Baptist, the early Christians, Justus of Tiberias, taxation, economic causes of the war, biblical covenant, several procurators and some legates in Antioch, the structure and weaponry of auxiliary cohorts, Bannus, the Fourth Philosophy, many towns and villages of the region, money or coin production, ritual baths, meals ...) tends to arise from a certain view of Josephus: as an observer and recorder of everything significant (to us). So, if he doesn’t mention something we consider significant, we consider that a problem needing an explanation.

When I suggest that the question has been noticed with respect to Qumran and the Scrolls, implicitly, I mean that the Qumran-Essene identification is based upon this issue to a large extent. As you know,

Sukenik, De Vaux, Black, and many others made the following case: over here we have this impressive cache of scrolls clearly indicating a community or communities following a rigid discipline of membership and sharing holy meals, which must have been a significant presence in Judaea; over there we have Josephus' accounts, which do not mention these groups or their scrolls or Qumran but DO describe in some detail the 'Essenes', whose way of life overlaps in significant ways that of the Qumran communities. *Ergo, the communities of the Scrolls must be Essenes*. That is the only rational explanation of Josephus' silence about such an important phenomenon: that he was not silent about it, but called it by a different name. This is a cornerstone, as you know, of the Q-E hypothesis, and repeated often, by Jim Vanderkam and others.

CCM: So what you mean is that the Qumran and DSS phenomenon is named "Essenes" in Josephus's writings. Therefore it would not be a real silence, at least NOT for the proponents of the Q-E hypothesis.

SM continues: But the logic is only impressive if one ignores the *hundreds or thousands of other interesting phenomena that Josephus fails to mention*. I've suggested a few in the previous paragraph (parentheses), and my current book in press takes note of many more<sup>1</sup>. The reality is that Josephus does not tell us about *the vast majority of events, groups, and personalities of his time*. This is no criticism of him. He could not have done otherwise. He wrote stories, and stories are highly selective in relation to the complexity of real life with its huge casts of actors. The really telling point here is that even with people and groups he mentions once or twice (e.g., Eleazar ben Simon, founder of the Zelotai, or Gorion ben Joseph, early joint leader of war preparations), about whom we often comfort ourselves that we therefore know something, he actually tells us very little indeed. They usually fade from the story outside their moment in the sun. In fact he doesn't even tell us much about *himself* during the war, outside of his allegedly brilliant defense of Iotapata, and so we have scads of unanswerable questions about his whereabouts and activities.

<sup>1</sup> Steve Mason's book has since been published; see S. Mason, *A History of the Jewish War: A.D. 66-74* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

So, my answer would be twofold. First, yes: Josephus' failure to mention Qumran and scrolls etc. has been a recognized problem for people who considered him a universal chronicler or database of interesting things. But second, once we recognize the actual nature of his writings — as highly selective, shaped narratives, which include only (a) what he considers useful for his story and (b) what he thinks his Roman audiences will understand — the question *why he didn't mention some X of interest to us* looks rather different. From this perspective we might rather ask: *Why should he have mentioned Qumran or the scrolls*, especially if Qumran were a pottery factory or the like, and where would he have done so? He doesn't describe life in Ain Feshkha or En Gedi or Masada or even Jericho. Should he have mentioned scrolls in the *Apion*, a polemical essay on the antiquity of Judaeans and excellence of the Mosaic constitution? No. In his autobiography, featuring his five months in Galilee? No. In the biblical paraphrase of AJ (1-11)? No. In the rest of the work, featuring Hasmoneans, Herod and successors, Roman affairs, and Babylonia? Why would he do so? In *War*, describing the causes and course of the conflict, then its aftershocks in Rome and the East? Why would the scrolls come up there?

CCM: As for your response to my first question, ... I do believe that **Josephus could have** mentioned the scrolls cache in his *Antiquities* since they were among the first tangible evidence of „the Bible“, then he even could have directed his audience to Qumran to find these scrolls. Let alone the Q-E hypothesis **Josephus could have mentioned** a school of scribes near Qumran or any other school of scribes in Judea. **Or he could have mentioned** the „authority behind the decision“ to hide the Temple library (Rengstorf then Golb's theory) in the Qumran caves ... After all he tells us that he was a priest eventhough most probably not practicing at the Temple. Hence I am inclined to believe that these scrolls (900) were hidden in the most secret way that not even “a Josephus” would have known of ...

SM: Of course you are right that Josephus **could have done** almost anything. In my earlier email I listed quite a number of topics that he does not cover at all, though **he might have done**, and others that he barely mentions and **could have** said much more about. He was a real

author who omitted the vast bulk of real life to craft a narrative, and decided with perfect freedom what he wanted to include and how. When I then asked where in his writings the scrolls would come up, I meant to suggest a different but related point: this author chose what to write about and how to structure his narratives. Whatever he does mention is there only because it serves a purpose in the stories. I was asking where scrolls from Qumran would have fit *so well and naturally* that their absence would be striking.

