Faith and Thought

F. F. BRUCE, D.D.

Qumran and the Old Testament

Presidential Address, 2 June 1959

Introduction

THE Qumran documents include an abundance of material bearing on the Old Testament—Hebrew texts, Greek texts, Targums and commentaries.

(1) Over 100 copies of Old Testament books in the Hebrew (or Aramaic) original have been identified among the more than 500 books represented by the Qumran finds. Most of these have survived only as fragments, but there are a few reasonably complete copies, such as Isaiah A from Cave I and the copies of Leviticus and the Psalms from Cave XI. All twenty-four books of the Hebrew Bible are represented with the exception of Esther; there are also fragments of some books of the Apocrypha.

(2) Some Septuagint fragments of two manuscripts of Leviticus and one of Numbers have been identified from Cave IV; Cave VII has yielded fragments of the Septuagint text of Exodus and also of the Epistle of Jeremiah, which appears in most editions of the Apocrypha as the last chapter of Baruch, although it is an independent composition.[1]

(3) Of all the Targumic material found, greatest interest attaches to the Targum of Job found in Cave XI, because we have independent evidence for the existence of a written Targum of this book in the period of the Second Temple, which Gamaliel I ordered to be built into the temple walls[2] (presumably not later than A.D. 63, when Herod's

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[1] Cf. H. M. Orlinsky, 'Qumran and the Present State of Old Testament Studies: The Septuagint Text', *JBL*, 78 (1959), pp. 26 ff. The most significant Greek Old Testament find in the Dead Sea region has been made not at Qumran but in an unidentified location which was occupied at the time of the second Jewish revolt (A.D. 132-135). This find is a fragmentary copy of a Greek version of the Twelve Prophets, whose text is in agreement with that used by Justin and has been tentatively identified with Origen's *Quinta;* cf. D. Barthélemy, 'Redécouverte d'un chaînon manquant de l'histoire de la Septante', *RB,* 60 (1953), 18 ff.　　　　　[2] TB *Sanhedrin* 115a.

temple was finally completed). We remember, too, the note appended to the Septuagint text of Job which is said to have been 'translated from the Syriac book' (probably from an Aramaic Targum). Fragments of a Leviticus Targum (xvi. 12-15, 18-21) have been found in Cave IV. The *Genesis Apocryphon* from Cave I certainly contains Targumic sections, although J. T. Milik says that it is 'no true Targum'.[1] Other scholars, however, disagree with him; M. Black, working out a hint dropped by P. Kahle, says that it 'is almost certainly our oldest written Palestinian Pentateuch Targum'.[2]

(4) One of the most important groups of writings found at Qumran consists of commentaries (*pesharim*) on various Old Testament books or parts of books. These not only tell us much about the biblical interpretation and religious outlook of the Qumran sectaries, but also have a contribution of their own to make to the history of the biblical text.

In the light of these different species of Qumran literature we now propose to consider what can be learned about (*a*) the literary criticism of Old Testament books; (*b*) the text of the Old Testament; (*c*) the canon of the Old Testament; (*d*) the interpretation of the Old Testament current at Qumran.

Literary Criticism

The evidence which the Qumran discoveries provide for the literary criticism of Old Testament books is exiguous. The reason for this is simply stated: the Qumran literature for the most part belongs to an age when all, or nearly all, the Old Testament books had acquired their final form (questions of textual variation excluded).

When at first the report of the complete Isaiah scroll from Cave I was released, there were excited surmises in various quarters about the light which might be shed upon the question of the composition and authorship of Isaiah. All that it does tell us about this, however, is that the book of Isaiah existed in its present form in the earlier half of the first century B.C. (when this manuscript appears to have been copied); but that was already known. It is clear, for example, that Ben Sira (*c.* 180 B.C.) knew the book of Isaiah in substantially its present form, for in his eulogy of the prophet Isaiah (Ecclus. xlviii. 22-25) he assigns to

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[1] *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (1959), p. 31.

[2] *New Testament Studies*, 3 (1956-7), 313 (in the final paragraph of an article, 'The Recovery of the Language of Jesus', pp. 305 ff.).

him indiscriminately passages from all three of the main divisions of
the book. The Septuagint text of the book is a further witness to the
same effect. The fact that there is no space between the thirty-ninth and
fortieth chapters of the book in IQ Isa. A (chap. xl beginning actually
on the last line of a column) tells us as little about the earlier history of
the book as does the fact that there *is* a space between the thirty-third
and thirty-fourth chapters (chap. xxxiv beginning at the top of a
column, although there is room for three lines of writing at the
foot of the preceding column).

To be sure, the Qumran evidence does appear to refute conclusively
arguments to the effect that the book of Isaiah did not receive its
present form until after the Maccabaean revolt. We may think, for
instance, of R. H. Kennett's suggestion[1] that the portrayal of the Suffer-
ing Servant in Isaiah lii. 13-liii. 12 was inspired by the martyrdom of
faithful Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes (between 168 and 164 B.C.),
or of B. Duhm's dating[2] of the 'Isaiah Apocalypse' (Isa. xxiv-xxvii) in
the reign of John Hyrcanus (135-104 B.C.). If we now have a copy of
the book of Isaiah, complete with Servant Songs and 'Isaiah Apocalypse',
assignable on palaeographical grounds to the general period of the
Maccabaean rising, there is no further need of argument. So, at least,
one might have thought; but in a book actually dealing with the
Qumran discoveries one French scholar hazarded the suggestion that
the portrayal of the Suffering Servant could have been based on the
historical experience of the Teacher of Righteousness, the revered
leader of the Qumran community, whose death he placed between
66 and 63 B.C.![3]

Text

If little light is thrown by the Qumran documents on questions
of date, composition and authorship, it is far otherwise with questions
of textual criticism.[4]

The text of the Old Testament has come down to us along three
principal lines of transmission.

