

The Messiah at Qumran

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Among the most intriguing of the newly released Dead Sea Scrolls is a fragment that was originally called "On Resurrection." It was assigned for publication to Abbé Jean Starcky, who died in 1988 without publishing it. After Starcky's death, it was given to Father Emile Puech of the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem, who is the present "official editor."¹

Shortly before the Biblical Archaeology Society published its facsimile edition of previously unpublished scroll photographs in 1991,² a photograph and preliminary translation of this text appeared in BAR.³

The official editors have now changed the name of this text to the "Messianic Apocalypse." It may be easier just to call it 4Q521—that is, document 521 from Qumran Cave 4. The more we study it, the clearer the conclusion becomes: 4Q521 is an extremely important text.

It is written on leather and is in Hebrew. About 15 fragments of the text from three columns have been identified, but most are very small and do not join. The largest body of text, principally two fragments, comes from column 2 and consists of 14 mostly broken lines. It is these 14 lines that we will analyze here. The text was written sometime between 200 B.C.E. and the fall of the Temple in 70 C.E., probably after 100 B.C.E. It is difficult to be more precise.

Three striking features of this text are significant: First, it speaks of a single messianic figure who will rule heaven and earth. Second, in the clearest possible language, it describes the resurrection of the dead expected to occur during the time of this Messiah. And third, it contains an exact verbal parallel with the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

Scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls by now almost takes it for granted that the Qumran community expected not one, but two messiahs.⁴ It is this that is supposed to provide one of the major differences between the messianic expectations at Qumran, on the one hand, and Christianity, on the other. For example, James VanderKam, a leading scholar on the subject, tells us: "There is no doubt that the Qumran covenants and the early Christians shared a similar eschatological outlook. Both must be regarded as eschatological communities in the sense that both had a lively expectation that the end of days would come soon and ordered their communal beliefs and practices according to this article of faith . . . [But,] although both groups had messianic expectations, they are different in some respects. The faith of Qumran was that the last days would bring two messiahs . . . The more prominent messiah is the priestly

one—the messiah of Aaron. The second and apparently lower-ranking messiah is the lay one—the messiah of Israel. Precisely what the [Qumran] messiahs would do, other than officiate at the messianic banquet, is not clear . . . There is no second messiah in the New Testament, as there was at Qumran."⁵

This Qumranic concept of two messiahs was supposedly derived from post-exilic Biblical literature, which portrays both Zerubbabel (a Davidic descendant) and Joshua, the High Priest, as "anointed Ones" (the Hebrew for messiah is *meshiach*, which literally means "the anointed One") (see especially Zechariah 6:9-14). Just as these two fifth-century B.C.E. figures shared power, so, it is said, Qumranic authors expected two messiahs, a priestly messiah and a Davidic messiah, who would arise in the Last Day and share authority over a restored Israel, the priestly messiah presiding in matters of Law and ritual and the Davidic scion leading God's forces into eschatological battle.

The early Christians, in contrast, focused on a single Messiah or Christ (the Greek *Christos* is a translation of the Hebrew *meshiach*, anointed One). They expected this person to be a descendant of King David and of course saw Jesus of Nazareth in this role (Mark 8:27-40; Acts 2:36). Jesus is presented as a direct descendant of David (Matthew 1:1-16; Luke 2:4). The early Christians clearly regarded Jesus as God's cosmic agent, who would return in power and glory to rule heaven and earth (Mark 14:61-62; 13:26-27).

Our Qumran text, 4Q521, is, astonishingly, quite close to this Christian concept of the messiah. Our text speaks not only of a single messianic figure ("[the hea]vens and the earth will obey His Messiah, [the sea and all th]at is in them"), but it also describes him in extremely exalted terms, quite like the Christian view of Jesus as a cosmic agent. (For full text and analysis, see box on p. 62.)

That there was in fact an expectation of a single messianic figure at Qumran is really not so surprising. A re-examination of the Qumran literature on this subject leads one to question the two-messiah theory.

As a matter of fact, only once in any Dead Sea Scroll text is the idea of two messiahs stated unambiguously. That statement appears in the nearly complete copy of the Manual of Discipline (1QS), published in the earliest days of Qumran research. Column 9:10-11 states: "They shall be judged by the first statutes, by which the Community members were ruled at first, until there shall come the Prophet and the Messiahs [plural] of Aaron and Israel."