I didn't develop that last criterion, but it's what I had in mind. With all the things I mentioned, it would be easy to imagine places where Josephus **could have** included them. (For example, why doesn't he tell us whatever happened to Gorion son of Joseph or Eleazar ben Simon, important characters, or indeed even Agrippa II?) Given what he includes, I could make a case for scores of things that he had good opportunities to include — but didn't. I might even feel that 'he really **should have** told us ...'. But even for those things, we can't really blame him. It's his story. He chose how and what to write.

In my view, then, Josephus' failure to mention almost anything is not significant, given that he omits almost everything. We could only have a chance of making omission into a strong criterion if we could show that he really **should have** mentioned X. But that would be a difficult case to make. Even with the best professional historians today, I can read many accounts of a campaign in WWI or II or the emergence of Israel from Mandatory Palestine and be astonished that the seventh or tenth or twelfth book is presenting what seems crucial information, though it was missed by the others. Were those others incompetent, or hiding something? I have no reason to think so: they did their best, but another historian finds something new that gives a different perspective.

That's even with professional historians today. With an ancient historian such as Josephus or Tacitus, writing in a time when even causation was such a rich and multifaceted concept, which might involve gods or demons or virtues and vices or vague 'passions' or 'evil character', quite apart from simple rational lines of cause and effect, I can't find a basis for saying that they should have mentioned X here. Josephus over-

looks a huge number of important incidents during his career in Galilee, for example, and we don't understand why people did things or what they did exactly. Same in *War*.

So, when you say that Josephus **could have** mentioned the (or some?) scrolls in AJ 1-11, I can easily agree. He could have mentioned almost anything. But I don't see how that gives us a criterion to say that the scrolls' absence from AJ 1-11 means anything. Whether he knew about them or didn't know about them, his silence would not be troubling. In particular, I don't understand your suggestion that he could (should?) have mentioned them 'since they were the first tangible evidence of „the Bible“.' They **are** the first tangible evidence **for us** today (this observation is a result of modern scholarly analysis), but were they also for those living in the first century? In my experience, most scholars appear to assume there were many such versions around — e.g. in discussions of the Bibles used by Josephus or the NT authors.

CCM: Although I do agree with you on principle that one should not expect Josephus to inform us about every aspect of life in Judaea-Palaestina, I contend that it has been too easy for the Q-E hypothesis scholars to assume that Josephus did not mention the „DSS phenomenon“ just because he actually could not mention everything in his writings and that he gives the name Essenes to the whole phenomenon. Furthermore, since these scholars assume that the Josephus's Essenes are behind the writing of the DSS then given the lengthy description of this community by Josephus, how can they „do without“ the fact that Josephus does not mention the Essenes as „writing the DSS, let alone hiding them in the Qumran caves“? It is too big a phenomenon: 900 scrolls and fragments (and not only in modern eyes!), to dismiss it both on Josephus's part and then on the Q-E hypothesis scholars' part in relation to Josephus.

In addition, I disagree with you when you say that Josephus freely chose what to include in his narratives, especially because he was a roman historian as you like to present him, which I totally agree, that means under the supervision of the roman emperors for what he wrote.

You wrote indeed in your original e-mail on the topic of Josephus and

the scrolls: „Should he have mentioned scrolls in the *Apion*, a polemical essay on the antiquity of Judaeans and excellence of the Mosaic constitution? No”. **I say: „why not?”** **The DSS copies of the Pentateuch would have been great evidence!...** „In his autobiography, featuring his five months in Galilee? No. **I say „OK, here you are right”**...In the biblical paraphrase of AJ (1-11)? No.” and my answer was: **“I do believe that Josephus could have mentioned the scrolls cache in his *Antiquities* since they were among the first tangible evidence of „the Bible”, then he even could have directed his audience to Qumran to find them”**. I concede that the term „Bible” (which I had carefully put in quotation marks) is not appropriate since the canon was not yet fixed at the time of the scrolls, hence the various versions of the Pentateuch found in the Qumran caves.

You also wrote in your second e-mail on the matter: „where scrolls from Qumran would have fit *so well and naturally* that their absence would be striking”. Again I do believe that the scrolls would have fit in both the *Apion* and in Josephus’s *Antiquities* (especially in *Antiquities* in which he paraphrases the Pentateuch), given that his objective in these two works was to prove the antiquity of „Jewish religion”, the scrolls were the best tangible evidence not only of the antiquity of Judaism but also of the intellectual activity of the Jews in Judaea-Palaestina, don’t you think ? So in my judgment here it is rather a matter of „secrecy inherent to the DSS phenomenon” than of an omission on Josephus’s part.

