Supplements

to

Vetus Testamentum

Discerning Wisdom

The Sapiential Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls

by

Matthew J. Goff

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A.A. Di Lella and Patrick W. Skehan, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987).

Tallahassee, Florida
June 30, 2006

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations of primary texts follow the guidelines given in Patrick H. Alexander et al., *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999).

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AcOr	*Acta orientalia*
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
ALD	*Aramaic Levi Document*
AnBib	Analecta biblica
ANTZ	Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ATM	Altes Testament und Moderne
BAR	*Biblical Archaeology Review*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
Bib	*Biblica*
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BS	Biblical Series
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue biblique
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CBR	*Currents in Biblical Research*
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
CRBS	*Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
DCLY	Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
DSSR	*The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader* (6 vols.; ed. D.W. Parry and E. Tov; Brill, 2004).
DSSSE	*The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (2 vols.; F. García Martínez and E.J.C. Tigchelaar; Brill, 1997-98).

DTT	*Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift*
ECDSS	Eerdmans Commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls
EDSS	*Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2 vols.; ed. L.H. Schiffman and J.C. VanderKam; Oxford, 2000).
EstEcl	*Estudios eclesiásticos*
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
Hen	*Henoch*
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
ISDCL	International Society for the Study of Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature
JANESCU	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism: Supplement Series
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
MasSir	The Masada scroll of Ben Sira
McCQ	*McCormick Quarterly*
MT	Masoretic Text
MU	Mainzer Universitätsreden
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OTL	Old Testament Library
PAM	Palestine Archaeological Museum
par	parallel (text or fragment)
PEQ	*Palestine Exploration Quarterly*

PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece
QC	*Qumran Chronicle*
RB	*Revue biblique*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumrân*
RevScRel	*Revue des sciences religieuses*
RHPR	*Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
ScrB	*Scripture Bulletin*
SEÅ	*Svensk exegetisk årsbok*
Sem	*Semitica*
SH	Studia Hellenistica
SIJD	Schriften des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum
SR	*Sciences Religieuses/Studies in Religion*
SSU	Studia Semitica Upsaliensia
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
Text	*Textus*
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WJ	*Women in Judaism*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YJS	Yale Judaica Series
ZAH	*Zeitschrift für Althebraistik*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZKT	*Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

INTRODUCTION

Before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, there were no extant wisdom texts in Hebrew from the time of Ben Sira (ca. 175 BCE) until the compilation of the Mishnah (ca. 200 CE). Most of the Qumran scrolls are from the second and first centuries BCE. They contain portions of at least eight previously unknown writings which are widely considered to be wisdom texts: 4QInstruction (1Q26; 4Q415-18, 423), the book of Mysteries (1Q27; 4Q299-301), 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184), 4QSapiential Work (4Q185), 4QWords of the Maśkîl (4Q298), 4QWays of Righteousness (4Q420-21), 4QInstruction-like Composition B (4Q424), and 4QBeatitudes (4Q525).[1] In the late 1990s the bulk of these writings were published.[1] Some appeared earlier, most notably 4Q184 and 4Q185.[2] The scrolls may include other sapiential works, as reflected in their official titles, such as 4Q411 (4QSapiential Hymn) and 4Q425 (4QSapiential-Didactic Work B), but they are often too fragmentary to decide their genre conclusively.

In 1964 James Sanders observed that "no work has been done ... on Wisdom thinking generally in Qumran literature."[3] One could not make this complaint today. Interest in this material has grown, particularly during the last few years.[4] But Qumran wisdom literature

---

[1] T. Elgvin et al., *Qumran Cave 4.XV: Sapiential Texts, Part 1* (DJD 20; Oxford: Clarendon, 1997); J. Strugnell and D.J. Harrington, *Qumran Cave 4.XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2. 4QInstruction (Mûsār Lĕ Mēbîn): 4Q415ff. With a re-edition of 1Q26* (DJD 34; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999).

[2] J. Allegro, *Qumrân Cave 4.1 (4Q158-4Q186)* (DJD 5; Oxford: Clarendon, 1968); J. Strugnell, "Notes en marge du volume V des 'Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan,'" *RevQ* 7 (1970) 163-276.

[3] J.A. Sanders, "Two Non-Canonical Psalms in 11QPsᵃ," *ZAW* 76 (1964) 57-75 (esp. 65). See also W.L. Lipscomb and J.A. Sanders, "Wisdom at Qumran," in *Israelite Wisdom* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978) 277-85 (esp. 277).

[4] J.J. Collins, "Wisdom Reconsidered, in Light of the Scrolls," *DSD* 4 (1997) 265-81; D.J. Harrington, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996); idem, "Ten Reasons Why the Qumran Wisdom Texts are Important," *DSD* 4 (1997) 245-55; J. Kampen, "The Diverse Aspects of Wisdom at Qumran," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (2 vols.; ed. P.W. Flint and J.C. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 1.211-43; S. White Crawford, "Lady Wisdom

is still in the early stages of research. James Crenshaw's authoritative introduction to wisdom literature includes only two pages on material from Qumran, and Roland Murphy's *Tree of Life* never engages these texts.[5] To date Daniel Harrington is the only author who has written a book-length survey of Qumran wisdom literature. His excellent book, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (1996), is presented as "only a beginning" in the study of this material.[6] This monograph is approximately one hundred pages in length, and much of it consists of translations. At the time this approach made sense, since these writings were not widely available. They are officially published

and Dame Folly at Qumran," *DSD* 5 (1998) 355-66; A. Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran* (STDJ 18; Leiden: Brill, 1995); idem, "Die Weisheitstexte aus Qumran: Eine Einleitung," in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought* (ed. C. Hempel, A. Lange and H. Lichtenberger; BETL 159; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2002) 3-30. This volume has many other articles on Qumran wisdom literature. Two other relevant volumes of collected essays have been published: F. García Martínez, ed., *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition* (BETL 168; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2003); J.J. Collins, G.E. Sterling and R.A. Clements, ed., *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Sixth International Symposium of the Orion Center, 20-22 May 2001* (STDJ 51; Leiden: Brill, 2004). See also P. Callaway, "Remarks on Some Sapiential Texts from Qumran," *QC* 8 (1998) 121-27; A. Caquot, "Les Textes de sagesse de Qoumrân (Aperçu préliminaire)," *RHPR* 76 (1996) 1-34; A.S. van der Woude, "Wisdom at Qumran," in *Wisdom in ancient Israel: Essays in honour of J.A. Emerton* (ed. J. Day et al.; Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1995) 244-56; D.J. Harrington, "Wisdom at Qumran," in *The Community of the Renewed Covenant: The Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. E. Ulrich and J. VanderKam; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994) 137-53; idem, "Wisdom Texts," *EDSS*, 2.976-80. J.C. VanderKam, "Mantic Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 4 (1997) 336-53, focuses on divinatory texts such as 4Q186.
  Earlier investigations of wisdom at Qumran include M. Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen* (OBO 26; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1979) 88-113; C. Romaniuk, "Le Thème de la sagesse dans les documents de Qumran," *RevQ* 9 (1978) 429-35; J. Worrell, "Concepts of Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls" (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1968).
  [5] J.L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction* (rev. ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998 [orig. pub., 1981]) 178-79; R.E. Murphy, *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002 [orig. pub., 1990]). J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997) is at present the only survey of the sapiential tradition that includes a section on Qumran wisdom literature (pp. 112-31).
  [6] Harrington, *Wisdom Texts*, 91. Lange's *Weisheit und Prädestination* examines some of the Qumran wisdom texts as well as other documents, such as the Damascus Document and the Hodayot, that can be related to the sapiential tradition.

now, and translations abound.[7] Therefore I do not include translations or critical editions of entire texts. Rather the focus is interpretation. Each chapter presents a summary overview of a composition and identifies its main themes and concerns. Issues such as genre classification and provenance are also treated.
  The texts covered in this book are examined in chapters according to the following format:

1. 4QInstruction (1Q26; 4Q415-18, 423)
2. The book of Mysteries (1Q27; 4Q299-301)
3. 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184)
4. 4QSapiential Work (4Q185)
5. 4QWords of the Maśkil (4Q298)
6. 4QWays of Righteousness (4Q420-21)
7. 4QInstruction-like Composition B (4Q424)
8. 4QBeatitudes (4Q525)
9. Wisdom psalms from the Cave 11 Psalms Scroll (11QPs^a)
10. Smaller wisdom texts

The concluding chapter gives an overview of the core themes and issues in this corpus and its contribution to our understanding of Jewish wisdom. The texts covered in this study are commonly identified as sapiential. But there is a great deal of variety among them and not everyone agrees that they are all wisdom texts. It has been argued, for example, that the book of Mysteries is an eschatological, rather than sapiential, composition.[8] This book does *not* discuss every Qumran document that has been considered a wisdom text. There is no consensus on how many sapiential writings the caves of Qumran actually contained. John Kampen includes 4Q370 (4QExhortation Based on the Flood) in his survey of Qumran wisdom.[9] Geza Vermes classifies 4QBarki Nafshi (4Q434-438) and 4Q444 (4QIncantation) as wisdom literature.[10] One could perhaps

  [7] G. Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (New York: Penguin, 2004); F. García Martínez and E.J.C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1997-98); D.W. Parry and E. Tov, *Calendrical and Sapiential Texts* (DSSR 4; Leiden: Brill, 2004).
  [8] G. Ibba, "Il 'Libro dei Misteri' (1Q27, f.1): testo escatologico," *Hen* 21/1-2 (1999) 73-84.
  [9] Kampen, "Diverse Aspects," 234.
  [10] Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 444-50. See also D. Dimant, "The Qumran Manuscripts: Contents and Significance," in *Time to Prepare a Way in the*

make a similar case for 4QTime of Righteousness (4Q215a) and 4QSongs of the Sage (4Q510-511).[11]

Wisdom is an admittedly vague category. There is a great deal of diversity within the sapiential tradition. From the standpoint of form and content, Job and Proverbs are very different works but both are considered wisdom literature. There are, however, widely agreed upon criteria for identifying sapiential texts. They include a search for order in the natural world and human society, a eudemonistic devotion to the addressee, and practical advice. Wisdom is discerned by a family of resemblances, a combination of compatible ideas and forms. Crenshaw has defined sapiential literature in the following manner:

> formally, wisdom consists of proverbial sentence, or instruction, debate, intellectual reflection; thematically, wisdom comprises self-evident intuitions about mastering life for human betterment, gropings after life's secrets with regard to innocent suffering, grappling with finitude, and quest for truth concealed in the created order and manifested in a feminine persona.[12]

While there is much debate on how wisdom should be defined, there is core agreement on the biblical texts that constitute sapiential literature: Proverbs, Job, Qoheleth and, among the deutero-canonical works, Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon. With so-called wisdom psalms such as Pss 1 or 119, there is less agreement as to

---

Wilderness (ed. D. Dimant and L.H. Schiffman; STDJ 16; Leiden: Brill, 1995) 23-58 (esp. 43-44).