There is, first of all, the Massoretic Hebrew text.[5] This is the

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[1] *The Servant of the Lord* (1911).   [2] *Das Buch Jesaia* (1892).

[3] Cf. A. Dupont-Sommer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (1952), p. 96.

[4] Cf. P. W. Skehan, 'The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism',
VT Suppl. 4 (1957), 148 ff.

[5] Cf. P. W. Skehan, 'Qumran and the Present State of Old Testament Text
Studies: The Masoretic Text', *JBL*, **78** (1959), 21 ff.

consonantal text of the Hebrew Bible which is commonly supposed to have been fixed by Jewish scholars in the days of Rabbi Aqiba (c. A.D. 100), the text to which the Massoretes of the sixth to ninth centuries A.D. affixed an elaborate apparatus of signs which standardised the pronunciation, punctuation and (up to a point) interpretation of the text. Although the earliest surviving manuscripts of this text belong, with fragmentary exceptions,[1] to the ninth century A.D., we have witnesses to its earlier stages in quotations in the Mishnah and Talmud, in the Midrashim and Targumim, and in the Syriac (Peshitta) and Latin (Vulgate) versions of the Old Testament.

There is, secondly, the Greek version of the Old Testament commonly called the Septuagint, produced in Alexandria in Egypt in the last two or three centuries B.C., and reflecting a Hebrew text which sometimes deviates from that of the Massoretes, and which may reasonably be labelled as an Egyptian text-type.

Thirdly, so far as the Pentateuch is concerned, there is the Samaritan Bible, an edition of the Hebrew text which has for at least 2,000 years been preserved along a line of transmission quite independent of the Massoretic text of the Jews. Before the discovery of the Qumran texts, P. Kahle expressed the view that the Samaritan Bible, apart from certain adaptations in the interest of Samaritan claims, 'is in the main a popular revision of an older text, in which antiquated forms and constructions, not familiar to people of later times, were replaced by forms and constructions easier to be understood, difficulties were removed, parallel passages were inserted'.[2]

The discovery at Qumran of biblical texts a thousand years older than the earliest Hebrew biblical manuscripts previously known naturally gave rise to considerable excitement and speculation, especially as the possibility of our ever finding Hebrew biblical manuscripts substantially earlier than the Massoretic period had been dismissed for all practical purposes by the highest authorities.[3] The general reader of the Bible asked if the new discoveries involved much alteration in the traditional text of the Old Testament; the specialist asked to which, if to any, of the known text-types the newly discovered texts could be assigned.

[1] These fragmentary exceptions are the portions of Hebrew Scripture, of the sixth century A.D. and later, found towards the end of last century in the genizah of the ancient synagogue in Old Cairo.

[2] *The Cairo Geniza* (1947), p. 148.

[3] Cf. F. G. Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* (1939), p. 48.

It was possible immediately to reassure the general Bible reader that he could go on using the familiar text with increased confidence in its substantial accuracy. The new evidence confirmed what there was already good reason to believe—that the Jewish copyists of the early Christian centuries carried out their work with the utmost fidelity. To be sure, it was inevitable that a number of scribal errors should find their way into the text in the course of a thousand years of copying and recopying the Scriptures, in spite of all the care taken to prevent this; and it seemed probable that here and there the new discoveries would help to correct some of these.

For example, when the text of 1Q Isaiah A was made available, the Revised Standard Version of the Old Testament had reached an advanced stage of production, but the revisers saw fit to adopt thirteen readings in which that manuscript deviates from the traditional Hebrew Text.[1] Thus, whereas Isaiah xiv. 4 appears in R.V. as 'How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city [margin, "exactress"] ceased!', R.S.V. renders it 'How the oppressor has ceased, the insolent fury ceased!', and adds a footnote to the word 'fury' as follows: 'One ancient Ms Compare Gk Syr Vg: The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain.' The Massoretic text reads *madhebah*, which was interpreted as related to the Aramaic *dhb* ('gold'); but this was almost certainly a scribal error caused by the close resemblance between the letters *d* and *r*, and 1Q Isaiah A (which, of course, has no vowel-points) reads *mrhbh*, which the R.S.V. relates to the root *rhb* ('be proud'). The renderings of the Greek, Syriac and Latin versions could represent *mrhbh*, but not *madhebah*.

Again, in Isaiah xxi. 8 R.S.V. says: 'Then he who saw cried: "Upon a watchtower I stand, O Lord . . ." ' and in a footnote invokes the authority of 'one ancient Ms' for this reading against the unsuitable Massoretic reading 'a lion'. The 'one ancient Ms' is 1Q Isaiah A, which reads *hr'h* as against M.T. *ha'aryeh* (whence A.V., 'And he cried, A lion . . .', and R.V., 'And he cried as a lion . . .'). The reference is to a watchman looking for the approach of a messenger across the Syrian desert from Babylon.

In Isaiah lx. 19 1Q Isaiah A adds the phrase 'by night' to the second clause, thus completing the parallelism. Here too R.S.V. follows it, reading: 'The sun shall be no more your light by day; nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night' (with a footnote which

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[1] Cf. M. Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (1955), pp. 304 ff.

appeals to the evidence of the Greek and Old Latin versions and the Targum, as well as of 'one ancient Ms'). R.V., on the other hand, following M.T., renders: 'The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee.'