That leaves both the Q-E hypothesis no longer acceptable and the fact that Josephus did not know about the „DSS phenomenon” intact ... Hence the whole Qumran enigma still far from being resolved ...

SM: Claude I don’t think it’s a matter of disagreement between us as much as a different use of language. When you explain why in your opinion Josephus should have mentioned these particular scrolls, if he had known of them, I can’t change your opinion of course, and I have no reason to try. I can only respond that you must mean ‘he *could have*’ mentioned them in these places, which is fair enough. (I mean, one couldn’t make a compelling argument for should have without making a strong case, just in terms of language.) I don’t doubt that *he could* have

mentioned them, as he could have mentioned a million other things. I might say (if I could wave my accusing finger at Josephus) that there are a good thousand things, maybe 10,000, that in a much stronger sense he ‘should have’ explained — because he mentions them obliquely or introduces them, and thus we know that he had some interest, and yet frustratingly (for us historians) he says no more.

If that is so, then when it comes to the many and major categories of things *he doesn’t mention at all*, even obliquely or allusively — the smells and marketplaces of daily life, provincial or wartime coinage, inscriptions, facilities such as synagogues in Jerusalem, educational practices, many of the Roman legates and prefects, the mechanisms of Roman government in most respects (e.g. the entourage of a governor, the assizes), the size and activities of the Jerusalem garrison, family life, education, his *own* life and family during the war — we have no meaningful basis for saying that ‘he should have’ described these. (I’m not yet talking about scrolls here, but only of things we can be sure he knew, from daily life in Jerusalem, but just doesn’t mention.) He chose not to talk about them, or rather he chose to talk about other things. He was the producer, writer, director, and at Times leading actor of his narratives, and he was highly selective in showing the lines of cause and effect that interested him most. He created the show he wanted, and we have no say.

This part can’t be a matter of opinion. I mean, of course you can have your personal opinions and tastes, as I can have mine. But in terms of *historical argumentation*, showing that Josephus *should* have (for some reason) mentioned some X or Y, we would need to show *why* he should have done so. At the very least, that would involve a thorough review of what he does and doesn’t mention (to the extent we know of it), in the search for a stable criterion. Where is the robust criterion, needed for a *should have* proposition? I don’t see how one could do it, since Josephus was a free agent, demonstrably able to include and exclude what he wished, also to completely change his account of the same events and persons in his later works. Again, this is not my opinion. I might well feel that he really *should have* told us about Coponius or Ambivulus or 500 things about Pilate, explained what happened to

dozens of characters, or properly introduced Cestius Gallus or explained Agrippa II's activities in Titus' campaign (or even who all the legionary legates were). But what is the value of such an emotion? I am talking about my differences of taste from his -- though I wasn't there, and he is the one who got to write this story.

My point is that if we have no robust rationale with respect to matters *we know* that he knew more about, but chose not to describe, then it seems impossible to argue that he must not have known about some other phenomenon, simply on the ground that he doesn't mention it. He doesn't mention the wartime coinage. I could say 'Well, *I think* he should have mentioned this, if he'd known about it'.

In order to make a *public historical argument* about Josephus' not mentioning the Scrolls, it seems to me that one would need a strong and meaningful criterion — a criterion that scholars with a close knowledge of Josephus' works would accept — that explained what Josephus does and does not mention. Then one could argue that 'He consistently includes material of type A, B, and C, but usually omits K, L, M, N, N, O through Z, and here we have a case of type A material, which he should have included.' But I don't see where any remotely useful criterion could come from.

I may be wrong, and may have misunderstood you. But I hope that this helps to clarify my point. For me it has nothing to do with the shortcomings of Q-E scholars, or others. In fact, your argument seems to me formally similar to theirs. They have argued that the Scrolls 'community', as the producers of so many texts, *must have been too important for Josephus to ignore*. That is the basis for their claim that Josephus does not ignore them, but calls them Essenes. You reject that Q-E identification, but still make a similar programmatic assumption: the *Qumran scrolls were too important for Josephus to ignore* (if he had known of them), and so his failure to mention them means he didn't know of them. The reason I can't accept that shared premise — that something was 'too important for Josephus not to mention' and *therefore*. ...— is that it doesn't accord with my conception of any ancient historian, including Josephus.

I may still be wrong, but I have tried to clarify what I understand the reasons why I can't follow your argument. This has to do with (my understanding of) the nature of Josephus' works, on the one hand, and with modes of constructive historical argumentation and consistency of rationale or criteria on the other. On Josephus as a Roman historian: I want to be careful here. He is quite emphatically a Judaeian historian, but one who writes in Rome for a Roman audience, and must communicate with them on shared terms. This in no way limits his freedom as an author, to choose his own topics, structures, contents, themes, rhetoric, and devices.