[11] For 4Q215a, see Å. Justnes, "4Q215a (*Time of Righteousness*) in Context," in *Sapiential Perspectives*, 141-69; T. Elgvin, "The Eschatological Hope of 4QTime of Righteousness," in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 89-102; E.G. Chazon, "A Case of Mistaken Identity: *Testament of Naphtali* (4Q215) and *Time of Righteousness* (4Q215ᵃ)," in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. D.W. Parry and E. Ulrich; STDJ 30; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 110-23. In the same volume as Chazon's article, see the preliminary publication of 4Q215a 1 ii (pp. 124-25).

According to the official classification of the Dead Sea Scrolls, 4QInstruction, Mysteries, Ben Sira (2Q18; MasSir), 4Q412, 4Q426 and 4Q525 are "Sapiential Instructions," 4Q424 is a "Collection of Proverbs," the Treatise of the Two Spirits (1QS 3:13-4:26), 4Q185 and 4Q298 are "Didactic Speeches," 4Q411 is a "Sapiential Poetic Text" and the following are "Sapiential Texts Too Fragmentary for Further Classification": 4Q184, 4Q302, 4Q303, 4Q305, 4Q413, 4Q425 and 4Q473. See E. Tov et al., *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and an Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series* (DJD 39; Oxford: Clarendon, 2002) 140. The rationale for not devoting a chapter to the Treatise is discussed below.

[12] Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 11.

---

whether they should be considered sapiential literature or not and, if so, which hymns should be placed in this category. There are similar issues with some of the material covered in this book. Because of the fragmentary nature of the scrolls and the ambiguous nature of wisdom as a genre, the task of deciding whether a given Qumran text is sapiential or not is somewhat subjective. In this procedure I have followed several guidelines.

1. Pedagogical Intent. Wisdom literature is by nature educational. It typically contains lessons devoted to the formation of character, given by a teacher to a student.[13] Pedagogical intent by itself, however, is not sufficient in indicating whether a work is sapiential or not. Many non-sapiential biblical books are instructional, as is the Torah itself.[14]

2. Thematic Affinity. If the work has several themes or concerns that are important in biblical wisdom, the text may be sapiential. Prov 3:19, for example, asserts that God made the world with wisdom, and creation theology is an important motif in the sapiential tradition. But prominent ideas in the wisdom tradition are often not restricted to wisdom texts. Creation is a major sapiential theme but is not limited to this corpus (e.g., Ps 104).

3. Key Phrases and Motifs. Every text with terms such as חמכה or דעה is not necessarily sapiential. Aside from widely used terminology, there are cases in which a text employs a specific image or motif that suggests continuity with traditional wisdom. 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman adapts the depiction of the promiscuous woman in Prov 7. Both 4QInstruction and 4Q424 utilize the image of moving a boundary marker, a motif prominent in Prov 22-24.

4. Innovation in the Wisdom Tradition. Some of the Qumran sapiential texts contain appeals to revelation, proclamations of final judgment, promises of life after death for the elect, and an interest in the angelic realm, all of which are more in keeping with apocalypticism than traditional wisdom. Such motifs are prominent

---

[13] Ibid., 3; Collins, "Wisdom Reconsidered," 281.

[14] D.M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

in 4QInstruction and Mysteries. In this book I argue that these texts attest a trajectory of wisdom in the Second Temple period that is characterized by influence from the apocalyptic tradition. It is possible for a sapiential composition to be in continuity more with the wisdom of Early Judaism than that of the Hebrew Bible. It is also important to attempt to understand such material as wisdom on the basis of its formal and rhetorical features, aside from its content.

Some Qumran sapiential texts identify wisdom with the Torah, most notably 4QBeatitudes and 4Q185. This immediately calls to mind Ben Sira, not Proverbs. As is well known, Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon combine the traditional wisdom of Proverbs with Torah piety and an interest in the history of Israel. Some, but not all, of the Qumran wisdom texts confirm this development.

This book is not a comprehensive study of the impact of the wisdom tradition on the Dead Sea Scrolls. The sapiential tradition exerted a significant formative influence on the *yahad*.[15] The Teacher of Righteousness himself can be understood as a wisdom teacher.[16] The Community Rule (1QS) is a rulebook but contains several different types of literature. The Treatise of the Two Spirits (3:13-4:26) identifies itself at the outset as an instruction. It can be considered, distinct from the rest of 1QS, a wisdom text with an apocalyptic worldview, like 4QInstruction and Mysteries.[17] The present study

[15] M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973) 1.221-22; Harrington, *Wisdom Texts*, 75-80; C. Hempel, "The Qumran Sapiential Texts and the Rule Books," in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran*, 277-95.
Many earlier investigations into wisdom at Qumran focus almost entirely on core Cave 1 documents such as the Community Rule or the Hodayot. This is the case, for example, in Worrell, "Concepts of Wisdom," 405, who argues that the Dead Sea sect was a "wisdom community." See further Lipscomb and Sanders, "Wisdom at Qumran," 281-82.
[16] Collins, "Wisdom Reconsidered," 280; C.A. Newsom, "The Sage in the Literature of Qumran: The Functions of the Maśkîl," in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. J.G. Gammie and L.G. Perdue; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 373-83; van der Woude, "Wisdom at Qumran," 255-56.
[17] S. Metso concludes that the Treatise developed independently from the rest of the Community Rule. 4QSᵃ may attest an older version of the Treatise than 1QS. See her *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule* (STDJ 21; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 137, 145.
B. Otzen understands the dualism of the Treatise in relation to Prov 1-9. See his "Old Testament Wisdom Literature and Dualistic Thinking in Late Judaism," in *Congress Volume: Edinburgh, 1974* (VTSup 28; Leiden: Brill, 1975) 146-57. Consult further J. Duhaime, "Cohérence structurelle et tensions internes dans

could have included a chapter on the Treatise. Many of my assessments would have been similar to those of Armin Lange.[18] Other non-wisdom texts contain passages that resonate with the wisdom tradition. Column 2 of the Damascus Document contains an exhortation to acquire wisdom.[19] The *Aramaic Levi Document* concludes with a didactic poem that praises the teaching of wisdom (cf. 4Q213 1 i 14).[20] Several hymns of the Hodayot combine

l'Instruction sur les Deux Espirits (1QS III 13 – IV 26)," in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 103-31; L.T. Stuckenbruck, "Wisdom and Holiness at Qumran: Strategies for Dealing with Sin in the Community Rule," in *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?: Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World* (ed. S.C. Barton; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999) 47-60 (esp. 48-51); P. Wernberg-Møller, "A Reconsideration of the Two Spirits in the *Rule of the Community* (1QSerek III, 13 – IV, 26)," *RevQ* 3 (1961-62) 413-41.
[18] Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 121-70.
[19] A.-M. Denis, *Les Thèmes de connaissance dans le document de Damas* (SH 15; Louvain: Publications universitaires de Louvain, 1967); W.D. Davies, "'Knowledge' in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Matthew 11:25-30," *HTR* 46 (1953) 113-39.
[20] Two new editions of this work argue that it concludes with a sapiential poem. See J.C. Greenfield et al., *The Aramaic Levi Document* (SVTP 19; Leiden: Brill, 2004); H. Drawnel, *An Aramaic Wisdom Text from Qumran: A New Interpretation of the Levi Document* (JSJSup 86; Leiden: Brill, 2004). The text in question, classified by Greenfield as *ALD* chapter 13 and by Drawnel as lines 83b-98, contains instruction from Levi to his children. This poem is aptly designated as a sapiential composition. It is similar to exhortations to acquire wisdom such as Sir 14:20-15:10. Following the translation of Greenfield, *ALD* 13:4-5 reads: "And now, my sons, <teach> reading and writing and teaching <of> wisdom to your children and may wisdom be eternal glory for you. For he who learns wisdom will (attain) glory through it, but he who despises wisdom will become an object of disdain and scorn." The study of wisdom is endorsed (13:7) and the man who has wisdom is praised, being placed "on the seat <o>f honor in order to hear his wise words" (13:10). This line also extols wisdom itself: "wisdom is a great wealth of honor (or: glory) for those familiar with it and a fine treasure to all who acquire it."
Traditionally *ALD* has been understood as a testament, but this has been called into question in recent years. Greenfield, *The Aramaic Levi Document*, 1, states that "it is not clear the work is a testament," but understands the work in relation to the testaments (pp. 25-32). *ALD* stresses "the sapiential characteristics of the priesthood," in that it contains instruction of Levi colored by the wisdom tradition (p. 34). Greenfield never claims that *ALD* as a whole is a wisdom text. This assertion is at the core of Drawnel's book. He overemphasizes the extent to which this work can be considered sapiential. For example, he characterizes a lengthy section of the text (ll. 11-61) as a "wisdom instruction" (p. 254). This section contains teachings from Isaac to Levi on cultic topics, frequently using the expression "my son" in reference to Levi. Isaac teaches him the "law of the priesthood" (l. 13). He should, for example, avoid fornication (l. 16) and repeatedly wash his hands and feet before sacrificing at the Temple (l. 20). The teaching often contains very specific and detailed instruction regarding the cultus. Levi is told to split wood before sacrificing it and the twelve types of acceptable trees are listed (l. 24). The order of the portions of the butchered animal to be sacrificed is specified (ll. 28-30), as are the proper

sapiential vocabulary with a pedagogical intent.[21]   Manuscripts of biblical wisdom texts have also been found at Qumran.[22] The focus of this book is the non-biblical sapiential texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls.   They constitute crucial evidence for understanding the wisdom of the late Second Temple period and the reception of traditional wisdom in Early Judaism.