There is, however, one place where R.S.V. does not follow a significant reading of 1Q Isaiah A, although it might have been expected to do so, the more so since this reading appears also in 1Q Isaiah B (which in general is much closer to the Massoretic text than 1Q Isaiah A is). That is in Isaiah liii. 11, where these two manuscripts add the word 'light', so as to read: 'After his soul's travail he will see light.' It had frequently been suggested that 'light' originally stood in the Hebrew text here, but had fallen out accidentally, since it was present in the Septuagint version; but now this suggestion was confirmed by the appearance of the word in these two ancient texts of Isaiah. Yet R.S.V. does not adopt this reading, but paraphrases M.T.: 'he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul.'

Another attractive reading of 1Q Isaiah A which is not mentioned in R.S.V. is in Isaiah xl. 12, where we find 'Who has measured *the waters of the sea (my ym)* in the hollow of his hand?' as against M.T. 'Who has measured *the waters (mayim)* in the hollow of his hand?'

Although some of the readings in which 1Q Isaiah A differs from M.T. are attested by the Septuagint,[1] 1Q Isaiah A does not in general exhibit the type which we may presume to have lain before the Septuagint translators. It is rather a popular and unofficial copy produced by amateur scribes for the use of readers who were not very familiar with Hebrew, but its text-type is in general that from which the Massoretic text-type is descended.

The widespread destruction of copies of Hebrew Scripture in the persecution of Palestinian Jews in 168 B.C. and the following years created a great demand for fresh copies when the persecution died down. While this demand may have been met in part by the production of such popular copies as 1Q Isaiah A, something more accurate and reliable must have been required for synagogue services and for study in the schools. Not only would fresh copies be made on the basis of those which had escaped the destruction, but trustworthy copies would be imported from Jewish communities outside Palestine.

As examination of the biblical manuscripts from Qumran progresses, it becomes ever clearer that they do not represent one text-type only,

[1] Cf. J. Ziegler, 'Die Vorlage der Isaias-Septuaginta (LXX) und die erste Isaias-Rolle von Qumran (1Q Is^a)', *JBL*, **78** (1959), 34 ff.

but all three of those we have already mentioned, if not indeed others as well. In addition to those manuscripts which exhibit the 'proto-Massoretic' text-type, there are several which exhibit the sort of Hebrew text which must have lain before the Septuagint translators, and yet others which have close affinities with the Samaritan Pentateuch. If the Septuagint *Vorlage* is an Egyptian text-type, and the Samaritan Bible in essence a popular Palestinian text-type, then it may be that the proto-Massoretic text is of Babylonian provenience.

During the study of the biblical fragments which were found when Cave I was explored by an archaelogical party in 1949, it was announced that a Hebrew fragment of Deuteronomy exhibited a reading in xxxi. 1 which agreed with the Septuagint ('And Moses finished speaking all these words') and not with M.T. ('And Moses went and spoke these words'). But with the discovery of Cave IV in 1952 much more evidence of the same kind came to light.

For example, a Hebrew fragment of Exodus (4Q Exod. A) agrees with the Septuagint against M.T. by giving the number of Jacob's descendants in i. 5 as seventy-five instead of seventy (cf. Acts vii. 14, where Stephen, as throughout his speech, relies upon the Septuagint text).

A tiny fragment of Deuteronomy from Cave IV presents us for the first time with documentary evidence for a Hebrew reading which had long been inferred on the basis of the Septuagint. According to M.T., 'the Most High . . . set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel', but the Septuagint says '. . . according to the number of the angels of God', whence it had often been deduced that the underlying Hebrew read (in place of M. T. *benê Yisra'el*) *benê 'el* or *benê 'elohim*, 'sons of God'.[1] It is the latter phrase that is shown by this fragment from Cave IV.

Another interesting reading in the same chapter is exhibited by a small roll from Cave IV which contains this chapter only (the Song of Moses). The end of the Song in the Septuagint diverges markedly from M.T., especially in verse 43, which is twice as long in the Septuagint as in M.T. (It is from this longer text that Hebrews i. 6 derives the quotation, 'Let all the angels of God worship him'.) The Hebrew original of these Septuagint readings is preserved in this roll from Cave IV.

[1] So R.S.V. on the basis of the Greek version; the Cave IV Hebrew fragment was not known when the R.S.V. was made.

In the summer of 1958 J. T. Milik identified a passage from the middle of Deuteronomy xxxii on another fragment from Cave IV, presenting further Hebrew readings previously known only from the Septuagint —notably the expansion at the beginning of verse 15, 'But Jacob ate and grew fat, and Jeshurun kicked', and the reading 'was moved to jealousy' (Heb. *wyqn'*) instead of M.T. 'abhorred' (Heb. *wayyin'aṣ*) in verse 19.

The best-preserved biblical manuscript from Cave IV is a copy of Samuel in Hebrew (4Q Sam. A). This scroll originally contained fifty-seven columns, of which parts of forty-seven survive. It is of particular interest, because not only does it exhibit very much the type of text which the Septuagint translator of Samuel must have used, but a type of text closer to that which the author of Chronicles appears to have used in the compilation of his work than to the M.T. of Samuel. P. W. Skehan[1] suggests that the M.T. of Samuel is a 'scissored' text, in which certain material has been removed from an earlier 'vulgar' text of which 4Q Samuel A and the Septuagint together give us information.