Understandably (since it is so well preserved and has long been available to researchers), the Manual of Discipline, 1QS, has exercised enormous influence on scholarly conceptions of the Dead Sea Scroll community. But it is now becoming apparent that this copy of the Manual of Discipline is a late and heavily revised version of one or more earlier literary works. The oldest version of the Manual of Discipline (4Q259) lacks these crucial lines.⁶ Thus, it is likely that they were added later and testify to certain developments in Qumranic thinking about the messiah.

Other Dead Sea Scroll texts that are often cited in discussions about the idea of two messiahs are ambiguous. For example, column 12:22-23 of the Damascus Covenant says, "This is the rule for the assembly of the camps who walk in it [a gloss: in the Age of Wickedness] until there shall arise the Messiah of Aaron and Israel." Those who argue for a definite expectation of two messiahs at Qumran understand the Messiah of Aaron and Israel as two distinct figures. But it is equally valid—indeed, preferable grammatically—to understand this phrase as describing one figure who arises from the collective Aaron and Israel. He represents both the priestly and lay elements of the nation. Thus conceived, these lines refer back to the first column of the same text which reads, "And in the Age of Wrath he remembered them and caused the root he had planted to sprout from Israel and Aaron" (CD 1:5-7).

In short, there is not much evidence in the previously published scrolls that straightforwardly supports a putative doctrine of two messiahs. What evidence there is reminds us that we must be careful about method. We must also allow for differences between the texts, differences that arise because, while many of the scrolls represent the views of a single movement, they nevertheless come from different places and different times. Further, we must be very careful about "harmonizing" what different texts say.

The newly released texts, mostly from Cave 4, only reinforce this need for caution. Not one speaks of two messiahs (though it must be said that references to any messiah at all are sparse). These texts usually describe a traditional Davidic warrior-prince. For example, the fragmentary 4Q458, which is a sort of apocalypse, refers to the destruction of the "uncircumcised" and then speaks of someone "anointed with the oil of the Kingdom."⁷ To all appearances this figure is a warrior, but in any case, only one person is described as anointed. The so-called "Son of God" text (4Q246) also conceives of a single messianic war leader.⁸ The author of this Aramaic work writes: "He shall be called the Son of God; they will call him Son of the Most High . . . He will judge the earth in righteousness . . . and every nation will bow down to him . . . with (God's) help he will make war, and . . . [God] will give all the peoples into his power."

Only one of the newly released scrolls presents a different idea about a messianic figure (though it doesn't actually use the word "messiah"). In this work, known as 4QAaron A,⁹ instead of a Davidic warrior, a marvelous priest is the focus. In describing the priest, the author gives his imagination full rein: "His [the messianic priest's] wisdom will be great. He will make atonement for all the children of his generation . . . His word shall be as the word of Heaven ['Heaven' is a circumlocution for "God"] and his teaching shall be according to the will of God. His eternal sun shall burn brilliantly."¹⁰ This is a somewhat different concept of a messianic figure, but it does not *ipso facto* suggest a second messiah.

So the text that is the subject of this article (4Q521) is, in speaking of a single Messiah, more the rule than the exception. And even if it is true that some Qumran texts conceived of two messiahs, it is not clear that the idea was either important or central.

Of course it is possible that lost portions of our text (and other new texts) may have described other messianic figures.¹¹ As always, we can only analyze what we actually have.

In 4QAaron A, as in our text, the messianic figure or priest is described in extremely exalted terms, much like the Christian messiah. Perhaps the best way to appreciate the variety of viewpoints in the Qumran corpus is to compare our text, 4Q521, to another Qumran text where the messiah

is described in less exalted terms:

Then shall come the Messiah of Israel, and before him shall sit the heads of the thousands of Israel, each according to his standing in their camps and mustering. And all the clan heads of the Community, together with the wise of the holy Community, shall sit before them, each according to his degree of honor. And when they shall assemble for the common table, to eat and to drink the wine, and when the common table shall be set and wine poured for drinking, no one shall reach out his hand to the first loaf of bread, nor the first cup of wine, before the priest; for he shall bless the first bread and the wine and extend his hand over the bread first. Then the Messiah of Israel shall extend his hand . . . (1QSa 2:14-20).

The Messiah in this text eats and drinks with a small band of followers, among whom he must take the second seat, as it were, to a Priest. This Messiah is described in very human terms. He enters into everyday life and is little more than *primus inter pares*.

In contrast, the Messiah of our text, 4Q521, controls heaven and earth, heals the wounded and raises the dead. He rules over nature. Even death, that old enemy, cannot stand before him (he will resurrect the dead).