---

proportions of oil and flour to be offered with different types of animals (ll. 32-47). While wisdom texts can incorporate priestly topics, the content of *ALD* 11-61 has more in common with Leviticus than Proverbs. *ALD* as a whole is not easily considered a wisdom text. The *Aramaic Levi Document* does not neatly fit into established genre categories. As Greenfield recognizes, the work is influenced by both the testamentary and sapiential traditions. Neither Greenfield nor Drawnel make substantial use of the Qumran wisdom literature. The question of how *ALD* should be understood in relation to the wisdom tradition of Early Judaism has not yet been thoroughly examined.

[21] M.J. Goff, "Reading Wisdom at Qumran: 4QInstruction and the Hodayot," *DSD* 11 (2004) 263-88; S. Tanzer, "The Sages at Qumran: Wisdom in the Hodayot" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1987). See also A. Lange, "1QGenAp XIX$_{10}$-XX$_{32}$ as Paradigm of the Wisdom Didactive Narrative," in *Qumranstudien: Vorträge und Beiträge der Teilnehmer des Qumranseminars auf dem internationalen Treffen der Society of Biblical Literature, Münster, 25.-26. Juli 1993* (ed. H.-J. Fabry et al.; SIJD 4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996) 191-204.

[22] The Dead Sea Scrolls include fragments of Proverbs (4Q102-103), Job (4Q99-101), Qoheleth (4Q109-10), and Ben Sira (2Q18). The large Psalms Scroll from Cave 11 (11Q5) includes a version of Sir 51:13-30 (see section 3.2.2 of Chapter 9). There are also two targums of Job (4Q157, 11Q10). 2Q15 is fragmentary but may contain part of Job 33:28-30. Note also 4Q468l (4QFragment Mentioning Qoh 1:8-9). See S.J. Pfann et al., *Qumran Cave 4 XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part I* (DJD 36; Oxford: Clarendon, 2000) 422; Harrington, *Wisdom Texts*, 14-22; H. Eshel, "6Q30, a Cursive *Śin*, and Proverbs 11," *JBL* 122 (2003) 544-46; É. Puech, "Qumrân e il Libro dei Proverbi," in *Libro dei Proverbi: Tradizione, redazione, teologia* (ed. G. Bellia and A. Passaro; Casale Monferrato [Alessandria]: Piemme, 1999) 169-89; M.G. Abegg, Jr., et al., ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1999) 590-621; E. Ulrich, "An Index of the Passages in the Biblical Manuscripts from the Judean Desert (Part 2: Isaiah-Chronicles)," *DSD* 2 (1995) 86-107 (esp. 104-5); J.A. Fitzmyer, "The First-Century Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI," in *A Wandering Aramean*, 161-82; repr. in *The Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids/Livonia: Eerdmans/Dove, 1997); J. Muilenburg, "A Qoheleth Scroll from Qumran," *BASOR* 135 (1954) 20-28.

CHAPTER ONE

A WISDOM TEXT WITH AN APOCALYPTIC WORLDVIEW: 4QINSTRUCTION (1Q26; 4Q415-18, 423)

1. INTRODUCTION

4QInstruction was published in 1999 by John Strugnell and Daniel Harrington.[1]   Portions of at least six manuscripts of this document have survived (1Q26; 4Q415-18, 423). The work contains practical instruction on topics such as marriage, the payment of debts and the moderation of food. 4QInstruction often uses the admonition form. It constantly refers to its addressee as *mēbîn* (מבין), or "understanding

---

[1] J. Strugnell and D.J. Harrington, *Qumran Cave 4.XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2. 4QInstruction (Mûsār Lě Měbîn): 4Q415ff. With a re-edition of 1Q26* (DJD 34; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999). They entitle the text "Musar Le-Mevin" ("Instruction for a Maven"). The work was often called "Sapiential Work A" before the publication of *DJD 34*. Some scholars use designations such as 1Q/4Q Instruction. This study uses the common title 4QInstruction. Elgvin is the official editor of 4Q423.
Recent scholarship on 4QInstruction includes F. García Martínez, "Marginalia on 4QInstruction," *DSD* 13 (2006) 24-37; É. Puech, "Les Fragments eschatologiques de 4QInstruction (4Q416 i et 4Q418 69 ii, 81-81a, 127)," *RevQ* 22 (2005) 89-119; B. Nitzan, "The Ideological and Literary Unity of 4QInstruction and its Authorship," *DSD* 12 (2005) 257-79; B.G. Wold, *Women, Men and Angels: The Qumran Wisdom Document 'Musar leMevin' and its Allusions to Genesis Creation Traditions* (WUNT 2/201; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005); M.J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction* (STDJ 50; Leiden: Brill, 2003); D. Jefferies, *Wisdom at Qumran: A Form-Critical Analysis of the Admonitions in 4QInstruction* (Gorgias Dissertations, Near Eastern Studies 3; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2002); E.J.C. Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning for the Understanding Ones: Reading and Reconstructing the Fragmentary Early Jewish Sapiential Text 4QInstruction* (STDJ 44; Leiden: Brill, 2001); T. Elgvin, "An Analysis of 4QInstruction" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997); D.J. Harrington, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996) 40-59; A. Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran* (STDJ 18; Leiden: Brill, 1995) 45-92. See also D.J. Harrington, "Recent Study of 4QInstruction," in *From 4QMMT to Resurrection: Mélanges qumraniens en hommage à Émile Puech* (ed. F. García Martínez, A. Steudel and E.J.C. Tigchelaar; STDJ 61; Leiden: Brill, 2006) 105-23.

veneration of the Torah, since this theme is so prominent in that document. This seems to be the case in the Sermon on the Mount as well (Mt 5:48), and perhaps Ps 119 (cf. v. 1). The emphasis in 4Q528 to be perfect can be understood as a call to commit oneself fully to the Torah. The stress in the composition on fearing the Lord is consistent with this interpretation. But the Torah is not an explicit theme in 4Q528. The beatitude opens up the work to comparison with the sapiential tradition. But not enough of 4Q528 survives to decide if it is a hymn or a wisdom text.

9. CONCLUSION

Several minor texts from Qumran have been associated with the wisdom tradition. A few of these compositions can be reasonably understood as sapiential texts, such as 4Q412 and 4Q425. Some of this material, I have argued, has no clear relationship to the wisdom tradition. This is the case with 4Q419. Many of the works reviewed in this chapter may be wisdom texts but do not contain enough evidence to be certain. These fragments demonstrate that the textual evidence at our disposal for the wisdom tradition in the late Second Temple period is far from complete.

CONCLUSION

THE QUMRAN WISDOM TEXTS AND THE SAPIENTIAL TRADITION

1. INTRODUCTION

Five biblical documents represent the corpus of Jewish wisdom literature: Proverbs, Job, Qoheleth and, from the deutero-canonical writings, Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon. Of this material, only the last two are from the late Second Temple period. Comparing Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon to the older wisdom of Proverbs demonstrates that the sapiential tradition changed over time. Ben Sira equates wisdom with the Torah, which is not a theme in Proverbs. The Wisdom of Solomon is influenced by Hellenistic philosophy, an intellectual tradition unknown to Proverbs. The sapiential texts from Qumran provide additional evidence for understanding the nature of Jewish wisdom during the late Second Temple period. At the very least, these writings indicate that there was more diversity within the tradition than was previously realized. The corpus contains a wide range of ideas, motifs and forms. The Qumran wisdom texts exhibit correspondences with the five biblical wisdom texts. Some issues that are prominent in biblical wisdom are absent in the Qumran material, or muted. The Qumran sapiential works also attest departures from traditional wisdom.

2. CORRESPONDENCES

The Qumran wisdom literature is pedagogical and eudemonistic, as is the sapiential tradition in general. A consistent theme in all wisdom writing is character formation, through ethical advice and the development of an accurate understanding of the world. The Qumran wisdom texts are no exception. They contain teachings that are designed to help people lead fulfilling and stable lives. 4Q525 and 4Q185 encourage their addressees to pursue wisdom, as does the

hymn in 11Q5 21:11-17 (cf. Sir 51:13-30). The same general goal is important in Proverbs, Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon. 4Q185 and 4QInstruction present long life as a goal of heeding instruction, a classic goal throughout wisdom literature (4Q416 2 iii 15-19; 4Q185 1-2 ii 12).

In terms of form there are links between Qumran and biblical wisdom literature. Several Qumran sapiential texts are instructions written by a teacher to students. 4Q298 contains lessons by a *Maśkîl* (instructor) for students, who are called "the sons of dawn." 4QInstruction is written to a *mēbîn* ("understanding one"), and the work is designed for the education of a group of students (4Q418 221 2-3). However, while the importance of learning is stressed several times in Qumran wisdom literature (e.g., 4Q525 1), the office or authority of a teacher is rarely praised in these writings (but see 4Q418 81 17). Like Proverbs, the Qumran sapiential texts contain exhortations in the admonition form, as in the sequence of vetitives in 4Q416 2 ii 14-21. 4Q525 and 4Q185 contain didactic poetry reminiscent of Prov 1-9. These two texts use the beatitude form in their praise of wisdom, as do Proverbs (3:13; 8:34) and Ben Sira (14:20).