CCM: Mentioning the DSS would have fed perfectly his main purpose in both the *Contra Apionem* and the *Jewish Antiquities*. Not mentioning them cannot be explained in the same way that you are trying to explain why he could NOT tell us about everything. Besides „do you really think that Josephus knew everything about life and people in Judaea-Palaestina ...?“

SM: No, I never said or would say anything like that, nor think it. That would be silly. I try to be well informed, and I don't know most of what goes on around me. But I *do* know about the facts of my daily life: where my office is, what UK and European coins and bills look like, who the governing parties and leaders in nearby countries are, how traffic lights and roundabouts work, when the shops and pubs are open, the main newspapers, what police cars look like, and a million other aspects of daily life. So do my colleagues in history. But someone who writes a history of recent Scottish-English relations (for example) isn't likely to include much of that. They write their own story and include what they consider germane, nothing else.

What I described that Josephus doesn't include, but could have mentioned, it wasn't 'everything about life and people in Judaea'. It was the kind of stuff that he, as a member of Jerusalem's small priestly aristocracy *must* have known from daily life (how the auxiliary was organised, the Roman governors, the coinage in daily use and the bronze and silver coinage produced during the war, what happened to many of the characters briefly mentioned in his accounts, his own activities and those of his

family after his capture, the true nature of the Zelotai and Sicarii). This doesn't mean he knew what games Zechariah and Isaac liked to play in their basement on Saturday evenings, or what Rachel had for breakfast on Thursday, or about salesmen on the road from Petra, or tons of other stuff. I would put what he doesn't discuss (= almost everything) in three concentric circles: (a) things he mentions briefly or alludes to, and could have said much more about; (b) things we may be sure for situational reasons (above) that he knew about, as a well-informed and sophisticated Jerusalemite aristo, though he omitted them from his narratives; and (c) the largest circle, stuff he didn't know about — other people's lives and business in particular.

CCM: So my argument sits in your **(b) category “things we may be sure for situational reasons (above) that he knew about, as a well-informed and sophisticated Jerusalemite aristo (and priest I should add), though he omitted them from his narratives”**. Therefore I am just saying: „No, there may have been matters he was not aware of, one of them being the DSS phenomenon” ..... I hope that I was also able here to make my point clearer.

SM: If that's all you're saying then we don't disagree. That much seems to me undeniable: he doesn't mention the DSS, and it could be that he didn't know about them. I thought you were saying something stronger: that if he had known about them he should have mentioned them, and therefore his silence means he didn't know.

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### ABSTRACTS: JOSEPHUS BETWEEN THE BIBLE AND THE MISHNAH: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR

The “Humanities and Social Sciences Fund Seminar on Josephus between the Bible and the Mishnah: An interdisciplinary Seminar” was held at the Hotel Neve Ilan in the hill country outside Jerusalem from April 7 to 11, 2019. Organized by Professor Michael Avioz, Chair of the Department of Bible at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, the event consisted of papers delivered by a variety of experts on Josephus and Second Temple Judaism from Israel, Europe and the United States. The following abstracts offer a brief summary of all the papers presented at the conference.

Daniel Schwartz (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel), “Hellenism, Judaism, and Apologetics: Josephus's *Antiquities* according to an Unpublished Commentary by Abraham Schalit.”

Professor Schwartz opened the conference with a unique paper about his discovery of an unpublished commentary on Josephus's *Antiquities* by the esteemed Jewish scholar Abraham Schalit. Schwartz brought this incomplete yellowed typewritten manuscript to the meeting, which is written in Hebrew in a rather small type size. The extant manuscript covers much of *Antiquities* 11. It is unknown whether more existed as the typescript was literally retrieved from the trash a few decades ago in Germany after Schalit's passing. It sat on a shelf until it was recently given by its discoverer to Schwartz. In his presentation, Schwartz shared passages from the manuscript to show the development of Schalit's thought. He also gave a synopsis of Schalit's career that largely focused on the controversy that followed the publication of his biography of Herod the Great (*Konig Herodes - der Mann und sein Werk*, Berlin,



1969; revised edition of the original 1960 Hebrew edition). Earlier, Schwartz wrote an article on the changes in Schalit's understanding of Herod in light of the reception of this book ("On Abraham Schalit, Herod, Josephus, the Holocaust, Horst R. Moehring, and the Study of Ancient Jewish History," *Jewish History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 [1987], pp. 9-28). His presentation significantly updated this article in light of this new find.