Among the prophetical books, Jeremiah shows the greatest divergence between the Septuagint and M.T., the Septuagint attesting a shorter text. This shorter text is exhibited in a Hebrew copy from Cave IV (4Q Jer. B), but the longer recension is also represented at Qumran.

A fragmentary scroll of Exodus from Cave IV, written in palaeo-Hebrew script, shows a type of text hitherto regarded as distinctively Samaritan. The Samaritan text is characterised by expansions, only a few of which reflect a sectarian tendency. This scroll exhibits all the Samaritan expansions for the area which it covers, except the supplement to the Tenth Commandment at the end of Exodus xx. 17, which is one of the expansions where a sectarian tendency is evident. There is thus nothing sectarian about this scroll, and its evidence confirms Dr Kahle's suggestion, quoted above, that the Samaritan Pentateuch in essence is a popular recension of the traditional text.

The well-known document 4Q *Testimonia*, which brings together a number of 'messianic' proof-texts from the Old Testament, quotes as its first proof-text part of the expanded Samaritan text of Exodus xx. 21, where the words 'Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was' are followed by a conflation of Deuteronomy v. 28 f. and Deuteronomy xviii. 18 f.

[1] *JBL*, **78** (1959), 24.

In addition to manuscripts which can be classified quite confidently as belonging to one or another of these three main text-types, there are others which exhibit a mixed text, while others may belong to text-types not yet identified. Thus, from Cave IV we have a manuscript of Numbers (4Q Num. B) whose text is midway between the Samaritan and Septuagint types, and one of Samuel (4Q Sam. B) which J. T. Milik considers to exhibit a text superior to the Septuagint and M.T. alike.[1]

The biblical manuscripts proper are not the only Qumran documents which provide us with the information about the biblical text; indeed, reference has already been made in this respect to 4Q *Testimonia*, which is not a biblical manuscript in the strict sense. The biblical commentaries are also useful in this respect, the more so because the commentators make skilful use of textual variants. Where one variant suits a commentator's purpose better than another, he will use it, although his exposition may show plainly that he is well aware of an alternative reading. Out of several instances that might be given, let one suffice.

The M.T. of Habakkuk ii. 16, as rendered in R.V., runs: 'Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and be as one uncircumcised. . . .' For 'be as one uncircumcised', however (Heb. *he'arel*), the Septuagint and Peshitta read 'stagger', which presupposes Heb. *hera'el;* and this is the basis of the R.S.V. rendering, 'Drink, yourself, and stagger!' But now it appears that the Qumran commentator on Habakkuk (1Q p Hab.) read *hera'el* ('stagger') in his biblical text, for he quotes the first part of verse 16 in this form. But when he comes to give his exposition of the words, he indicates that he was acquainted with the alternative reading *he'arel* ('be uncircumcised'), for he combines both ideas in his application of the prophet's denunciation to the Wicked Priest: 'Its interpretation concerns the priest whose shame was mightier than his glory, for he did not circumcise the foreskin of his heart but walked in the ways of drunkenness to quench his thirst.'

As between the three main text-types, that which developed in due course into the Massoretic is superior to the other two. In a considerable number of places the new discoveries have helped us to emend it, or have confirmed emendations previously conjectured; but in general neither the Septuagint *Vorlage* nor the Samaritan text can approach the

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[1] *Ten Years of Discovery* . . ., pp. 25 f.

proto-Massoretic for accuracy. It is evident that down to the end of
the Second Commonwealth no one text-type was fixed as authoritative
among Palestinian Jews, even in so strict a community as that of
Qumran. But when, about the end of the first century A.D., a uniform
consonantal text was fixed by Aqiba and his fellow-rabbis, it is clear
that they proceeded with sound judgment. It is significant, by the way,
that the biblical Hebrew manuscripts found in the Murabba'at caves,
whose presence there evidently dates from the years of the second
Jewish revolt against Rome (A.D. 132-135), uniformly exhibit one text-
type—the text-type recently standardised by Aqiba and others, the
text-type which some centuries later formed the basis on which the
Massoretes worked.

Canon

It is difficult to make a definite pronouncement on the limits of the
biblical canon recognised by the Qumran community. It is clear that
they recognised the Law and the Prophets as divinely inspired. The
commentaries which are written on those books, or on excerpts from
them, presuppose that they are to be treated as divine oracles, whose
interpretation was a closely-guarded mystery until it was made known
in the latter days to the Teacher of Righteousness. The Psalter was
evidently accorded the same recognition as the Law and the Prophets.
But what about the other books in the third division of the Hebrew
Bible—the 'Writings'? We cannot simply infer that they were regarded
as canonical from the fact that all of them (except Esther) are represented
in the Qumran literature, for many other books are represented in the
Qumran literature. The Qumran library evidently included many
apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic works which enjoyed considerable
prestige in certain sections of the population of Judaea in those days,
such as Jubilees and I Enoch,[1] which appear to be closely related to the
distinctive theology of Qumran. It also included fragments of Tobit
(in Aramaic and Hebrew), of Ecclesiasticus (in Hebrew) and, as we have
already mentioned, of the Epistle of Jeremiah (in Greek). Were these
works, which large tracts of the Christian Church were to venerate as

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[1] No trace has been found to date of the 'Similitudes of Enoch' (I Enoch
xxxvii-lxxi). This, says Milik, 'can scarcely be the work of chance' (*Ten Years of
Discovery* . . . ., p. 33); he infers that the 'Similitudes' belong to a later period
than that of the Qumran literature. A. Dupont-Sommer resists this argument
from silence, and characterises Milik's opinion as 'très fragile' (*Les écrits esséniens
découverts près de la Mer Morte* [1959], pp. 311 ff.).