Like biblical wisdom, the Qumran sapiential writings provide practical instruction that relates to ordinary spheres of life. 4QInstruction emphasizes the risks associated with indebtedness, as does Proverbs. 4QInstruction, however, is the only wisdom text from Qumran that offers a great deal of financial advice. This text provides instruction on marriage, like Proverbs, but stresses the authority of the husband to a greater degree than this biblical book. 4QInstruction associates marriage with poverty (4Q416 2 iii 20), which is not the case in Proverbs.

4Q424 is characterized by common sense teachings that are reminiscent of Proverbs. This Qumran text describes negative types of people who should be avoided. 4QInstruction does as well (4Q417 2 i 7), and similar material abounds elsewhere in the wisdom tradition (e.g., Prov 29:27). 4Q424 teaches that unreliable men should not be employed. This emphasis is present but not prominent in Proverbs (10:26). Proper speech is another commonplace topic in the wisdom tradition that is well represented in Qumran sapiential literature. 4Q420-21 and 4Q525 stress caution and deliberation in speech and that a person should speak only after understanding the words of his

interlocutor. 4Q525 14 ii 18-28 is the best example of such advice in this corpus. Proverbs and Ben Sira similarly recommend that a person listen to his conversation partner before talking (e.g., Prov 18:13; Sir 11:7-8).

3. ABSENCES

Some prominent features of biblical wisdom are absent or at best muted in the Qumran wisdom texts. Solomon plays no role in this corpus. None of its material is presented as age-old wisdom handed down from a legendary figure of the past. None are pseudepigrapha, although the Cave 11 Psalms Scroll, which is ascribed to David, contains hymns influenced by the sapiential tradition. Unlike Ben Sira, no Qumran wisdom text is attributed to a specific sage. The Qumran sapiential writings do not include a single collection of proverbs. They include some material that could be considered a proverbs or common sayings, but this is not a characteristic feature of the corpus.[1]

While the Qumran wisdom texts often echo material in Proverbs, this material has little, if anything, to do with Job and Qoheleth. Neither the theodicy of Job nor the epistemological despair of Qoheleth resonates with this corpus. In the opinion of Armin Lange, 4QInstruction reconfigures the sapiential idea that the world is imbedded with a sense of order into a revealed truth in response to the "crisis of wisdom" that is associated with Job and Qoheleth.[2] According to this formulation, endowing an assertion of cosmic order with the status of revealed knowledge protects this conception of the world from the challenge posed by these biblical books. Lange's thesis is compelling and merits further consideration. But it suffers

---

[1] As discussed in Chapter 6, Elgvin understands 4Q420 1a ii-b (par 4Q421 1a ii-b) as containing "wisdom sayings." Some parts of 4QInstruction, such as the vetitives in 4Q416 2 ii 14-21 on topics such as social relations and financial affairs, could be considered proverbs, or at least sayings that are fully compatible with Prov 10-31. See T. Elgvin et al., *Qumran Cave 4.XV: Sapiential Texts, Part 1* (DJD 20; Oxford: Clarendon, 1997) 173.

[2] A. Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran* (STDJ 18; Leiden: Brill, 1995). See also J.C. Rylaarsdam, *Revelation in Jewish Wisdom Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946).

from the basic fact that neither 4QInstruction nor any other Qumran wisdom text explicitly engages Job and Qoheleth.[3] Nevertheless, he is probably right to relate the absence of theodicy in Qumran wisdom literature to the theme of revelation. The *mēbîn* of 4QInstruction is given the mystery that is to be, from which he can learn how God has structured the world. There is no theological arena for despair and the legitimacy of the *rāz nihyeh* is never challenged. But while none of the Qumran wisdom texts deal with theodicy, not all of them appeal to revelation, as discussed below. To understand the lack of theodicy one must seek an answer beyond the issue of revelation. One possible explanation is that Job and Qoheleth, the validity of their critiques notwithstanding, are not representative of a broader revolution in sapiential thought.[4]

Personified wisdom is another surprisingly muted element in Qumran wisdom literature.[5] On the basis of the biblical evidence it is easy to surmise that the trope of wisdom allegorized as a woman, immanent in the world and rooted in creation theology, is a core element of the wisdom tradition. Lady Wisdom is a towering figure in the book of Proverbs. Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon appropriate her in different ways but she is central to both works. The Qumran wisdom literature, and the Dead Sea Scrolls in general, contain virtually no vivid portrait of Lady Wisdom. Like the issue of theodicy, this absence has been understood in relation to the theme of revelation. With regard to 4QInstruction, Elgvin argues that "*Raz nihyeh* is clearly a reinterpretation of the divine Wisdom of Proverbs 1-9," referring to Lady Wisdom.[6] This could be the case. The

---

[3] Lange has argued that 4QInstruction, the book of Mysteries and parts of Qoh 12 have a common provenance and that Mysteries shows familiarity with Qoheleth. In Chapters 1 and 2 I critique these claims.

[4] Extrapolating a "crisis of wisdom" from Job and Qoheleth has been questioned. For example, G. von Rad has written "is it at all feasible that two individual works will have brought about a rethinking of later Israel's understanding of the world?" See his *Wisdom in Israel* (London/Valley Forge: SCM Press Ltd/Trinity Press International, 1972) 237. Consult also J.T. Sanders, "Wisdom, Theodicy, Death and the Evolution of Intellectual Traditions," *JSJ* 36 (2005) 263-77.

[5] S. White Crawford, "Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly at Qumran," *DSD* 5 (1998) 355-66.

[6] T. Elgvin, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Early Second Century BCE—The Evidence of 4QInstruction," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Fifty Years After Their Discovery: Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20-25, 1997* (ed. L.H. Schiffman et al.; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society/Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, 2000) 226-47 (esp. 235).

---

mystery that is to be is associated with the rational structure of the world in 4QInstruction, as is Lady Wisdom in Proverbs. However, it would be easier to concur with Elgvin if 4QInstruction more explicitly engaged the figure of Lady Wisdom. Also, this Qumran text considers the terms "wisdom" and "mystery that is to be" complementary descriptions of the means God used to create the world, rather than opposing concepts (4Q417 1 i 8-9; 4Q418 126 ii 4-5).

Some Qumran wisdom texts show a degree of familiarity with the Lady Wisdom tradition. 4QBeatitudes claims "she cannot be obtained with gold," presenting wisdom as superior to items of value, much like Prov 3:14-15 (4Q525 2 iii 3). 4Q525 24 ii contains remnants of a poem in which a female speaker, in the first person, "pours out" speech, as Lady Wisdom does in Prov 1:23. The woman of 4Q525 24 ii has a dwelling that is associated with agricultural abundance and water, evoking the banquet at the house of Lady Wisdom in Prov 9. 4Q185 1-2 ii 13-15 describes the search for wisdom in romantic terms, urging one not to "play tricks" against wisdom or attain her with "flatteries." The version of Sir 51:13-30 in 11QPs[a] 21 likens the search for wisdom to a man in love with a woman. 11QPs[a] 21:11-12 reads "I was a young man before I had erred when I looked for her. She came to me in her beauty and up till the end I searched for her." 4Q185 stresses the honesty and devotion of one's search for wisdom and 11QPs[a] 21 underscores the intensity and passion of the speaker's desire for wisdom. These texts are more interested in inculcating a love for wisdom than the allegory of wisdom as a woman. They never associate hypostatic wisdom with creation. Lady Wisdom has no speaking role in the Qumran sapiential corpus, with the fragmentary 4Q525 24 ii as a probable exception.

The Qumran wisdom writings do not give the impression that its authors were polemical or hostile to the Lady Wisdom tradition but that they rather considered it a peripheral motif. There is not enough evidence to decide conclusively why this is the case. One can speculate that the authors of this material chose not to highlight the figure of Lady Wisdom to avoid ambiguity regarding God's sole creation of the world (cf. 11QPs[a] 26:12). Ben Sira, however, has no problem asserting both God's supreme control while associating hypostatic wisdom with creation (Sir 24:3).

The Qumran sapiential corpus attests no explicit interest in mantic wisdom, which is associated with divination and the interpretation of dreams. The "magicians" mentioned in the book of Mysteries have been understood in relation to this tradition.[7] It has been suggested that the origins of apocalypticism are rooted in mantic wisdom.[8] Nothing in the Qumran sapiential literature endorses this claim.

4. DEPARTURES

Several aspects of the Qumran wisdom corpus constitute departures from the traditional wisdom of Proverbs. Three key innovations involve apocalypticism, the Torah and piety.

4.1 *Wisdom and Apocalypticism*

Core aspects of Proverbs are at odds with characteristic features of an apocalyptic worldview. In this book wisdom is an innate mental aptitude that leads to success and fulfillment in this world. There is no prospect of rewards after death. Recompense for misdeeds is allocated in this world, without appeal to eschatological judgment. Wisdom is publicly available and there is no interest in esoteric revelation to the elect. One who discloses secrets is chastised as a gossip (Prov 11:13; 20:19). Ben Sira, writing in a context in which apocalypticism was prevalent, dismisses the study of hidden knowledge and dreams (3:21-24; cf. 20:30; 34:5; 41:14). This can be understood as a critique of a type of wisdom speculation based on esoteric revelation that is exemplified by *1 Enoch*.[9] However, Ben

Sira does contain elements that are fully consistent with apocalyptic literature, such as the proclamation of judgment (e.g., 16:18; 35[32]:22-26). The Wisdom of Solomon has an elaborate judgment scene (4:20-5:23) that is more in keeping with the apocalypses than traditional wisdom and the work affirms the immorality of the soul for the righteous, echoing the assertion of Dan 12:3 that they will join the angels in heaven (Wis 3:7; cf. *1 En.* 104:2-6).[10]

4QInstruction and the book of Mysteries reflect significant influence from the apocalyptic tradition.[11] Both of these texts appeal to supernatural revelation in the form of the *rāz nihyeh* (רז נהיה), an enigmatic phrase that can be translated "the mystery that is to be." In Mysteries this expression is associated with eschatological judgment (1Q27 1 i 3-4) and the work's addressees are apparently called "those who hold fast to mysteries" (תומכי רזים), referring to their possession of revealed knowledge (4Q299 43 2; 4Q300 8 5; cf. 4Q299 3a ii-b 9). The *mēbîn* of 4QInstruction is asked repeatedly to study the mystery that is to be. From this *rāz* he can learn many things, such as the knowledge of good and evil, and who will inherit "glory" after death (4Q417 1 i 6-8; 4Q417 2 i 10-12). 4QInstruction and Mysteries teach that God's dominion over the world is expressed in a comprehensive plan that orchestrates history and creation. The mystery that is to be signifies a deterministic conception of the natural order, presented as revealed knowledge. Creation is a prominent theme in Proverbs and elsewhere in the wisdom tradition. But the structure of the cosmos and the means of perceiving it in 4QInstruction and Mysteries

---

[7] I evaluate this opinion in Chapter 2.