Christians embraced a similarly exalted view of their Messiah as one who ruled heaven and earth. They expected that the entire cosmos would be subjected to him (Philippians 2:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28). They remembered him as one who had power over the demonic spirits, over disease and death and even over the forces of nature. This exalted view of Jesus is well summed up in the disciples' exclamation when Jesus calms a storm on the Sea of Galilee: "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:35-41). Matthew 28:18 is more direct; there Jesus is portrayed as saying, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

The messiah of our text is thus much closer to the Christian messiah in this regard than in any previously published text and requires us to re-examine the previously rather restricted views of messianic expectations at Qumran.

Our text, 4Q521, also has special significance because it reflects a clear belief in the resurrection of the dead: "He will . . . resurrect the dead." Heretofore scholars have heatedly debated whether the people who composed the Dead Sea Scrolls believed in the distinctively Jewish doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. We know that various Jewish groups during the late Second Temple period (200 B.C.E.-70 C.E.) held different views of the afterlife. The first references to the idea of the dead being raised occur only in late portions of the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Daniel 12:1-3). Belief in the resurrection of the dead emerged in certain Jewish circles from the second century B.C.E. down through the first century C.E. Some Jews adopted the doctrine and fervently adhered to it. Others denied it. We see evidence of the dispute in the Apocrypha and in the New Testament (2 Maccabees 12:43-45; 15:11-16; Mark 12:18-27; Acts 23:6-10). Obviously, for early Christians, faith in the resurrection of Jesus, and indeed, of all humankind at the end of days, was a cardinal doctrine (1 Corinthians 15:12; Acts 14:15).

But what about the movement that collected and composed the Dead Sea Scrolls? Did they believe in the resurrection of the dead? Geza Vermes, in his widely circulated book, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (3rd ed. [New York: Penguin, 1987], p. 56), says that the scrolls never clearly mention the idea, and concludes that resurrection played no

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4Q521 and a Line-by-Line Analysis*

הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ יִשְׁמְעוּ לְמָשִׁיחַ	c4]	(1)	[... The hea]vens and the earth will obey His Messiah,
וְהַיָּם וְכָל אֲשֶׁר בָּם לֹא יִסּוּג מִמִּצְוַת קְדוֹשִׁים		(2)	[The sea and all th]at is in them. He will not turn aside from the commandment of the Holy Ones.
וְהַתְּאֻמָּצוּ מִבְּקָשִׁי אֲדָנִי בַעֲבֹדָתוֹ	vacat	(3)	Take strength in His mighty work, all ye who seek the Lord.
הֲלֹא בֹאֵת תִּמְצְאוּ אֶת אֲדֹנִי כָּל הַמִּיחָלִים בְּלִבָּם		(4)	Will you not find the Lord in this, all ye who wait (for Him) with hope in your hearts?
כִּי אֲדָנִי חֲסִידִים יִבְקַר וְצַדִּיקִים בִּשְׁם יִקְרָא		(5)	Surely the Lord will seek out the pious, and will call the righteous by name.
וְעַל עֲנֻיִם רוּחוֹ תִרְחַף וְאֶמְנִים יִחְלִיף בְּכֹחוֹ		(6)	His spirit will hover over the poor; by His might will He restore the faithful.
יִכְבֹּד אֶת חֲסִידִים עַל כִּסֵּא מַלְכוּת עֶד		(7)	He will glorify the pious on the throne of the eternal kingdom.
מִתִּיר אֲסוּרִים פּוֹקֵה עֲוִרִים זֹקֵף כְּפֹפִים		(8)	He will release the captives, make the blind see, raise up the do[wn]trodden.
לְעֹלָם אֲדַבֵּק [בּו עֲלִי] מִשְׁלִים וּבַחֲסֵדוֹ [אֲבַטְחָ]		(9)	For[ev]er I will cleave [to Him aga]inst the [po]werful, and [I will trust] in His lovingkindness
וְנִתְּנוּ לְעֵד מִשִּׁיחוֹ הִקְדָּשׁ לֹא יִתְאַחַר [לְבֹא]		(10)	a[nd in His] go[odness forever. His] holy [Messiah] will not be slow [in coming.]
וְנִכְבְּדוּתָּ שְׁלֹא הִיוּ מַעֲשֵׂה אֲדָנִי כְּאִשֶּׁר [בֹּא]		(11)	And as for the wonders that are not the work of the Lord, when he (i.e., the Messiah) [come]s
אֲזִי יִרְפָּא חֲלָלִים וּמֵתִים יִחַיָּה עֲנֻיִם יִשְׂכַר		(12)	then he will heal the sick, resurrect the dead, and to the poor announce glad tidings.
וְיִשְׁמְעוּ לְמָשִׁיחַ [בִּלְבָּב] יִשְׁמְעוּ [בִּלְבָּב] יִשְׁמְעוּ	c5]	(13)	... he will lead the [Ho]ly Ones, he will shepherd [th]em. He will do
[c12] [וְכָל כֵּן] [c16] [וְכָל כֵּן] [c12]		(14)	... and all of it ...