deuterocanonical, venerated in any such way at Qumran? We cannot say with certainty, for the mere fact of their presence among the Qumran fragments provides no evidence one way or the other.[1]

A book may be authoritative in a religious community without being given the status of a divine oracle. The *Book of Common Prayer* is an authoritative document in the Church of England, but it is not part of Holy Writ. The *Rule of the Community* was an authoritative document at Qumran, but no one suggests that it was regarded as canonical scripture. Jubilees was also an authoritative document at Qumran; the community apparently accepted the solar calendar of Jubilees as that instituted by God in the beginning (Gen. i. 14), and it is very probably the work referred to in the Zadokite document (xvi. 3 f.) as 'the book of the divisions of times into their jubilees and weeks'. But was it regarded as canonical in the sense of being divinely inspired? We cannot as yet give a confident answer to this question.

What can be said about the fact that thus far no fragment of Esther has turned up at Qumran? Obviously no sound inference can be built upon the argument from silence. Its non-appearance among the Qumran texts may be accidental. On the other hand, we know that its right to a place in the sacred canon was questioned in some Jewish quarters,[2] as also later in some Christian quarters,[3] and it would not be surprising if it were not accepted at Qumran.

Daniel was clearly a favourite book with the Qumran sectaries, and may well have enjoyed canonical status among them.[4] Two copies

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[1] Dupont-Sommer concludes that the Qumran community acknowledged a more comprehensive Old Testament canon than the rabbis, and finds it significant that the early Christians did the same (*Les écrits esséniens . . .*, p. 310).

[2] Cf. TB *Megillah* 7a; *Sanhedrin* 110b.

[3] It is omitted from the list of O.T. books published by Melito of Sardis (*c.* A.D. 170); and it is reckoned as deuterocanonical, along with Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Judith and Tobit, by Athanasius (A.D. 367).

[4] F. M. Cross, discussing the 'proto-Masoretic tradition' of the Qumran manuscripts of Daniel, concludes 'that the extraordinarily free treatment of Daniel at Qumran in at least four different copies strongly suggests its non-canonical status' (*JBL*, 75 [1956], 123). D. Barthélemy (in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, i [1955], 150 f.) adds the following considerations against the canonical recognition of Daniel at Qumran: (*a*) all the biblical manuscripts from Cave I whose format can be determined have columns whose height is twice their breadth, whereas 1Q Dan. A has columns of roughly equal length and breadth; (*b*) in Cave VI a papyrus copy of Daniel was found, whereas no other papyrus fragment from Cave IV or Cave VI contains a canonical book in its original language. None of these arguments strikes one as being particularly

of this book have been identified from Cave I, four from Cave IV and one from Cave VI. These follow M.T., apart from a few variant readings related to the Septuagint *Vorlage*. Fragments from Caves I and IV have preserved the two places in Daniel where the language changes —from Hebrew to Aramaic in ii. 4 and back from Aramaic to Hebrew in viii. 1. No light is thrown by the Qumran finds to date on the problem of the two languages in Daniel.

The deuterocanonical additions to Daniel (*Susanna, Bel and the Dragon*, the *Prayer of Azariah* and the *Benedicite*) have not been identified at Qumran. It appears from these additions that the cycle of stories about Daniel continued to grow after the publication of the canonical book,[1] and indeed we can recognise among these additional stories a variant account of one of the canonical incidents (Daniel's six days' imprisonment in the lions' den in the story of *Bel and the Dragon* is patently a variant of the incident narrated in chap. vi). And even the canonical book has been thought to have 'the appearance rather of a series of excerpts than of a continuous narrative, and the hypothesis that the present book is an abridgment of a larger work (partly preserved in its original language and partly translated) has much in its favour'.[2]

Now, alongside the fragments of the canonical Daniel found at Qumran fragments have also been found of one or more Daniel cycles not represented in either the canonical or deuterocanonical documents. One of these fragments, the *Prayer of Nabonidus*, written in Aramaic, represents that king as telling how he was afflicted with a sore inflammation for seven years 'in the city of Teman', and how, when he confessed his sins, he received help from one of the Jewish exiles in Babylon. This may well be a variant of the story of Nebuchadnezzar's madness in Daniel iv, but it is attached to another Babylonian king, Nabonidus (556–539 B.C.), and preserves a reminiscence of his historical residence at Teima in North Arabia.[3] Further fragments of a Daniel cycle, also in Aramaic, represent Daniel as rehearsing events of biblical

strong. In any case, since Barthélemy wrote this, a papyrus copy of Kings (an undoubtedly canonical work) has been identified from Cave IV.

[1] Cf. further additions in Josephus, *Antiquities*, x. 260 f., 264 f.

[2] C. H. H. Wright, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (1891), pp. 193 f.

[3] Milik (*Ten Years of Discovery* . . ., p. 37) expresses the opinion that this account, in an oral or written form, seems to have been the source of Dan. iv. Nabonidus, of course, was the father of Belshazzar, and it is the father of Belshazzar (albeit named Nebuchadnezzar) to whom the seven years of madness are ascribed in Dan. v. 20 f. Cf. D. N. Freedman, 'The Prayer of Nabonidus', *BASOR*, No. 145 (February 1957), pp. 31 f.

history from the Deluge and the Tower of Babel down to Hasmonean times, and going on from there to predict what is to happen in the end-time.[1]

These discoveries may not add to our knowledge of the history of the Old Testament canon, but further study of them may illumine a number of the literary problems of the book of Daniel.