[8] H.-P. Müller, "Mantische Weisheit und Apokalyptik," *Congress Volume: Uppsala, 1971* (VTSup 22; Leiden: Brill, 1972) 268-93; A. Bedenbender, "Jewish Apocalypticism: A Child of Mantic Wisdom?" *Hen* 24 (2002) 189-96 (*The Origins of Enochic Judaism: Proceedings of the First Enoch Seminar. University of Michigan, Sesto Fiorentino, Italy, June 19-23, 2001* [ed. G. Boccaccini]); J.C. VanderKam, "Mantic Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 4 (1997) 336-53.

[9] R.A. Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach* (SBLEJL 8; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995). Some commentators consider Sir 3:21-24 polemic against Greek wisdom. See, for example, A.A. Di Lella and P.W. Skehan, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987) 160; M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973) 1.139.

[10] According to Wis 2:22, the wicked do not know the "mysteries of God." See further J.J. Collins, "The Reinterpretation of Apocalyptic Traditions in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *The Book of Wisdom in Modern Research: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology* (ed. A. Passaro and G. Bellia; DCLY 2005; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005) 143-57; M. Gilbert, "Sagesse 3,7-9; 5,15-23 et l'apocalyptique," in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition* (ed. F. García Martínez; BETL 168; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2003) 307-22; S. Burkes, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Wisdom of Solomon," *HTR* 95 (2002) 21-44.

[11] F. García Martínez, "Wisdom at Qumran: Worldly or Heavenly?" in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 1-15; K.B. Larsen, "Visdom og apokalyptik i Musar leMevin (1Q/4QInstruction) [Wisdom and Apocalyptic in Musar leMevin (1Q/4QInstruction)]," *DTT* 65 (2002) 1-14; J.J. Collins, "Wisdom Reconsidered, in Light of the Scrolls," *DSD* 4 (1997) 265-81 (esp. 272-78). In the same volume as the García Martínez article, see M. Knibb, "The Book of Enoch in the Light of the Qumran Wisdom Literature," 193-210 (esp. 199-204).

represent a radical departure from the creation theology of Proverbs.[12] The cosmos requires revelation to be understood. This accords with the epistemology of apocalypses such as *1 Enoch* and Daniel.[13]

4QInstruction and Mysteries resonate in other ways with the apocalyptic tradition. Both disclose revelation to the elect. While angels are not a major concern in Mysteries, 4QInstruction displays a strong interest in the angelic world. The work holds up the angels as models for the addressee to emulate (4Q418 69 ii 13-14), and his elect status is construed as a special affinity with them (4Q418 81 4-5). Mysteries gives the impression that the righteous will enjoy a utopian existence on a transformed earth, cleansed of evil, not unlike *1 En.* 10. 4QInstruction and Mysteries include judgment scenes that recount the ultimate destruction of wickedness. Each is a wisdom text with an apocalyptic worldview. One can make a similar case for the Treatise of the Two Spirits (1QS 3:13-4:26).

Other Qumran wisdom texts have features that resemble apocalyptic literature more than traditional wisdom. 4QWords of the Maśkîl urges its intended audience to understand "the end of the ages" (4Q298 3-4 ii 9-10). 4QSapiential Work proclaims that the angels will judge with "flaming fire" (4Q185 1-2 i 8-9). 4Q184 imagines the netherworld as a place of "eternal flames" to which a female figure leads those who go astray (4Q184 1 7). The text then claims that "none of her inheritance is among all who shine brightly" (ll. 7-8). This expression, which is dualistically opposed to the "eternal flames," can be understood as an indirect allusion to the prospect of astral immortality with the angels, not unlike Dan 12:3.

Beyond 4QInstruction and Mysteries, however, there is not a great deal in the Qumran wisdom corpus that is reminiscent of apocalypticism. Aside from these two texts no Qumran sapiential work explicitly appeals to supernatural revelation. No other work is clearly oriented to an elect community, although in some cases, such as 4Q298, this may be assumed. 4Q424 shows no interest in apocalypticism. No Qumran wisdom composition attests an imminent eschatology, although Mysteries claims that its addressees will recognize the "sign" of the final judgment in their own lifetime (1Q27 1 i 5). There is no messianism whatsoever in this material. None of these texts presents the world as radically out of joint or under the dominion of Belial. Because of its apocalyptic worldview, 4QInstruction, despite its length and significance, is not fully representative of the Qumran wisdom corpus.

The apocalyptic features of 4QInstruction and Mysteries are important for understanding Jewish wisdom in the Second Temple period. These compositions demonstrate that in this era, despite Ben Sira's emphatic rejection of esoteric speculation, a wisdom text could be significantly influenced by the apocalyptic tradition. The later Wisdom of Solomon attests this phenomenon to an extent, as does the saying source Q of the New Testament, following the standard view that it contains several sapiential instructions.[14] 4QInstruction is the best example of a wisdom text with an apocalyptic worldview.

4QInstruction's practical advice and admonitions demonstrate that its author was familiar with the traditional wisdom represented by Proverbs. Von Rad asserted that scholars of wisdom literature must "take seriously the idea that the forms can never be separated from the contents."[15] The forms in which wisdom is expressed, such as the proverb or instruction, in that they are pithy, concise and didactic, are themselves considered expressive of a sapiential worldview. James Crenshaw likewise argues that the wisdom tradition is characterized by "a marriage of form and content."[16] John Collins observes that the Qumran wisdom texts, and above all 4QInstruction, illustrate that "the marriage of form and worldview seems to end in divorce."[17] The tradition was able to incorporate modes of thought that are completely alien to the older wisdom of Israel. In Early Judaism the wisdom

---

[12] M.J. Goff, "The Mystery of Creation in 4QInstruction," *DSD* 10 (2003) 163-86.

[13] D.J. Harrington has written "Perhaps the most striking contribution of the Qumran wisdom texts is their insistence on wisdom as a gift from God." See his *Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996) 83.

[14] M.J. Goff, "Discerning Trajectories: 4QInstruction and the Sapiential Background of the Sayings Source Q," *JBL* 124 (2005) 657-73; J.S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999 [orig. pub., 1987]); K. Löning, "Die Konfrontation des Menschen: Elemente einer sapientialen Soteriologie," in *Rettendes Wissen: Studien zum Fortgang weisheitlichen Denkens im Frühjudentum und im frühen Christentum* (ed. K. Löning; AOAT 300; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2002) 1-41 (esp. 23-24); M. Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen* (OBO 26; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1979) 558.

[15] Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 25.

[16] J.L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction* (rev. ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998 [orig. pub., 1981]) 11.

[17] Collins, "Wisdom Reconsidered," 280.

tradition was both conservative and adaptable to new ideas.

Lange has argued that 4QInstruction confirms von Rad's claim that apocalypticism is a development out of the sapiential tradition.[18] But 4QInstruction was probably written in the second century BCE, which would date it after the early Enochic apocalypses, the *Book of Watchers* and the *Astronomical Book*. 4QInstruction does not represent "erste Schritte auf dem Weg zur Apokalyptik."[19] It is more likely that the apocalyptic tradition influenced 4QInstruction.[20] Furthermore, it is well known that von Rad's engaging thesis cannot stand as originally formulated.[21] It cannot explain sufficiently the substantial differences between the two traditions. Apocalypses typically appeal to heavenly revelation, whereas knowledge in the wisdom tradition is generally rooted in empirical observation. Sapiential literature often presupposes stability and continuity, whereas the conviction that the world is fundamentally out of joint is paramount in apocalypses such as Daniel and Revelation. Wisdom and apocalypticism should not be thought of two wholly separate pure streams of tradition. But they are nevertheless two different traditions, each with its own origins and process of development. By the late Second Temple period the boundaries and distinctions between them can become quite nebulous.[22] The two traditions can overlap, a possibility best represented by 4QInstruction, and various kinds of Early Jewish literature reflect influence from both wisdom and apocalyticsim, such as the testaments and the Qumran rulebooks.

Collins has put forward the well-received view that Jewish apocalypticism represents a new synthesis in the Hellenistic period of elements drawn from older traditions such as post-exilic prophecy, Persian apocalypticism and ancient Near Eastern myth.[23] The

---

[18] Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 301-6; von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 263-83.

[19] Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 305.

[20] In Chapter 1 I support the possibility that the author of 4QInstruction was familiar with a version of *1 Enoch*.

[21] J.J. Collins, "Wisdom, Apocalypticism and Generic Compatibility," in *Seers, Sibyls and Sages in Hellenistic Roman Judaism* (JSJSup 54; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 385-404.

[22] L. Wills and B.G. Wright, ed., *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism* (SBLSymS 35; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005).