Schwartz emphasized that Schalit's biography was controversial because he portrayed Herod as a competent official by the standards of his time. He often had no choice but to implement harsh policies to maintain peace and independence from the Romans. Schwartz stressed that the Israeli reaction was quite harsh because many readers interpreted the book in light of the Holocaust. Consequently, some felt uncomfortable with what they saw as Schalit's justification of Jewish atrocities by Herod. This led Schalit to teach in Germany, where this manuscript was found, and largely published in German. In his discussion of Schalit's unpublished manuscript, Schwartz commented that he understood Josephus as a Jew who was very dependent on Jewish traditions in biblical literature. Schalit's commentary is greatly concerned with chronology and makes extensive use of the rabbinic traditions to understand Josephus's numerical calculations based on Scripture. This reliance on later Jewish literature is understandable as Schalit wrote this manuscript before the publication of most Qumran writings. Overall, Schwartz emphasized that Schalit regarded Josephus an apologist for Judaism, yet he incorporated vocabulary from other Hellenistic pagan writings. Schwartz compared Schalit's perspective with recent scholarship on Josephus that argues he wrote his work for Gentiles. Schwartz announced that he will donate Schalit's manuscript to the Israel national library.

Paul Mandel (Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, Israel), "'Sefer Moshe' and 'Torat Moshe' in Second Temple Period Literature and Josephus: The Relation between Text and Law."

Professor Mandel began with a detailed examination of references to the "Law" in the singular and plural in the Hebrew Bible, Philo, Josephus, and other works such as the Books of the Maccabees. He then compared these with the Dead Sea Scrolls and noted that Moses's laws are often referred to in a general sense with no citation given. The Torah, moreover, in this collection is never used exclusively for a book of Scripture. Mandel proposed that some Dead Sea Scrolls, such as

CD VII,14-18, refer to sectarian books. Likewise, in texts such as CD 5,2, "Law" refers to hidden books not revealed in the past and not the Mosaic Pentateuch. This newly revealed sectarian law was considered authoritative to the Qumran community. This, Mandel emphasized, helps us to understand such passages as *Antiquities* 13.297 where Josephus describes the Sadducees as using books outside the Bible. Mandel concluded by stressing that both the Qumran community and the Sadducees used other books they believed contained God's laws. In one example from the Temple Scroll (Column LCI), Mandel highlighted a parallel from Deuteronomy 17:9-11 that shaped the writer's thought concerning the existence of another authoritative non-biblical book. The content of this revelation was revealed to the leader of the Qumran sect. This helps us to understand the difference between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, the latter of whom rejected the very existence of such non-biblical law codes. For the Sadducees, these books, although not considered of divine content like Scripture, were nevertheless authoritative.

Michael Segal (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel), "The Book of Daniel and its Character in Josephus."

Segal examined Daniel 1-6 in the Masoretic Text, Theodotian, and Josephus. He proposed that Josephus used a proto-Hebrew-Aramaic text of Daniel that was not the version commonly attributed to Theodotian. He believed that Josephus in *Antiquities* 10.218 makes this clear when he says that he translated Scripture from Hebrew to Greek. Segal devoted much attention to the numerical calculations in Daniel 9:27 and 12.11, highlighting the controversies concerning the nature of the calendar upon which the author based figures. Segal believes that although Josephus does not explicitly identify the kingdoms of Daniel, it is clear from his work that he read Daniel 2 as a reference to Rome. Josephus did not want to explain all the prophecies in Daniel to avoid dealing with Rome's future fall, which resulted in him abbreviating his references from this biblical book. He concluded by noting that in *Antiquities* 10.276 Josephus interprets Daniel's oracle to refer to the destruction of his nation and the temple.

Cornelis de Vos (Münster University, Germany), "Josephus and the Decalogue."

Professor de Vos explored Josephus's attitude towards the Decalogue as found in *Antiquities* 3:389-92. In this passage, Josephus claims it is not permitted for Jews to speak the Decalogue openly verbatim.

Consequently, Josephus only reveals its basic content. Unlike Philo (*Decalogue* 50-51), Josephus offers no explanation for his arrangement of the commandments. His order follows the Masoretic Text against the Septuagint, Philo, and other Second Temple writers. His version of the Decalogue, moreover, contains many parallels with the Septuagint, most notably its verbs. For Josephus, the Decalogue is the essence of the Law and has a holy status. De Vox noted that in *Antiquities* 3:84, Josephus preceded his discussion of the Decalogue with a description of it as a well-ordered constitution that bring happiness. Its structure (cf. *Antiquities* 1:21) replicates the arrangement of the universe. Josephus emphasizes the piety of the Mosaic theocracy by viewing the Decalogue not merely as a Mosaic constitution. Rather, Josephus believes it is the constitution for the world.

René Bloch (Universität Bern, Switzerland), “Josephus’ Moses: How Greek, How Jewish?”