Interpretation

The interpretation of Old Testament scripture exhibited by the *pesharim* and related Qumran documents is based upon the following principles:[2]

(a) God revealed His purpose to His servants the prophets, but this revelation (especially with regard to the time of the fulfilment of His purpose) could not be properly understood until its meaning was made known by God to the Teacher of Righteousness, and through him to the Qumran community.[3]

(b) All that the prophets spoke refers to the time of the end.

(c) The time of the end is at hand.

These principles are put into operation by the use of the following devices:

(a) Biblical prophecies of varying date and reference are so interpreted as to apply uniformly to the commentator's own day and to the days immediately preceding and following—that is, to the period introduced by the ministry of the Teacher of Righteousness and the emergence of the eschatological community of the elect.

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[1] Among several points of interest in this cycle is the occurrence of the name *blkrws*, i.e. Balakros, the full form of which Balas (Alexander Balas) is a hypocoristic (*balakros* is an adjective meaning 'bald', the Macedonian equivalent of the general Greek *phalakros*). Fragments of other proper names survive in the same context, where it is said that '... *rhws*, son of ... *ws*, [reigned ...] years'—possibly 'Demetrius, son of Demetrius' (1 Macc. x. 67).

[2] I have dealt with this subject more fully in *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts* (1958).

[3] The revelation, that is to say, is given in two stages: first the 'mystery' (*raz*) is communicated to the prophet, but it remains a mystery until the 'interpretation' (*pesher*) is communicated to the Teacher, and through him to his followers. Members of the community therefore praise God in the *Hodayoth* that He has made known to them His wonderful mysteries (cf. Mark iv. 11 f.; 1 Peter i. 10-12). We may compare how, in the book of Daniel, part of a divine revelation is conveyed as a 'mystery' as in Nebuchadnezzar's dreams or the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast; not until the other part of the revelation is conveyed as 'interpretation' to Daniel, and declared by him, is the revelation completed and understood.

(*b*) The biblical text is atomised so as to bring out its relevance to the situation of the commentator's day; it is in this situation, and not in the natural sequence of the text, that logical coherence is to be looked for.

(*c*) Variant readings are selected in such a way as best to serve the commentator's purpose.

(*d*) Where a relation cannot otherwise be established between the text and the situation to which (*ex hypothesi*) it must refer, allegorisation is resorted to.

The most important of the Qumran *pesharim* is the commentary on the first two chapters of Habakkuk found in Cave I. As I have devoted some attention to this document elsewhere,[1] it is appropriate to consider here rather some of the shorter or more fragmentary samples of the same genre.

In a commentary on Isaiah from Cave IV (4Q p Isa. A), the Assyrian advance and downfall of Isaiah x. 22 ff. are interpreted of the eschatological 'war of the Kittim'.[2] The leader of the Kittim (or so it appears, for the document is sadly mutilated) goes up from the plain of Acco to the boundary of Jerusalem. Then follows a quotation of Isaiah xi. 1-4, which is (very properly) interpreted of the 'shoot of David', the Davidic Messiah, who is to arise in the latter days to rule over all the Gentiles, including 'Magog', but takes his directions from the priests. This is in line with the general messianic expectation cherished at Qumran, in which the priesthood (and particularly the 'Messiah of Aaron') is envisaged as taking precedence over the Davidic Messiah, whose main function is to lead his people to victory in battle.

A fragmentary commentary on Micah from Cave I provides a good example of allegorical interpretation. Here the words, 'What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?' (Mic. i. 5), are interpreted of 'the Prophet of Falsehood, who leads astray the simple', while the following words, 'and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?', are interpreted of 'the Teacher of Righteousness, who teaches the law to his people and to all those who offer themselves to be gathered in among God's elect, practising the law in the council of the community, who will be saved from the day of judgment'. The Teacher of Righteousness we know; the Prophet of Falsehood is evidently the leader of a rival sect—the Pharisees, in my opinion. But the only way of reading these two rival leaders out of Micah's reference to the transgression of Jacob and the high places of Judah is first of all to read them in—by arbitrary allegorisation.

[1] Cf. 'The Dead Sea Habakkuk Scroll', *Annual of the Leeds University Oriental Society*, I. (1958-59).

[2] Further details of this war are given in the *Rule of War* (1QM).

Considerable portions have survived of a commentary on Psalm xxxvii from Cave IV. Here 'those that wait upon the LORD,' those who 'shall inherit the land' (verse 9), are 'the congregation of His elect who do His will'—i.e. the Qumran community. The 'little while' after which 'the wicked shall not be' (verse 10) is the probationary period of forty years at the end of the age, comparable to the probationary period of forty years in the desert in Moses' day.[1] At the end of the eschatological period of forty years 'there will not be found in the earth any wicked man' (how the wicked are to be got rid of in just that period is explained in greater detail in the *Rule of War*). 'The wicked', who 'have drawn out the sword and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy' (verse 14) are 'the wicked ones of Ephraim and Manasseh who will seek to put forth a hand against the priest and the men of his counsel in the time of trial which is coming upon them'.[2] The 'priest' is certainly the Teacher of Righteousness.[3] But he and his followers will not be left to the mercy of their enemies; 'God will redeem them from their hand, and afterwards they [the wicked] shall be given into the hand of the terrible ones of the Gentiles for judgment'. The 'terrible ones of the Gentiles' are no doubt the Kittim, who in 1Q p Habakkuk are the executors of divine wrath against the persecutors of the Teacher of Righteousness. There is a further possible reference to the Teacher of Righteousness in the comment on verses 32 f. ('The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged'); but the comment unfortunately is very defective: 'Its interpretation concerns the Wicked [Pries]t who s[ent to the Teacher of Righteousness . . .] to slay him . . . and the law which he sent to him. But God will not le[ave him in his hand] nor [condemn him when] he is judged.' But if the commentator did see a reference to the Teacher of Righteousness in this passage (which, on the analogy of Qumran interpretation of similar passages, is highly probable), the Wicked Priest's attempt to slay the Teacher seems to have been unsuccessful, for his deliverance is mentioned here as in the comment on verse 14.