[23] J.J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998 [orig. pub., 1984]) 24-37; idem, "Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and

---

Qumran wisdom literature, and the sapiential tradition of Early Judaism in general, should be understood in a similar way. The late Second Temple period attests a transformation of wisdom.[24] Traditional wisdom is combined with new ideas from traditions such as apocalypticism, prophecy and Torah piety.[25] One of the most important concepts in this period is appeal to supernatural revelation. Hengel has argued that one strand of Hellenistic thought is characterized by the "idea of '*higher wisdom by revelation.*'"[26] In the context of increased influx of influence from other cultures, a loss of native control of political events and widespread economic disparity, Jews needed knowledge that transcended the reality they faced to assert God's justice and control of events. It is a kind of cultural theodicy. An intellectual climate developed in which it became popular to understand the world in terms of revelation and determinism. 4QInstruction fits very well with this prevailing mood.[27] The work discloses revelation regarding a deterministic plan guiding history and creation. 4QInstruction also emphasizes the poverty of the addressee who is given revelation. His ordinary life is difficult and he is taught to endure the indignities caused by his low social station. He needs heavenly knowledge to consider himself among the elect. While the book of Mysteries does not give the impression its intended audience endured difficult political or economic circumstances, the work presents the deterministic order of creation as divinely revealed knowledge. The theme of revelation in 4QInstruction and Mysteries is better understood against this broad Hellenistic milieu than as a response to Job and Qoheleth.

Apocalypticism in the Hellenistic Age," in *Seers, Sibyls and Sages*, 317-38. In the same volume, see his "Jewish Apocalypticism against its Hellenistic Near Eastern Environment," 59-74.

[24] T. Elgvin, "An Analysis of 4QInstruction" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997) 59-62.

[25] M. Kister, "Wisdom Literature and Its Relation to Other Genres: From Ben Sira to Mysteries," in *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Sixth International Symposium of the Orion Center, 20-22 May 2001* (ed. J.J. Collins, G.E. Sterling and R.A. Clements; STDJ 51; Leiden: Brill, 2004) 13-47 (esp. 47).

[26] Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1.217 (italics his). See also Collins, "Wisdom, Apocalypticism and Generic Compatibility," 388; Löning, "Die Konfrontation des Menschen," 3.

[27] Goff, "Mystery of Creation," 184-86.

4.2 *Wisdom and Torah*

In some Qumran wisdom texts the theme of higher revelation is prominent in the form of appeal to the Torah. 4Q185 and 4Q525 confirm developments within the wisdom tradition that have long been evident from Ben Sira. He teaches students about the value of wisdom and its rewards. The sage reveres figures from the national history of Israel as moral exemplars. He celebrates the Torah as a source of wisdom. His instruction turns to the motif of Lady Wisdom to explain the relationship between Torah and wisdom. Many of these statements can be made about 4Q185 and 4Q525 as well. 4Q185 holds up Jacob and Isaac as models to follow (1-2 ii 4), and utilizes the Exodus tradition (1-2 i 13-ii 2). The work recounts the rewards of wisdom. The Torah is revered by the author, who urges one to follow "the words of [his] covena[nt]" (4Q185 1-2 iii 9). 4Q525 offers no prominent appeal to specific events in the history of Israel but contains the most explicit association of wisdom with the Torah in the Qumran sapiential corpus (4Q525 2 ii + 3 3-4). 4Q185 and 4Q525 also show familiarity with Lady Wisdom.

Some commentators consider the centrality of the Torah as one of the defining characteristics of Qumran wisdom literature. Lange has claimed that the entire corpus, with the exception of 4Q424, demonstrates "Toraweisheit."[28] The texts confirm, in his view, the rise of the Torah in sapiential thought that is discernible in Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch (3:9-4:4), and perhaps in putative wisdom psalms such as Pss 1 and 119. In the opinion of Jack Sanders, the Qumran wisdom texts "go somewhat further" than Ben Sira in terms of the incorporation of the Torah.[29] Lange and Sanders

are correct insofar as the Torah is important for several Qumran sapiential texts. But to hold up "Toraweisheit" as a defining feature of Qumran wisdom literature obscures more than it explains. If one defines "Torah wisdom" as any instance in which a sapiential work shows familiarity with the Torah, the view of Lange is basically accurate. But such an open definition offers little assistance in understanding the different ways the Qumran wisdom texts use the Torah. There is a difference between showing familiarity with the Torah and appealing to it as an authoritative source of revelation. Most Qumran wisdom texts exhibit familiarity with the Torah. The figure of Adam is important in 4QInstruction and the composition adapts language from Gen 1-3. The book of Mysteries mentions Aaron (4Q299 79 6) and probably reflects knowledge of the book of Daniel, as discussed in Chapter 2. 4Q184 shows extensive reliance on Prov 7. Numerous other examples could be cited. But when one asks which wisdom texts from Qumran thematize the Torah and proclaim it as the main source of wisdom, the list becomes much smaller—4Q185 and 4Q525.[30] It is implied that 4QWays of Righteousness reveres the Torah, since it provides halakhah regarding the Sabbath (4Q421 11-13). But this text never praises, let alone mention, the Torah, whereas Ben Sira celebrates the law but never provides halakhah. 4QWays of Righteousness attests a different kind of Torah wisdom from that of Ben Sira.

If 4QInstruction can be said to merge the sapiential and apocalyptic traditions, Ben Sira combines the sapiential and covenantal traditions.[31] The book of Mysteries and the Treatise of the

---

[28] A. Lange, "Die Weisheitstexte aus Qumran: Eine Einleitung," in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought* (ed. C. Hempel, A. Lange and H. Lichtenberger; BETL 159; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2002) 3-30 (esp. 30). See also idem, "Die Bedeutung der Weisheitstexte aus Qumran für die hebräische Bibel," in *Weisheit in Israel* (ed. D.J.A. Clines, H. Lichtenberger and H.-P. Müller; ATM 12; Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2003) 129-44.

[29] J.T. Sanders, "When Sacred Canopies Collide: The Reception of the Torah of Moses in the Wisdom Literature of the Second-Temple Period," *JSJ* 32 (2001) 121-36 (esp. 127). See also idem, "Wisdom, Theodicy, Death," 263; White Crawford, "Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly," 365; G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism in Early Judaism: Some Points for Discussion," in *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism*, 17-37 (esp. 34); D.M. Carr, *Writing on*

the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) 225-28; Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen*, 33-61.

[30] 4Q426 may reflect this tradition as well. Note also that 11Q5 18 (Ps 154) praises the Torah.

[31] It has been argued that rabbinic Judaism develops the combination of traditional wisdom with the covenantal tradition to the point where sapiential literature as a distinct entity essentially disappears. Rylaarsdam, *Revelation in Jewish Wisdom Literature*, 46, claims that "the Hebrew wisdom movement" was "submerged by and lost in rabbinism." Gerald Sheppard writes "Biblical wisdom literature seems fully appropriated as commentary on the torah within Judaism." See his "Biblical Wisdom Literature at the End of the Modern Age," in *Congress Volume: Oslo, 1998* (ed. A. Lemaire and M. Sæbø; VTSup 80; Leiden: Brill, 2000) 369-98 (esp. 387). He also asserts that wisdom literature was not absorbed by Christianity. Sanders, "Wisdom, Theodicy, Death," 276-77, echoing Rylaarsdam, likens the wisdom tradition to a "dinosaur": "big and important in one epoch, gone in the next." The *Pirke Avot* is an early rabbinic work that is widely considered a

Two Spirits attest the same phenomenon as 4QInstruction, suggesting that it is representative of a broader wisdom trajectory in the late Second Temple period. 4Q185 and 4Q525 are examples of sapiential developments expressed in fuller form in Ben Sira. This instruction can thus be taken as the best example of another type of Jewish wisdom from this era. For heuristic purposes the sapiential trajectory associated with 4QInstruction and Mysteries can be called *rāz* wisdom, and the one with Ben Sira, 4Q185 and 4Q525 (and other texts such as Bar 3:9-4:4), Torah wisdom.[32] The delineation of these two types should not be made too rigidly, and not every Qumran wisdom text can be easily placed in either category. For example, 4QInstruction, like 4QWays of Righteousness, attests halakhah in a wisdom text (4Q416 2 iv 7-10; 4Q418 103 ii), but neither praises the Torah nor appeals to the revelation at Sinai. The crucial difference between *rāz* and Torah wisdom is that in one the authoritative source of wisdom is the Torah, and in the other obtaining wisdom chiefly relies on an esoteric form of revelation available only to the elect.[33] In 4QInstruction acquiring wisdom through the *rāz nihyeh* is not incompatible with obtaining it through the Torah. Rather the former is encouraged much more than the latter. Ben Sira, by contrast,

praises the Torah while dismissing esoteric sources of wisdom (3:21-24). The Community Rule venerates the Torah and its claims of possessing secret knowledge relate to the interpretation of scripture. The Dead Sea sect claims to possess both the נגלות and the נסתרות, referring to the public revelation of the Torah and its hidden interpretation, respectively (1QS 5:11-12; CD 3:13-14; cf. 1QpHab 7:4-5). There is no Early Jewish wisdom text that invokes different forms of revelation in an equally harmonious way.[34]

With the full evidence of the Qumran wisdom texts available, it is clear that in the late Second Temple period sapiential texts turned to divine sources of wisdom. The incorporation of the Torah into the wisdom tradition in this era can be understood against the backdrop of prevailing Hellenistic intellectual currents described above with regard to the theme of supernatural revelation.