A recently released text from the Dead Sea Scrolls, known as 4Q521, reflects an extraordinarily close relationship to early Christian messianic beliefs.

Above are 14 lines from column two of that text, which are the most substantially preserved part of it. In accord with scholarly convention, the parts in brackets have been reconstructed on the basis of surviving portions.

Those who wish to analyze the text more closely will find these line-by-line comments helpful.¹

Lines 1-2:

The restoration of "heavens" in line 1 is obvious.

The restoration of the "sea" in line 2 is not quite so obvious. Line 2 is based on Psalm 146, a psalm of praise that exhorts

* The Hebrew text contains markings used by scholars to indicate the state of the original text. A lower-case c followed by a number, such as c4 in the first line, indicates the estimated number of letters lost in a missing section of a line. A filled-in circle above a letter indicates a damaged letter whose proposed reading seems almost certain; an open circle above a letter indicates a damaged letter whose proposed reading is uncertain. A period on the bottom of a line indicates the presence of an extremely damaged letter. *Vacat* indicates a space left empty by the scribe. The signs < and > on either side of a letter indicate that the letter had been written above the line by the scribe after he had detected a scribal error.

"The heavens and the earth will obey His Messiah . . . He will heal the sick, resurrect the dead, and to the poor announce glad tidings" (4Q521).

the audience to place trust not "in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help; when their breath departs, they return to the earth," but in the Lord "who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them" (Psalm 146:3-4,6). It seems clear that the author of our Qumran text was tracking verse 6 of Psalm 146.

This psalm was apparently quite important for the author of our text. Both the psalm and our text reflect a concern for the destitute—the poor and the hungry. In both the psalm and the Qumran text, crucial terminology includes the "righteous" ("The Lord loves the righteous" [Psalm 146:8] and "The Lord . . . will call the righteous by name" [Line 5]) and "spirit" (Psalm 146:4 and "His spirit will hover over the poor" [Line 6]). Other similarities between Psalm 146 and our text will be cited below.

The Hebrew word for Messiah (*meshiach*) in this text carries the possessive suffix (*meshicho*), so it must be translated "His Messiah." Although God is not mentioned in the text, it is clear that that is the referent. In another previously unpublished fragment from Qumran (4Q287), we find

this text: "The Holy Spirit rested on His Messiah." Here the referent is explicit. In the apocryphal writing known as the Psalms of Solomon, Psalm

18:5 reads "for the appointed day when his Messiah will reign." Like our Qumran text, this Psalm of Solomon has not previously mentioned the name of God, but it is clear he is the referent of "His Messiah."

Line 3:

The words we have translated "Take strength in His mighty work" can be understood in Hebrew in at least three different ways: (1) The "work" performed *for* God. So understood, God is the object, the faithful believers the subject (compare Numbers 8:11, Joshua 22:27 and 2 Chronicles 35:16). (2) The "work" performed *by* God. In this interpretation God is the subject and the faithful the object. Isaiah 28:21 refers to an action performed *by* God using the term "work"; the context there is instructive: God will arise in anger to do his "work," by which is meant his work of judgment in the last days. This understanding of the term fits the Qumran text especially well. (3) The "work" performed by His Messiah. So understood, the Messiah is the subject, God or the people is the object. Although it is very difficult to decide which of the three options is best, we have adopted the second in our translation.

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part in their eschatology. Vermes's view is commonly reflected in many standard Qumran studies. Of course, Vermes and other scholars had no access to this new text. From our text we now have an unambiguous statement that "raising the dead" was indeed an important expectation of the messianic age among at least some elements of the movement reflected in the scrolls.

Moreover, if this is correct, as we believe it is, then this is the first evidence outside the New Testament for an important aspect of this belief. This Dead Sea Scroll text appears to say that it is the Messiah who will raise the dead. That is the common Christian understanding. But that was not the usual Jewish view when Christianity arose. Those Jews who believed in resurrection apparently thought that it was something God, not the Messiah, would do. For example, in a prayer still recited in synagogues, some portions of which antedate the Roman destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. (the *Shemone Esrai*, or 18 Benedictions), we read (in the second benediction):

Lord, you are almighty forever, who makes the dead to live . . . and keeps your word faithfully to them who sleep in the dust . . . And you are faithful to make the dead alive. Blessed are you, Lord, who makes the dead alive.