Professor Bloch offered a paper examining how the Torah depicts Moses. After exploring the works of such scholars as J. Feldman, D. Schwartz, A. Shalit, Bloch turned to Josephus’s portrayals of Moses. He noted that Josephus’s *Antiquities* presents him as a lawgiver in contrast to the Torah’s portrayal of him as God’s mediator. Bloch notes that in the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint, Moses never appears as a legislator as he does in Josephus. Josephus, Bloch proposed, occupies a place between the Bible and Jewish Hellenistic authors. His approach, moreover, is closer to that of the rabbis. Because Josephus portrays Moses as emphasizing that one must keep emotions under control (*Antiquities* 4.320-26), he leaves out the biblical story of Moses murdering an Egyptian. He also portrays Moses as a general, which, likely many other sections of his writings, shows influences from other Jewish literature and Hellenistic culture.

Paul Spilsbury (Regent College, Canada) “Josephus and Esther.”

In his paper, Professor Spilsbury examined Josephus’s possible sources for the Esther traditions in his writings. He also explored the complicated textual history of the biblical book. Spilsbury noted that the two extant Greek editions are different, but both share six passages not in the Hebrew that provide a religious framework for the book. He observed that Josephus preferred the Greek translation of Esther which he uses in most of his citations. In *Antiquities* 11, Josephus, in his discussion of Esther, emphasizes the Diaspora where most Jews of his day

resided. Spilsbury emphasized that for Josephus, the lesson of this biblical book for Jews living in the Roman Empire was that they could reside anywhere yet must live according to their own customs.

Étienne Nodet (École Biblique et Archéologique, Israel), “Josephus’ Hebrew Bible.”

In his controversial paper, which stimulated much discussion, Nodet challenged the consensus that Josephus used the Septuagint for at least most of his biblical citations. Rather, Nodet proposed that Josephus knew only the Hebrew Bible and never consulted the Greek versions. Nodet proposed that the evidence for this conclusion is clearly found in such texts as *Antiquities* 1.5, which he suggested refers to Josephus’s use of the Hebrew text, and *Life* 418, where he refers to holy books Titus gave him. Nodet believes these books were copies of the Hebrew Scriptures from the Temple. In his paper, he offered many arguments in support of his thesis that included examples of Greek grammar and scriptural citations that Nodet believes reflect the Hebrew text rather than the Septuagint. Because Josephus shows no knowledge of Hanukkah, Nodet suggested that he used the Hebrew edition of 1 Maccabees and knew a longer story about that period that contained the account of Jewish recognition by the Romans (1 Maccabees 15). One of Nodet’s central arguments was the spelling of proper names, which he proposed provide critical evidence that Josephus used a Hebrew version and not a Greek translation of the Bible.

Silvia Castelli (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands), “Better than the LXX: Josephus’s Terminology of the Tabernacle Account and the Priestly Garments as an Improved Alternative to the Septuagint.”

In her paper, Professor Castelli began with an examination of the problematic Septuagint version of the construction of the Tabernacle in Exodus 28 and 36, which contains many differences from the Masoretic Text and numerous unique words. She accepted the prevailing consensus that Josephus used a Greek text for his biblical citations. She then compared the Septuagint version of the Tabernacle account with Josephus’s *Antiquities* (3.108-114, 116-21, 152-56) and the corresponding passages in Exodus to explain how Josephus used the Septuagint translation. Highlighting differences in grammar and vocabulary, Castelli suggested that Josephus’s version often diverges from the biblical account more than the Septuagint because he consciously sought to improve the text.

Castelli proposed that some words are best explained by the supposition that Josephus used a dictionary. In other instances, Josephus used rare words and even invented words. He did so to bring the text to his readers so they could understand the ancient and difficult biblical text.

Michael Avoiz (Bar-Ilan University, Israel), “Legal Exegesis in Josephus’ Writings.”

Professor Avoiz explored the legal elements in Josephus’s *Antiquities* 3-4 in light of similar passages in his *War* and *Apion*. Avoiz emphasized that it is often impossible to determine how Josephus has used the biblical texts. He proposes that Josephus does not merely translate the Hebrew text into Greek like the Septuagint translators, but that he often omits, adds, and rearranges biblical passages and even incorporates halakhic materials. This requires the scholar to compare Josephus’s text with the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint to determine which influenced his accounts. In addition, Josephus, Avoiz emphasizes, tried to explain the Bible by incorporating exegetical traditions to resolve problematic biblical passages. This shows that he was not writing only for a pagan audience.

Daphne Baratz (Tel Aviv University, Israel), “The Pestilence and the Plague of the Firstborn: Josephus’ Interpretation against its Background in Second Temple Literature and Rabbinic Literature.”