4.3 *Wisdom and Piety*

The sapiential material from Qumran exhibits a greater interest than older wisdom in God and humanity's response to him. Proverbs assumes regular participation in worship (e.g., 15:8) and its prologue famously reveres the fear of God as the beginning of wisdom.[35] But its content, particularly the sayings of chapters 10-29, is often not explicitly oriented to God but rather ordinary and mundane aspects of human life. By contrast, many Qumran wisdom texts emphasize the praise and worship of God. 4QInstruction teaches the *mēbîn* "to praise his name constantly" (4Q416 2 iii 11). This composition emphasizes the holiness of the addressee and encourages him to participate in the cultus. Mysteries mentions, albeit briefly, related topics such as priests (4Q299 67 3; 1Q27 3 2) and Urim and

---

wisdom text. The rabbis do not for the most part continue the production of wisdom genres attested in biblical and Early Jewish literature. They develop their own genres and do not merely mimic biblical forms. But I am not sure if it follows that the wisdom tradition becomes "lost" in rabbinic Judaism. It is perhaps better to say that the rabbis continue the wisdom tradition in very different ways. The *Pirke Avot* is not considered an abandoned relic of a by-gone tradition; rather the rabbis expanded and rewrote it with a version in the Mishnah and the two recensions of *Avot de-Rabbi Nathan*. The wisdom text found in the Cairo Geniza is another example of a sapiential work produced by rabbinic Judaism. Kugel has argued that the rabbis continued the biblical wisdom tradition in texts such as *Genesis Rabbah* and the *Mekhilta deR. Ishmael.* See G.W. Nebe, *Text und Sprache der hebräischen Weisheitsschrift aus der Kairoer Geniza* (Frankfurt: P. Lang, 1993); H.P. Rüger, *Die Weisheitsschrift aus der Kairoer Geniza* (WUNT 53; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991); K. Berger, *Die Weisheitsschrift aus der Kairoer Geniza* (Tübingen: Francke, 1989); J. Goldin, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (YJS 10; New York/London: Yale University Press, 1983 [orig. pub., 1955]); J.L. Kugel, "Wisdom and the Anthological Temper," *Prooftexts* 17 (1997) 9-32.

[32] In section 3.1.4 of Chapter 1 I critique the opinion that the *rāz nihyeh* can be equated with the Torah.

[33] A. Bedenbender has argued that the Enochic apocalyptic tradition relies upon the authority of Moses. See his *Der Gott der Welt Tritt auf den Sinai: Entstehung, Entwicklung und Funktionsweise der frühjüdischen Apokalyptik* (ANTZ 8; Berlin: Institut Kirche und Judentum, 2000) 264-66.

[34] Appeals to esoteric revelation for the elect and to the Mosaic revelation at Sinai are combined together in the first century CE. *2 Baruch* turns to apocalyptic revelation to help legitimate traditional covenantal theology grounded in the Torah (e.g., *2 Bar.* 54). From roughly the same time, 4 Ezra 14 recounts the restoration of both the Torah and additional literature disclosed only to the elect. See Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 209-10, 221; Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen*, 80.

[35] L.G. Perdue, *Wisdom and Cult: A Critical Analysis of the Views of Cult in the Wisdom Literatures of Israel and the Ancient Near East* (SBLDS 30; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977).

Thummim (4Q299 69 2). 4QWays of Righteousness discusses the Temple service and the observance of the Sabbath (4Q421 11-13). For 4Q185 and 4Q525 a life guided by the Torah is characterized by reverence of God. The version of Ps 154 in the Cave 11 Psalms Scroll makes the praise of God a central theme. Several fragmentary compositions blur the distinction between hymnic and sapiential literature. 4QSapiential-Didactic Work A, for example, exhorts: "with all your mouth, praise ... give thanks to his name" (4Q412 1 7-8).

Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon also celebrate God more than Proverbs. Ben Sira includes hymns that praise the power and magnitude of God (e.g., 42:15-43:33). The sage endorses the Temple cultus, reflecting, for example, on the value of acceptable sacrifices (35:1-26).[36] He makes the fear of God a more prominent theme than in Proverbs (e.g., Sir 1:27; 10:22; 19:24; 25:10-11).[37] The Wisdom of Solomon never addresses liturgical issues or ritual purity but praises God as a transcendent, ineffable being (Wis 9:13-18).[38]

Job and Qoheleth are not consistent with the emphasis on divine praise and worship in Qumran wisdom. These books deal with theological topics such as the power of God and his relationship with humankind. However, their reflection on these issues does not encourage the praise of God. Qoheleth is intensely aware of God and his control over the world. This is considered cause for despair. His observance of Temple worship seems motivated by a sense of trepidation with regard to God rather than an outpouring of love: "Guard your steps when you go to the house of God; to draw near to listen is better than the sacrifice offered by fools" (4:17). The situation is similar with regard to Job. The book teaches not that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom but that to be afraid of God is itself wisdom (28:28). Job is portrayed as a pious participant in the sacrificial cult in the beginning of the book, before God disrupts his life (1:5). At the end of the work God displays his transcendent power from the whirlwind to Job and his fortunes are restored (42:6).

---

[36] G. Boccaccini understands Ben Sira as the product of "rapprochement between Zadokite and Sapiential Judaism." See his *Roots of Rabbinic Judaism: An Intellectual History, from Ezekiel to Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 125.
[37] Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 143-47.
[38] J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997) 199-209.

Job submits to God but does not extol him.[39] For him acknowledging the power of God is not an occasion for praise.

Job and Qoheleth, which are generally considered to have been written before Ben Sira, support the view that in the late Second Temple period the wisdom tradition develops a strong interest in piety and worship. This is compatible with the tendency of sapiential texts in this era, examined above, to appeal to a divine source, be it the Torah or esoteric revelation to the elect. Rather than an occasion for theodicy or despair, several Early Jewish wisdom texts purport to provide divine knowledge in part to help people deal with difficult circumstances. This is the case, for example, in Ben Sira, 4QInstruction and 4QBeatitudes.[40] Praise and worship are considered natural responses to the conviction that God is a transcendent being in supreme control of the world.

5. FUNCTION AND MILIEU

Most of the Qumran wisdom texts are instructional and written to further the education of students. In that sense they are the product of "schools." But it is not clear that they are from a single, unified social movement or that they were written in schools in a formal, institutional sense.[41]

4Q298 is the only Qumran wisdom text that is considered a product of the sect associated with the Teacher of Righteousness. In Chapter 6 I endorsed the suggestion that portions of 4QWays of Righteousness can also be attributed to this movement. Since the texts examined in this book are among the Dead Sea Scrolls, one can assume that members of the *yaḥad* read them and used them in their education. 4QInstruction and Mysteries have much in common with the undisputed literature of the *yaḥad*, in particular the Treatise of the Two Spirits, as Lange has emphasized. In Chapters 1 and 2 I endorse the view that these two texts were probably used as sources by the

---

[39] In 42:8-9 God commands Job to pray to him on behalf of his friends. This is not portrayed as a spontaneous act that reflects his love for God. This passage presupposes the viability of the sacrificial cult since the friends make a burnt offering.
[40] See, for example, Sir 2:4-6; 4Q416 2 ii 9-18; 4Q525 2 ii + 3 4-5.
[41] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet*, 12-13.

writings of the Dead Sea sect.[42]   In these chapters I critique the opinion that 4QInstruction and Mysteries were written by priests. One could perhaps make this claim with regard to 4QWays of Righteousness, with its interest in halakhah and the Temple, and the prominence of the Torah in 4Q185 and 4Q525 could also imply a priestly provenance. But there is no unambiguous evidence that any Qumran wisdom text was written by a priest.

The educational function of 4QInstruction is for the *mēbîn* to develop the means to have success, or at least stability, in this world and to enjoy eternal life with the angels after death. The available evidence from Mysteries suggests that its overall purpose was to encourage its addressees to be righteous, so that they will be spared from God's judgment. There is no sense that after death they would join the angels but rather live a utopian existence on a transformed earth. The fate of the *mēbîn* during judgment is a concern of 4QInstruction. This is the case in 4QSapiential Work as well (cf. 4Q185 1-2 i 8-9). 4Q184 does not emphasize judgment but locates the fate of the wicked in Sheol, which is associated with flames and a female figure derived from Prov 7. It is implied that one should avoid this fate through ethical conduct.

It is difficult to posit a specific milieu for the Qumran wisdom texts because they cannot be dated with precision. This is generally the case with wisdom texts. The Qumran sapiential writings were probably written in the second and first centuries BCE, as were most of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Some could have been composed earlier. The wisdom compositions of Qumran contain no markers of specific historical events or personages. The main clue to dating 4QInstruction and Mysteries is the possibility that they were used as sources by the Teacher movement, in which case they were written prior to or relatively early in the history of this group. But this community's history is itself disputed, making it difficult to use as a benchmark. Granting the position that 4QInstruction and Mysteries were utilized as sources by the *yaḥad*, one can exclude a first century provenance with relative safety. If one follows the opinion that the

---

[42] Harrington, *Wisdom Texts*, 85, argues that "the Qumran wisdom writings (or, at least some of them) represent the intellectual and religious heritage of a larger movement within Second Temple Judaism," and suggests that the Dead Sea sect might have been a "break-away Essene faction" from this broader movement. This could have been the case but the position is speculative.

Dead Sea sect wrote 4Q298 and part of 4Q420-21, it is not clear when exactly this composition took place. Since 4QWays of Righteousness provides instruction regarding the Temple cult, it is likely that members of the Teacher movement reworked this composition at a relatively early point in its history, before any interaction with the Temple was prohibited (CD 6:12-21).

Some Qumran wisdom texts give indications about their social setting. 4QInstruction emphasizes the poverty of its addressee to an extent not attested elsewhere in ancient Jewish literature. Much of its intended audience suffered from material hardship. Some texts assume the *mēbîn* is a farmer and/or craftsman. He could easily be forced to borrow. 4QInstruction is a written document devoted to the education of students. It presupposes a scribal, pedagogical setting. Not all wisdom texts were produced by a patrician class of intellectuals serving in the royal court or other aristocratic circles, as Robert Gordis, in an earlier generation of scholarship, asserted.[43] The social background of 4QInstruction is analogous to that of the saying source Q of the New Testament. This is also a written work that gives the impression that its original addressees led simple, commonplace lives and that few were among the aristocracy.