This passage clearly regards resurrection as a divine action. It is God who will resurrect the dead. In our Dead Sea Scroll text, the author presumably would have agreed that power over life and death ultimately comes from God, but he would insert God's Messiah as the mediator of resurrection. Here the Dead Sea Scroll text stands with earliest Christianity, rather than what emerged as rabbinic Judaism.

The line of our text (line 12) relating to the resurrection of the dead is remarkable for another reason: It contains one of the closest, most direct linguistic parallels to a New Testament text that has ever been discovered in the scrolls. The line reads:

Then he will heal the sick, *resurrect the dead, and to the poor [he will] announce glad tidings.*

In Matthew and Luke we read that while John the Baptist is in prison, he sends his disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you the coming one, or do we look for another?" In inquiring about Jesus' *messianic identity*, John's disciples want to know what the signs of the true Messiah will be. Jesus answers:

Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed,

and the deaf hear, *the dead are raised up, the poor have the glad tidings preached to them* (Matthew 11:4-5; Luke 7:22-23).

These then are the "signs of the messiah."

The language of our Dead Sea Scroll text is virtually identical to that in Matthew and Luke. The Christian signs of the messiah were, as it were, foreshadowed in the Jewish literature from Qumran.

The fact that parallels to our Dead Sea Scroll text appears in both Matthew and Luke almost word for word indicates that the passage from the Gospels comes from a very early Christian tradition that scholars call "Q" (from the German word *Quelle*, meaning "source"). Q is a hypothetical collection of the "Sayings of Jesus" compiled in the middle of the first century, before the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) were written. Q accounts for the many virtually identical sayings in Matthew and Luke; Matthew and Luke both used Q as their source.

The passages from Matthew and Luke then reflect a very early Christian expectation of the signs of the messianic age and the marks for identifying the Messiah. It was a view shared by the Jews represented by our Dead Sea Scroll text, a text that closely matches Matthew and Luke although it was probably composed earlier.

The last phrase of line 12 of our text, proclaiming glad tidings to the poor, is a direct quotation from Isaiah 61:1, which tells of an "anointed One" (i.e., Messiah) who will work various signs before the Day of the Lord. This passage from Isaiah is especially important in the Gospel of Luke. Luke highlights it as the inauguration of the messianic mission of Jesus. According to Luke 4:18, it is this very verse from Isaiah that Jesus reads in his hometown synagogue at Nazareth. It is this very verse that Jesus there claims he fulfills (Luke 4:21)! Thus, both our text and Luke look back to the same Isaianic text as evidence of messianic fulfillment.

Isaiah 61:1 says nothing about this Anointed One "raising the dead," however. Indeed, in the entire Hebrew Bible there is nothing at all about a messianic figure raising the dead. Yet in both Luke and Matthew (quoting from Q), we find the reference to raising the dead linked to glad tidings for the poor. The two phrases are linked as "signs of the messiah": "The dead are raised up and the poor have glad tidings preached to them"—precisely as in our Dead Sea Scroll!

With this newly released Dead Sea Scroll fragment, we are taken back to a very early tradition within Palestinian Judaism regarding the "signs of the Messiah," common to the Dead Sea Scroll movement and early Christianity. This tradition was obviously shared by early Christians, who were still

part of the Jewish community.

We may go one step further: The passage from Matthew/Luke is clearly connected with the movement of John the Baptist. It is he who sends the query to Jesus from his prison cell. The tradition we are dealing with here was shared by the community of John the Baptist and the early followers of Jesus. The strong connections between John the Baptist and the Dead Sea Scroll movement have often been noted.¹² With our new text, we are in a better position to speak of the common expectations of a variety of interrelated apocalyptic and baptist groups that fled to the "wilderness" to prepare the "Way of the Lord" (Isaiah 40:3; Luke 3:4; IQS 8:9 [though this last passage seems to be allegorical]). They appear to have shared a specific set of expectations, and they draw in strikingly similar ways upon a common core of prophetic texts from the Hebrew Bible. This new Dead Sea Scroll text provides a direct and very significant example of a common messianic hope among the followers of John the Baptist, Jesus and (so it appears) the Dead Sea Scrolls' Teacher of Righteousness.