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[1] Cf. the implication of the 'forty years' in Heb. iii. 9 ff.

[2] Cf. 4Q *Florilegium*, where a comment on Ps. ii. 1 f. refers to 'the chosen ones of Israel in the last days, that is, the time of trial which is coming'.

[3] The Teacher is expressly called 'the priest' in col. 2, line 15, of this same *pesher*; cf. 1Q p Hab., col. 2, lines 8 f.: 'the priest into whose [heart] God has put [wisdo]m, to interpret all the words of his servants the prophets.'

It has, of course, become a major preoccupation of students of the Qumran literature to interpret the Qumran commentaries so as to elucidate their historical and personal references. The difficulty of doing so may be gauged by the great variety of solutions proffered. One source of difficulty is that leading personalities are denoted by descriptive titles rather than by personal names. Many a religious minority will venerate a Teacher of Righteousness, complain of persecution at the hands of a Wicked Priest, and despise the easy-going majority of Seekers after Smooth Things, followers of a Prophet of Falsehood. Even the Gentile power which looms so largely in the literature is mentioned allusively as the Kittim, a term which in itself might denote either Greeks[1] or Romans.[2]

Occasionally we may think we have found a more definite clue. Thus the document 4Q *Testimonia* ends with these words:

> When Joshua had finished praising and giving thanks in his praises, he said: 'Cursed be the man that buildeth this city: with his firstborn shall he lay the foundation thereof, and with his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.' And behold, an accursed man, one of the sons of Belial, shall stand up, to be a very sna[re of the f]owler to his people, and destruction to all his neighbours. And he shall stand up[3] . . . [so that] they two may be instruments of violence. And they shall build again the . . . [and s]et up a wall and towers for it, to make a stronghold of wickedness . . . in Israel, and a horrible thing in Ephraim and Judah, . . . [and they shall w]ork pollution in the land, and great contempt among the sons of . . . [and shall shed b]lood like water on the rampart of the daughter of Zion, and in the boundary of Jerusalem.

This passage is said to be an extract from a work called the *Psalms of Joshua*, which is independently attested among the Cave IV material. It does not belong strictly to the *pesher* category, but the passage quoted above certainly follows *pesher* principles in its interpretation of Joshua's curse on the rebuilder of Jericho (Joshua vi. 26).

According to M.T., Joshua said, 'Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho'. It may be that the word Jericho was absent from the Qumran author's copy of Joshua (as it is from the Septuagint), but the context makes it clear that Joshua was referring to Jericho. It is not certain, however, that the Qumran author applied the curse to a rebuilding of Jericho; he may

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[1] As in 1 Macc. i. 1; viii. 5.   [2] As in Dan. xi. 30.

[3] J. T. Milik, who supplements some lacunae in 4Q *Testimonia* here with the help of 4Q *Psalms of Joshua* (thus far unpublished), renders the beginning of this sentence 'And he stood forth and [made his sons] rulers' (*Ten Years of Discovery* . . ., p. 61).

have had another incident in mind, such as one of the successive fortifications of Jerusalem; conceivably, but improbably, he may have intended the 'city' in a metaphorical sense.[1]

If, however, we look for a man with two sons, all in positions of authority, who take a leading part in the rebuilding of a Judaean city, and cause great bloodshed in the precincts of Jerusalem, we have an embarrassing wealth of choices. F. M. Cross says that 'the application of the passage to Simon and his older and younger sons Judas and Mattathias, and their deaths in Jericho is almost too obvious to require comment. The slaughter in Jerusalem and its environs described in the last lines reflects the attack of Antiochus Sidetes upon Judaea in 134–132 B.C. immediately following Simon's death.'[2] But the application is not so obvious to many other scholars. J. T. Milik[3] prefers to think of Mattathias (father of the Maccabees) and his two sons Jonathan and Simon, both of whom took part in the rebuilding of Jerusalem's fortifications (1 Macc. x. 10 f.; xiii. 10; xiv. 37). (The reference to Jerusalem at the end of the passage does at least suggest that it, and not Jericho, is the city whose rebuilding the commentator has in mind.) But the idea that the pious Mattathias should be described as 'one of the sons of Belial' makes one lift an eyebrow, to say the least.

If we pass other members of the Hasmonean family in review, we may think of Jonathan, whose two sons were unsuccessfully sent to Trypho as hostages for their father's release (1 Macc. xiii. 16 ff.); of John Hyrcanus and his two sons Aristobulus I and Alexander Jannaeus; of Jannaeus and his two sons Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II; or even of Aristobulus II and his two sons Alexander and Antigonus. If we cast our net wider, we may think of Antipater and his two sons Phasael and Herod; or of Herod and his two sons by Mariamne, Aristobulus and Alexander; or even of Vespasian and his two sons Titus and Domitian.[4] The later identifications in this list can probably be excluded on palaeographical grounds. For 4Q *Testimonia* is said to be the work of

[1] In 1Q p Hab. the town built with blood of Hab. ii. 12 is perhaps interpreted figuratively; cf. the builders of the wall in CD iv. 19.