The social background of 4QInstruction differs from that of Ben Sira. The instruction of the Jerusalem sage is widely regarded to be the product of a retainer class. He lauds the superiority of the scribe over menial professions (38:24-39:11). His students are likely from upper-class circles. In Ben Sira's view they have a moral obligation to lend money and go surety despite the risks. "Store up almsgiving in your cash box," he teaches, assuming they are in a financial position to do so (29:12). Ben Sira instructs his students to be ethical creditors. The author of 4QInstruction teaches his to be ethical borrowers (4Q417 2 i 22-24). 4QBeatitudes is the only Qumran wisdom text that can be reasonably placed in Ben Sira's social milieu.

---

[43] Gordis argued that the wisdom literature of Israel "had little in common with the poorer peasants clinging desperately to their holdings, or with the petty tradesmen and the artisans in the cities." This view is bolstered by the sapiential instructions written elsewhere in the ancient near East, particularly Egypt, which are often produced by an elite administrative class. See his *Poets, Prophets, and Sages: Essays in Biblical Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971) 162; idem, "The Social Background of Wisdom Literature," *HUCA* 18 (1943-44) 77-118; J.D. Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible: A Theological Introduction* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001) 453-57.

This link is significant since 4Q525 associates wisdom with the Torah so explicitly. 4QBeatitudes tells its addressees that they can become great teachers by the time of their deaths (4Q525 14 ii 14-16). They are students in training to join an educational profession. According to a lesson on proper speech, one should "Answer correctly among princes" (4Q525 14 ii 25). This suggests that the members of the intended audience will interact with nobles and aristocrats. The stress on the Torah implies they are developing skills in reading and writing. This would suit a variety of administrative positions. The view that 4QBeatitudes is the product of a retainer class is not as clear cut as in the case of Ben Sira. But 4Q525 provides more evidence for this position than any other wisdom text from Qumran.

The only other Qumran sapiential text that appears to have been written for a person of means is 4Q424. The addressee is not a scribe in training. There is no emphasis on caution before nobles or the duties of scribes. The intended audience is more interested in hiring people than serving others. 4Q424 probably stems from an aristocratic context, but this is not necessarily the case. Hiring people and giving them responsibility are tasks not restricted to the wealthy. This is nevertheless a reasonable position to take.

6. GENRE

Wisdom literature is a form critical category that contains several genre types. As is well known, the genre classifications of wisdom are somewhat loose and ambiguous. Crenshaw writes that the five biblical wisdom texts "retain a mysterious ingredient" that binds them together.[44] The Qumran wisdom literature includes sapiential genres that are well attested, including instructions explicitly intended for students, such as 4QInstruction and 4Q298, and didactic poetry in the

---

tradition of Prov 1-9, as in 4Q185 and 4Q525.[45]

Some Qumran sapiential texts attest genres that do not accord well with traditional wisdom. This is a major interpretative problem and a key reason there is no consensus on how many Qumran texts should be considered wisdom writings. (The other reason is the fragmentary nature of the material.) The exegetical poem of 4Q184 is rare among wisdom texts. Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon recount figures from biblical lore and in that sense they practice a type of exegesis (Sir 44-49; Wis 11-19). This is quite different from the free and creative adaptation of the promiscuous woman of Prov 7 by 4Q184. 4QWays of Righteousness obscures the distinction between wisdom and halakhah.[46] The book of Mysteries best illustrates the problem of genre in the Qumran wisdom texts. The text contains a limited amount of practical advice, as in 1Q27 1 ii, but several hallmark features of sapiential genres are absent, such as admonitions, vetitives or eudemonistic parenesis. Much of the document accords with the apocalyptic and prophetic traditions more than traditional wisdom. It is a sapiential text that does not resemble traditional wisdom in either form or content. It would be difficult to consider it a wisdom text were it not for 4QInstruction and the Treatise of the Two Spirits. As examined in Chapter 2, Mysteries has numerous affinities with these works in terms of theme and terminology. This makes it easier to understand this work as part of a sapiential trajectory. If one grants this view it must be admitted that, when considering the biblical and non-biblical Jewish wisdom texts together, the loose nature of wisdom as a genre appears even looser.

Menahem Kister understands Mysteries as a "fusion of concepts and genres," including elements drawn from apocalypticism, prophecy and traditional wisdom.[47] This development confirms, in his opinion, the assertion of Michael Stone that "wisdom terminology" in the Second Temple period can be become divorced

---

[44] Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 9. For an assessment of how contemporary genre theory can be applied to traditional conceptions of genre in biblical studies, see C.A. Newsom, "Spying out the Land: A Report from Genology," in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients: Essays Offered to Honor Michael V. Fox on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. R.L. Troxel et al.; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005) 437-50.

[45] Lange, "Die Bedeutung der Weisheitstexte aus Qumran," 140, argues that Qoheleth, Ben Sira, 4QInstruction, Mysteries and 4QBeatitudes are all examples of "eine Spätfrom der weisheitlichen Lehre (Instruction)."

[46] G.J. Brooke, "Biblical Interpretation in the Wisdom Texts from Qumran," in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran*, 201-20 (esp. 208-11).

[47] Kister, "Wisdom Literature," 47.

from its usage in older wisdom to suit new purposes.[48] Kister realizes that Stone's observation pertains beyond the issue of terminology to concepts and genres. This insight is valid with regard to the Qumran wisdom corpus in general.[49]   They developed new forms of expression by combining ideas and genres from older traditions in new ways. Their authors did not follow a model of an ideal wisdom text or apocalypse.[50]

The Qumran wisdom literature comprises a diverse corpus of texts—diverse in form, worldview and milieu. They confirm some developments in sapiential thought discernible by comparing Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon with Proverbs. Others they do not support.   The Qumran wisdom texts question, for example, the centrality of personified wisdom in the tradition and the view that all wisdom texts in this period thematize the Torah and incorporate the national history of Israel into their teachings. The Qumran sapiential texts attest some developments that were relatively unexpected. Before the publication of 4QInstruction scholars had no example of a wisdom text that encourages the study of esoteric revelation. This work and Mysteries illustrate the extent to which a wisdom text can be transformed by the apocalyptic tradition.   4QInstruction and 4QWays of Righteousness provide some of the earliest instances of halakhah in the sapiential tradition. 4QBeatitudes provides a rare example of a sequence of beatitudes in Hebrew. 4Q184 appropriates imagery from Proverbs more creatively and loosely than perhaps any other wisdom composition. The Qumran sapiential texts provide an impression of the variety of Jewish wisdom during the late Second Temple period.

---

[48] M.E. Stone, "Apocalyptic Literature," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (ed. M.E. Stone; CRINT 2.2; Assen/Philadelphia: Van Gorcum/Fortress Press, 1984) 383-437 (esp. 389); Kister, "Wisdom Literature," 45.

[49] This realization is not unique to Qumran wisdom. The Wisdom of Solomon, for example, transforms traditional sapiential concepts by combining them with other, newer traditions, such as Hellenistic philosophy and Jewish apocalypticism.

[50] J.J. Collins, "The Eschatologizing of Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Sapiential Perspectives*, 49-65 (esp. 63).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abegg, Martin G., Jr., "Who Ascended to Heaven? 4Q491, 4Q427, and the Teacher of Righteousness," in *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. C.A. Evans and P.W. Flint; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 61-73.

Abegg, Martin G., Jr., et al., ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1999).

Aitken, James K., "Apocalyptic, Revelation and Early Jewish Wisdom Literature," in *New Heaven and New Earth: Prophecy and the Millennium. Essays in honour of Anthony Gelston* (ed. P.J. Harland and C.T.R. Hayward; VTSup 77; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 181-93.

——, "Divine Will and Providence," in *Ben Sira's God: Proceedings of the International Ben Sira Conference, Durham, Ushaw College 2001* (ed. R. Egger-Wenzel; BZAW 321; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002) 282-301.

Allegro, John M., "Wiles of the Wicked Woman: A Sapiential Work from Qumran's Fourth Cave," *PEQ* 96 (1964) 53-55.

——, *Qumrân Cave 4.I (4Q158-4Q186)* (DJD 5; Oxford: Clarendon, 1968).

Aperghis, Makis, "Population – Production – Taxation – Coinage: A Model for the Selukid Economy," in *Hellenistic Economies* (ed. Z.H. Archibald et al.; London/New York: Routledge, 2001) 69-102.

Argall, Randal A., *1 Enoch and Sirach* (SBLEJL 8; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

——, "Competing Wisdoms: *1 Enoch* and *Sirach*," *Hen* 24 (2002) 169-78 (*The Origins of Enochic Judaism: Proceedings of the First Enoch Seminar. University of Michigan, Sesto Fiorentino, Italy, June 19-23, 2001* [ed. G. Boccaccini]).

Asensio, Victor Morla, "Poverty and Wealth: Ben Sira's View of Possessions," in *Der Einzelne und seine Gemeinschaft bei Ben Sira* (ed. R. Egger-Wenzel and I. Krammer; BZAW 270; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998) 151-78.

Attridge, Harold, et al., *Qumran Cave 4.VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1* (DJD 13; Oxford: Clarendon, 1994).

Aubin, Melissa, "'She is the beginning of all the ways of perversity': Femininity and Metaphor in 4Q184," *WJ* 2 (2001) 1-23.

Auffret, Pierre, "Structure littéraire et interprétation du Psaume 154 de la grotte 11 de Qumrân," *RevQ* 9 (1977-78) 513-45.

Bach, Alice, *Women, Seduction and Betrayal in Biblical Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Baillet, Maurice, et al., *Les 'Petites Grottes' de Qumrân* (DJD 3; Oxford: Clarendon, 1962).

Barthélemy, D., and J.T. Milik, *Qumran Cave 1* (DJD 1; Oxford: Clarendon, 1955).

Barthélemy, D., and O. Rickenbacher, *Konkordanz zum hebräischen Sirach* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973).

Baumgarten, Albert I., *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era: An Interpretation* (JSJSup 55; Leiden: Brill, 1997).

Baumgarten, Joseph M., "On the Nature of the Seductress in 4Q184," *RevQ* 15 (1991-92) 133-43.

——, *Qumran Cave 4.XIII: The Damascus Document (4Q266-273)* (DJD 18; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).