Professor Baratz explored Josephus’s understanding of the biblical plagues in light of Jewish literature. Baratz observed that Josephus, Philo, and the rabbis often changed the order of the plagues to highlight their theological interpretations. Many of the biblical texts in their writings are vastly different than the Exodus tradition. In Psalm 78:50-51, for example, Baratz noted that the author states that pestilence occurred prior to the deadly plague. Baratz stated that the Wisdom of Solomon 18:14-16 is a key passage for understanding the development of the pestilence and plague traditions in Josephus and early Jewish literature. In this passage, like 1 Chronicles 21:16, the author merely refers to the plague as the sword. This helps to understand the rabbinic traditions which sometimes refer to the plague of pestilence and merge the two punishments into a single form of death.

Vered Noam (Tel Aviv University, Israel), “Rethinking Josephus and the Pharisees.”

In her presentation, Professor Noam focused on Josephus’s depic-

tions of the Pharisees in his works. She mainly examined the *War* alongside some parallels in the *Antiquities*. She proposed that some of Josephus’s materials, such as the account of the rift between Alexander Jannaeus and the Pharisees, came from a lost Pharisaic polemical work. This source also formed the basis for Josephus’s account of the advice Jannaeus gave to his wife and successor, Salome Alexandra, on his deathbed (*Antiquities* 13.398-404). This source was also used by the writer of the Talmud to record stories about Jannaeus. Noam noted that the interpolations from a foreign source into Josephus’s narrative that parallel the rabbinic literature appear only in the *Antiquities*, which suggested that he inserted them into his account. Their removal from the *Antiquities*, moreover, does not essentially affect the flow of his narrative and results in a sequence nearly identical to the *War*.

Tal Ilan (Freien Universität Berlin, Germany), “The Importance of Josephus for the Romance between Bernice and Titus.”

Professor Ilan presented a paper she termed an *argumentum ex silentio* that was intended to understand what Josephus did not say about Bernice, the sister of King Herod Agrippa II, and why he is still our most important source about her. She reconstructed the known facts about Bernice’s relationship with the Roman general, and future emperor, Titus and his whereabouts during the Jewish Revolt. In her talk, Ilan asked the question why Josephus does not mention their romance? She speculates that Josephus’s relationship with Titus led him to promise the future emperor he would not write about their relationship. By focusing on the disappearances of Titus in Josephus’s *War*, Ilan speculated that he lingered in the region, in the cities of Berytus and Antioch, among others, to be with Berenice. Ilan speculates that both knew their relationship could not last and chose to spend as much time together as possible before Titus had to return to Rome.

Adiel Schremer (Bar-Ilan University, Israel), “Ritual Immersion for Menstrual Impurity: Josephus, Qumran, and Rabbinic Tradition.”

Professor Schremer explored the silence in Josephus and historical works concerning the ritual immersion of an impure woman (*niddah*). He asked why there is no clear biblical source for this later Jewish halakhic requirement. After examining the biblical traditions regarding purity and Talmudic stories, Schremer proposed that Rabbi Akira established the biblical origin for the requirement of ritual immersion after menstruation. According to his logic, Akira understood the Hebrew

word impurity to imply that the woman remained impure, so he assumed that the Torah presupposed ritual immersion. Schremer noted that Akira's interpretation was unknown to the earlier sages who recognized that immersion for a *niddah* lacked a biblical precedent. Josephus in his *Antiquities* 3.261 was likewise unaware of the requirement of ritual immersion for menstrual impurity.

Joshua Schwartz (Bar-Ilan University, Israel), "Flavius Josephus as Geographer and Archaeologist of the Land of Israel."

Professor Schwartz examined the accuracy of Josephus's geographical and archaeological data. Focusing on topics such as topography and distances, he highlighted several sites such as Gamla and Herod's tomb with the archaeological remains and geography in light of Josephus's accounts. Overall, according to Schwartz, Josephus is a faithful chronicler of this information. Comparing Josephus's writings with Strabo, Schwartz argued that Josephus was greatly indebted to Hellenistic geographical traditions. The Galilee of Josephus, moreover, was not a region of brigands, but a military stronghold that he described in this manner to impress the Roman reader.

Eyal Ben-Eliyahu (Haifa University, Israel), "The Land of Canaan According to Josephus: Maximalism or Minimalism?"

In his presentation, professor Ben-Eliyahu discussed the biblical accounts of the Land of Canaan in Josephus's works, particularly the *Antiquities*. Ben-Eliyahu notes that Josephus in *Antiquities* 1.139-42 identified the curse of Ham to be the result of sin, which led to the taking of the land from the sons of Canaan and given to Abraham's descendants. Josephus reads the Bible in light of the political and geographical constellations of his day and links them to demographics. Through his comparison of Josephus's view of the territory that belonged to the Land of Israel, Ben-Eliyahu explored the extent to which space often defines nationhood and how Jewish identity also influences ancient perceptions of space.

Kenneth Atkinson (University of Northern Iowa, U.S.A.), "Josephus's Use of Scripture to Describe Hasmonean Territorial Expansion."