¹ A preliminary publication of the text by Puech is to appear in 1992 in the *Revue de Qumran*, vol. 15. We have not yet seen this publication.

² A Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls, prepared by Robert H. Eisenman and James M. Robinson (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1991). In this collection the fragment is plate No. 1551, PAM 43.604. Its siglum is 4Q521.

³ Eisenman, "A Messianic Vision," BAR, November/December 1991, p. 65. See also Eisenman and Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (Rockport, MA: Element Books, forthcoming).

⁴ For a recent discussion see S. Talmon, "Waiting for the Messiah at Qumran," in J. Neusner, W. S. Green and E. S. Frerichs (eds.), *Judaism and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987) pp. 111-137.

⁵ James C. VanderKam, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christianity," in *Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Hershel Shanks (New York: Random House, 1992), p. 196.

⁶ As revealed already in J. T. Milik's review of P. Wernberg-Miller, *The Manual of Discipline Translated and Annotated* (Leiden: Brill, 1957), *Revue Biblique* 67 (1960), pp. 410-416. Milik dates the text as the oldest by paleographical analysis.

⁷ The text appears on PAM 43.542. For convenient reference see Eisenman and Robinson, *Facsimile Edition*, #491.

⁸ For the text, PAM 43.236, see Eisenman and Robinson, *Facsimile Edition* #1272.

⁹ PAM 43.587 and 43.588; see Eisenman and Robinson, *Facsimile Edition*, #1534-1535.

¹⁰ This text is in Aramaic. Compare this description with the famous messianic description in the Testament of Levi, chapter 18.

¹¹ One fragmentary line on another fragment of 4Q521 does speak of "its (apparently, the land's) anointed ones." In the context—a review of the history of the nation—we take this wording as a reference to the Prophets, who were often described in such terms (e.g. Psalm 105:15 and CD [Damascus Covenant] columns 2 and 6).

¹² See Otto Betz, "Was John the Baptist an Essene?" *Bible Review*, December, 1990.

Line 6:

Especially interesting is the clause, "His spirit will hover over the poor." Genesis 1:2 also combines the terms "hover" and "spirit." Nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible do we find this combination. "The spirit of God" also appears in Genesis 1, corresponding to "His spirit" here.² By this reference to the Creation story, our text emphasizes its promise that the messianic time will be a time of renewal and a new age—in effect, a new creation.

"By His might will He restore," our text tells us. This is clearly based on Isaiah 40:31: "They who trust in the Lord shall restore their strength." The correspondence is much clearer in Hebrew than in English: compare the scroll's בְּכֹחַ יְהוָה with Isaiah's כֹּחַ יְהוָה יְחַלִּיפוּ קָרְיָהּ. The context of this passage from Isaiah relates to the Lord's mighty coming in judgment.

It is of the utmost importance to understand the settings of the Biblical passages to which the author of our text refers. By alluding to and thus recalling a number of Biblical passages, our author draws them together and imports their power into a new literary creation.

Line 8:

This is a very slightly modified quotation of Psalm 146:7-8. The latter reads: "The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down." Line 8 in our text reads: "He will release the captives, make the blind see, raise up the do[wn]trodden." The only difference is that our text drops the name of God. That this line of our text is a quotation makes the restoration at the end of the line certain.

Line 10:

The first half of this line is so broken that any reconstruction is speculative. Accordingly, our suggestion for the first two Hebrew words is very tentative, and, it must be admitted, results in a difficult phrase. We further propose restoring "His Messiah" מְשִׁיחֵהוּ at the end of the lacuna ("lacuna" is a technical term for a missing portion). This is a crucial and straightforwardly speculative restoration, but it has several considerations in its favor. First, if, as we believe, the text returns in lines 11-13 to the messianic figure it began describing in lines 1-2, then we would expect an explicit mention of that figure somewhere prior to line 12. Where was this mention? There are three options which can fit grammatically: first, the present lacuna; second, the lacuna at the

end of line 10, or the lacuna at the end of line 11. For syntactic reasons, the last option is very unlikely. Thus the messianic figure was presumably mentioned somewhere in line 10. Perhaps that mention was indeed at the end of the line. But the reading of "holy" (though admittedly uncertain because of the damaged state of the first three letters) seems to favor the placement of מְשִׁיחֵהוּ in the preceding, rather than in the subsequent, lacuna because the proposed reconstruction, "His holy Messiah," is attested in another Qumran manuscript (1Q30).

Line 11:

However one restores the end of line 11, it is clear that the author intended a disjunction with what was said earlier. Up to this point, the author has been describing the miraculous acts of God's final visitation and judgment; now he moves to something else.