[2] *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies* (1958), p. 113. For Simon's death, cf. 1 Macc. xvi. 11 ff.; for the subsequent invasion of Antiochus VII, cf. Jos. *Ant.* xiii. 236 ff.

[3] *Ten Years of Discovery* . . ., pp. 63 f.

[4] Cf. C. Roth, *The Historical Background of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (1958), p. 37: 'This could well be a reference to Vespasian's capture of Jericho in 68, though there is no need to insist on this point.' (In a footnote Roth suggests that the execrated builder of Jericho might be Herod.)

the same scribe as 1QS (the copy of the *Rule of the Community* found in Cave I), which the palaeographers date in the earlier part of the first century B.C. If this date is upheld, it might be felt to rule out even the otherwise attractive identification of the parties concerned with Jannaeus and his two sons; but the palaeographical evidence must be carefully scrutinised before we dismiss an interpretation which would recognise the civil strife between Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, with the consequent intervention of the Romans, as the occasion of the bloodshed around Jerusalem. But at least this may serve as an example of the difficulty of correlating the biblical exegesis of Qumran with events in the relevant period of Jewish history.[1]

There is, however, one fragmentary *pesher* which actually refers to historical characters by name. This is the commentary on Nahum from Cave IV, which explains the prophet's description of Nineveh as a den 'where the lion and the lioness walked, the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid' (ii. 11) as a reference to '[Deme]trius, king of Javan, who sought to enter Jerusalem by the counsel of the Seekers after Smooth Things'. The personal name is unfortunately mutilated, but it can scarcely be anything but Demetrius. We have a choice between three Seleucid kings of that name—Demetrius I (162-150 B.C.), who sent Nicanor to seize Jerusalem at the instigation of the high priest Alcimus and his supporters; Demetrius II (145-139/8 B.C.), who sent a force against Jonathan; Demetrius III (95-88 B.C.), who invaded Judaea at the invitation of Jannaeus' hostile Jewish subjects. The Seekers after Smooth Things, who are mentioned in other places in Qumran literature, are best identified with the Pharisees, who led the opposition to Jannaeus throughout most of his reign.

The comment on Nahum ii. 11 continues: '[Never has that city been given] into the hand of the kings of Javan from Antiochus to the rise of the rulers of the Kittim, but ultimately it will be trodden down [by the Kittim].'[2] This Antiochus may well be Sidetes, whose demolition of the walls of Jerusalem early in the reign of John Hyrcanus (135-104 B.C.) was the last effective action by a Gentile ruler against the city until Pompey entered it in 63 B.C. In that case the Demetrius

[1] J. L. Teicher considers that in this passage from 4Q *Testimonia* 'Joshua' is to be understood typologically as Jesus, and that the son of Belial is the future Antichrist, who is to rebuild Jerusalem as his capital ('Dead Sea Fragment of an Apocryphal Gospel', *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 March 1958).

[2] The supplementation is uncertain; cf. Dupont-Sommer, *Les écrits esséniens* . . ., p. 280.

mentioned in the previous sentence of the commentary will surely be Demetrius III. It may also be pointed out that the reference in this context to 'the rulers of the Kittim' makes the identification of the Kittim with the Romans practically certain.

Nahum ii. 12 goes on: 'The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his caves with prey, and his dens with ravin'; in these words the commentator sees a reference to 'the young lion of wrath, who smote with his mighty ones and the men of his counsel' and 'took vengeance on the Seekers after Smooth Things, in that he proceeded to hang them up alive, [which was never done] in Israel before, for concerning one hung up alive on a tree the Scripture says. . . .' What the Scripture says is that such a person is 'accursed of God' (Deut. xxi. 23); but our scribe evidently could not bring himself to pen such ill-omened words. In any case, the Scripture envisages the hanging of a dead body on a tree; the Qumran commentator on Nahum has something more dreadful in mind—hanging men up alive, in other words, crucifying them. That 'such a thing was never done in Israel before' means that it had never been done by an Israelite. We know that Jewish confessors were crucified by Antiochus Epiphanes, but the first Jewish ruler to punish his enemies in this way, so far as we know, was Jannaeus. The Seekers after Smooth Things were not approved of by the Qumran community, but to crucify them was a blasphemous atrocity. (It may be remarked in passing that there is no implication that the Teacher of Righteousness or his followers were among those crucified by the 'young lion of wrath'.)

The Nahum commentary, then, provides us with more certain criteria for relating Qumran exegesis to history than we find in the other commentaries published to date.[1] And these criteria may, with due caution, be used to throw light on ambiguous references in other Qumran texts. The Qumran commentaries plainly do not give us much help in understanding the Old Testament. But the serious student of Scripture can never fail to be interested in what was thought of its meaning by serious students of earlier days; and in this regard the Qumran commentaries on the Old Testament have opened a new world for our exploration.

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[1] Other historical names—*šlmṣywn* (Salampsio, i.e. Queen Salome Alexandra), *hwrqnws* (Hyrcanus) and *'mlyws* (Aemilius, i.e. Aemilius Scaurus)—appear in a fragmentary sectarian calendar from Cave IV (Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery* . . ., p. 73); cf. also p. 21, n. 1 above.