In his presentation, Professor Atkinson explored Josephus's use of Scripture to describe Hasmonean territorial expansion. He not only discussed the biblical traditions that shaped Josephus's accounts of the Hasmoneans, but he proposed that several Dead Sea Scrolls show that

Josephus has incorporated earlier Jewish exegetical traditions regarding the geographical extent of the Promised Land. Josephus uses these prior traditions to shape his narratives of the size and nature of the land conquered by each Hasmonean leader. Atkinson believes Josephus viewed geography as sacred space and judged each Hasmonean leader by the amount of land he added to the country.

Ishay Rosen-Zvi (Tel Aviv University, Israel), "Between Ethnos and Ethnos in Josephus."

Professor Rosen-Zvi explored the relationship between Jews and Gentiles in Josephus's books and antiquity. He notes that Josephus used three terms to describe those of non-Judean descent: *ethne*, *Hellenes*, and *allophyloi*. Examining these words, Rosen-Zvi concludes that it is important to understand Josephus as a figure of the diaspora. Unlike Philo, Josephus is not a systematic thinker.

Nevertheless, like Philo, Josephus was particularly interested in Moses and Joseph at the Pharaonic court. Both writers identified with these two figures since they, like these biblical persons, lived outside the Land of Israel. Josephus, like Philo, focused mainly on the Law rather than the land or the Temple, which they interpreted as an exceptional kind of political constitution.

Jan Willem van Henten (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands), "Historical Law against Theft in its Literary, Legal and Historical Contexts."

Professor van Henten examined Josephus's discussion of Herod the Great's adaptation of the laws concerning burglary in *Antiquities* 16.1-5. Josephus criticizes Herod's laws, which he views as a violation of earlier laws, and therefore portrays Herod as a tyrant. Van Henten believed that Herod may have created his own laws about burglary after the theft of his own property, and that Josephus expanded them into more extensive laws concerning the entire kingdom.

David Flatto (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel), "Legal and Political Motifs in Josephus's Normative Discourse."

In this paper, Professor Flatto focuses on biblical laws of idolatry Josephus omitted in his works. Flatto observes that Josephus omits many biblical verses describing God's jealousy. Josephus, moreover, interprets the covenant as a ban against idolatry. Instead of emphasizing the covenant in his writings, he focuses on *politeia*, a well-ordered con-

stitution, which is better than a covenant. It is, Josephus believed, the best regime by which to live.

Meir Ben-Shahar (Sha'anana College, Israel), "When was the First Temple Destroyed? Chronology, Exegesis and ideology in Josephus, Biblical and Rabbinic Literature."

In his presentation, Professor Ben-Shahar offered a detailed discussion of the biblical and rabbinic sources concerning the destructions of the Jerusalem temple. Shahar proposed that Josephus dated the destructions of the first and second temples to the same date to prove that God was behind its devastation, which was punishment for sin. He also discussed the complicated topic of calendars and the debates in antiquity as to when Jewish religious holidays were observed.

Jonathan Klawans (Boston University, U.S.A.), "Heresy, Forgery, and Novelty: Condemning and Denying Innovation in Josephus."

In his presentation, Professor Klawans used a variety of Christian texts to help us understand Josephus's condemnation of religious novelty. He noted that in Josephus and Christian writers, religious innovation was seen as dangerous. Josephus blamed the fourth philosophy (*Antiquities* 18.4-9, 23-24) for the destruction of the Jewish people and the state because it was a novelty previously unknown. Its reform of the ancestral traditions, Josephus stresses, was directly responsible for the temple's destruction. Klawans stressed that although Josephus and the early Christian writers shared a similar negative view of religious novelty, the former was not influenced by the latter.

Tessa Raja (University of Reading, England), "The Bible(s) behind Josephus's *Antiquities*."

Professor Rajak examined Josephus's use of Scripture. She emphasized that Josephus, because he was raised in Jerusalem, likely knew the Bible in Hebrew as well as oral traditions. She assumes that Titus took Hebrew Scrolls from Jerusalem back to Rome, which reflected a pre-canonical form of the text. Josephus made use of these biblical texts. Rajak stressed that Josephus was trilingual speaking Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. In her examination of Josephus's use of Scripture, Rajak emphasized it is important to remember there was no such entity as Josephus's Bible as he often paraphrased his traditions, especially the Septuagint.

For the final day of the conference, participants went on a guided tour

of Yodfat, where the Romans captured Josephus, and Second Temple and Mishnaic city of Sepphoris led by Asher Altshul. While at Yodfat, the participants engaged in a friendly debate as to which of the site's many caves was the one in which Josephus hid and where the Romans captured him. The organizer plans to publish many of the papers in a future issue of *Jewish Studies, An Internet Journal* (<https://jewish-faculty.biu.ac.il/en/JSIJ>) produced by Bar-Ilan University.