Line 12:

"Heal the sick" is not a Biblical phrase. Nor does any portion of the Bible seem at all close to it in spirit. The phrase "resurrect the dead" (מַחְיֵה יוֹתֵם) does not occur in the Bible, either. The closest text is Isaiah 26:19: "Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise." This Biblical text apparently associates resurrection with God's visitation of wrath and judgment "when he comes from his place" (Isaiah 26:21). This may have informed the thinking of our author. The Biblical text does not say precisely who is doing the resurrecting.

"To the poor announce glad tidings" is a modified quotation of Isaiah 61:1. In view of the importance of the phrase we should consider the whole of Isaiah 61:1:

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to announce glad tidings
to the poor,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners.

This passage from Isaiah was certainly in our author's mind throughout his composition—particularly words and phrases like "spirit of the Lord," "anoint" (the root meaning of messiah, i.e. "the anointed one"), "announce glad tidings to the poor," and "prisoners." Moreover, Isaiah 61 can be understood as referring to the last days. Our text and Isaiah 61:1 also share a concern for the downtrodden (as does Psalm 146, referred to in the accompanying article).

In light of the reference to "anoint" in

Isaiah 61:1, the Second-Temple period reader of this passage from Isaiah would almost certainly conclude that it speaks of a messiah. Presumably the author of our text thought the same. Further, the author probably meant to say that it was this Messiah who would "proclaim glad tidings," not God himself. (The Bible never uses the Hebrew term for "proclaim glad tidings" in reference to God.)

Line 13:

Compare "He will lead the Holy Ones" with Isaiah 49:7-11. The latter is an eschatological passage describing "the Day of Salvation." Then he will "lead" (Isaiah 49:10) the hungry and thirsty, etc.

This same line of our text tells us that "he will shepherd them." Compare this with Ezekiel 34:23: "I will raise up over them a shepherd . . . my servant David; he will shepherd them." In this passage from Ezekiel, a messianic figure tends the flock of Israel. This fact is further support for the inference that all of the activities of lines 12-13 are messianic activities that will take place when the apocalypse dawns.

To be sure, our text is not without its interpretive difficulties. But the following points seem clear: In Lines 1-2 (and perhaps Line 3), the author describes a messianic figure. Lines 4-9 deal with an apocalyptic visitation in which God lifts up the oppressed and rewards his faithful. Line 11 then establishes a disjunction with the preceding lines. Lines 12-13 describe activities that the Bible (Isaiah 49:7-11 and Ezekiel 34:23) associates with a messianic figure. The cautious conclusion that it is a Messiah who heals the wounded, resurrects the dead, proclaims glad tidings to the poor, leads the Holy Ones and acts as their shepherd seems reasonable. Even if that conclusion is wrong, however, and it is God Himself who directly acts in these ways, this Qumranic text clearly describes the author's view of the messianic time.—M.O.W. and J.D.T.

¹ For a technical discussion, see James Tabor and Michael Wise, "4Q521 'On Resurrection' and the Synoptic Gospel Tradition: A Preliminary Study," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* (forthcoming).

² For some interesting comments on this portion of 4Q521 see Dale Allison, Jr., "The Baptism of Jesus and a New Dead Sea Scroll," *BAR*, March/April 1992.

Dothan as director of Israel's newly created Archaeological Council. In this capacity, Dothan—distinguished excavator of Tel Ashdod, Tel Akko and the ancient synagogue of Hammat Tiberias—will preside over meetings of the council.

The council's purpose is to serve as a forum for discussion of archaeological policy between the Israel Antiquities Authority and other institutions. This is accomplished through meetings at which the director of the Antiquities Authority, currently Amir Drori, brings subjects for discussion to the council. Typically the subjects to be discussed include requests for excavation permits, proposals for archaeological reconstruction projects, planning and coordination of excavations, problems of archaeological surveys, division of finds among museums, site protection, illegal export of artifacts and changes in the antiquity laws.

The 38-member council, including the director, serve a three-year term. They are nominated to membership, based on education and experience, by various bodies—including the Israel Antiquities Authority, Hebrew University, the Israel Exploration Society and the Administration of Education and Culture—and then appointed by the Minister of Education and Culture.

MUSEUM GUIDE

Ancient Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa

October 10, 1992-September 1993

University Museum
33rd and Spruce Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 898-4000

Nubia is hot in more than climate. An ancient civilization on the Nile in what is now southern-most Egypt and Sudan, Nubia has inspired at least two other major art exhibits in the past year (see Museum Guide, BAR, March/April 1992). Now the University of Pennsylvania's University Museum will trace Nubia's 3,500-year history, from about 3100 B.C. to 400 A.D., in an exhibition featuring more than 300 artifacts. The artifacts will be drawn from the 7,000 in the museum collection, one of the most important collections of Nubian art and archaeology in the United States.

A wide variety of artifacts—including ceramic vessels, jewelry, statues and funerary inscriptions—will be used to document the rise and fall of a series of Nubian kingdoms and their complicated relationships with pharaonic Egypt. Among the highlights will be extraordinary eggshell-thin painted wares from the Early Bronze Age (3100-2200 B.C.), some of the most delicate ceramics ever made; and third- and fourth-century A.D. objects from Karanog, capital of a

major Lower Nubian province of the Meroitic empire, a unique site that is represented in no other museum outside of Cairo, Egypt.

After concluding its run at University Museum, the exhibit will travel to the following seven locations: The Newark Museum, Newark, NJ; The Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, CA; Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL; Rochester Museum, Rochester, NY; Kelsey Museum, Ann Arbor, MI; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; and Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, MN.

THE CASE OF THE BAS SEMINARS

Trying to Turn the Camera in the Other Direction

Dick Ostling, the religion writer for *Time* magazine, and Kate Olsen, a producer for MacNeil-Lehrer television news, just left my house with their camera crew. I tried to turn the camera on them, but failed, so my only alternative is to resort to a form of communication that is open to me.

Time and MacNeil-Lehrer, in cooperation with one another, are producing a series of mini-documentaries to be shown on MacNeil-Lehrer news. One of them is on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Ostling and Olsen spent three hours here. If the usual pattern prevails, I can expect to be on national television for somewhere between 4.5 and 5 seconds. But that's really beside the point.

They had just come from Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina, where they had filmed a Biblical Archaeology Society Seminar on the Dead Sea Scrolls. They had filmed our faculty members James Tabor of the University of North Carolina and Anthony Saldarini of Boston College lecturing on the scrolls to the BAS participants. They had interviewed the participants separately. They even joined the participants in the evening, at a place the participants had dubbed the BAR bar, where, after a day of study, lectures and discussions, good conversation continued over a beer.

Dick Ostling, who did the interviewing, described the experience at Guilford with near ecstatic enthusiasm. Here, he said, Christians of all kinds and Jews of all kinds could—and did—meet and study together on common ground. He told me about the variety of wonderful people who attended, some of whom he interviewed on camera—such as first-time attendee Eugenia Ballesteros, a New York attorney with an interest in ancient civilizations; and repeat-attendee Ann Baldwin, a data processor from Madison Heights, Virginia, who uses the experience both for personal enhancement and to help her teach at her Southern Baptist

Goodbye Molds, Hello Stereolithography

A new process for replicating three-dimensional objects promises to one day do away with replicas cast from molds. Called stereolithography, the process uses a laser connected to a computer to scan an object, such as a statuette, and to record in the computer a detailed representation of the object's dimensions and surface features. Then the computer image is used to guide

BARLINES

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church. He told me how exciting the lecturers were and how well they related to the participants. The participants each had an annotated Bible and a copy of Geza Vermes' *Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, which they thumbed through during the lectures. Then, still full of energy, they repaired to the BAR bar in the evening for more talk, much of it about what they were studying. They formed an instant community, Dick said. All he was trying to do, he explained, was describe some of their enthusiasm to me.

I had heard such things regularly about BAS seminars, but almost always from the participants. My 84-year-old mother still describes the BAS seminar she attended at Oxford University as one of the highlights of her life. But coming from the religion writer of *Time* magazine, it all somehow sounded more reliable. We weren't just puffing ourselves.

I wanted to turn the camera around and get Ostling on film. But no luck. The camera crew was working for MacNeil-Lehrer, not for me. So I tried the next best thing. Could I have the outtakes of the interviews with the BAS participants after the MacNeil-Lehrer segment on the Dead Sea Scrolls was shown? Answer: No... against policy... a firm rule.

So I am reduced to the inadequate medium of words to convey the difference these BAS seminars are making—something I continually hear from the teachers as well as from the students—and to urge all of you to become part of this exciting learning experience. (Upcoming seminars include one in San Francisco, preceding the Annual Meeting, November 19-21, 1992; and a Seminar at Sea to the Mexican Riviera, with former Jerusalem archaeologist Dan Bahat, February 6-13, 1993. See the advertisement on p. 37.)—H.S.