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Creative Fidelity, Faithful Creativity The Reception of Jewish Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity

Edited by Michael A. Daise and Dorota Hartman



UniorPress

Creative Fidelity



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Creative Reception: The Bible and its Interpretations at Qumran*

CORRADO MARTONE

Introduction

Biblical interpretation is among the main literary genres found in the Qumran library. According to Moshe Bernstein:

The picture of biblical interpretation at Qumran is but a piece of the larger mosaic of Jewish biblical interpretation in antiquity. Although it may not have comprised a major component of that body of exegesis during the Second Temple period, Qumran biblical interpretation now constitutes a principal element in our delineation of the overall system of early biblical interpretation. The significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls in this area is based not merely upon the number of manuscripts discovered, but also on the diversity in its corpus and the way in which the collection seems to mirror Second Temple Jewish literature as a whole. It can thus serve as a virtual representative of a much broader body of material.¹

In fact, any introduction to the Qumran literature and any anthology of Qumran texts has a chapter devoted to 'Exegetical Literature' or the like. However, the main problem relating the interpretation and reception of the Bible at Qumran concerns the very notion of 'Bible' in this context. A number of Qumran texts show a fluid textual status, which makes it difficult to set a clear distinction between text and interpretation, and therefore to have a clear picture of the reception of a given biblical text. Paradoxically, this situation recalls the state of the art of the most recent 'reception history' in the field of biblical studies. Timothy Beal points out that one of the main problems of reception history today is the lack of what he calls 'origination'.² At the time of the Qumran reception the

^{*} I want to thank Dorota Hartman and Michael A. Daise, the organizers of the Naples conference 'The Reception of Jewish Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity', for the most congenial atmosphere of a superbly successful conference.

¹ See Moshe J. Bernstein, 'Interpretation of Scriptures', in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1:376. The bibliography in this field is simply boundless; however, one cannot fail to mention the two useful collections of essays edited by Matthias Henze, ed., *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran*, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); and more recently, idem, ed., *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).

² Timothy Beal, 'Reception History and Beyond: Toward the Cultural History of Scriptures', *BibInt* 19 (2011): 357–72 (in particular, p. 367).

original text was still in progress; today, according to many scholars, we are no longer able to reconstruct it.³

1. Textual Instability in the 'Biblical' Qumran Manuscripts

As mentioned, one of the main features of the Qumran library is undoubtedly the textual instability of the various works to be found there.⁴

This instability has long been recognized among the so-called 'biblical' texts from Qumran, and Emanuel Tov remarked in a seminal study how difficult and risky it is to label a given Qumran biblical text as belonging to a given tradition. Moreover I will analyze how this kind of free approach to a given textual tradition can be regarded as a sort of reception of that tradition, a reception that directly acts upon the text, so as to become a creative reception.

As for the well-known case of $4QSam^a$, a Qumran manuscript of Samuel from Qumran dating to the mid-1st century BCE, Tov maintains that this text

shares important readings with the LXX, but when these are examined together with the differences between the two, and with the unique readings of both, the scroll cannot be characterized any longer as 'Septuagintal'. Furthermore, not even all common readings of $4QSam^a$ and the LXX bear on this comparison.⁵

Shemaryahu Talmon, as early as 1964, wrote that '[t]he more ancient manuscripts are being discovered and published, the more textual divergencies appear'.⁶ And in fact we can see that, not only the manuscripts originally labelled as Septuagintal share variant readings with other textual traditions, but in many cases also the manuscripts labelled as (proto)-Masoretic tend to deviate from the tradition ascribed to them.

³ For a discussion on this point see Corrado Martone, 'All the Bibles We Need: The Impact of the Qumran Evidence on Biblical Lower Criticism', in *The Scrolls and Biblical Traditions: Proceedings of the Seventh Meeting of the IOQS in Helsinki*, ed. George J. Brooke, Daniel K. Falk, Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar and Molly M. Zahn, STDJ 103 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 47–64.

⁴ On this point see Corrado Martone, 'Textual Fluidity as a Means of Sectarian Identity: Some Examples from the Qumran Literature', in *The Hebrew Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Nóra Dávid, Armin Lange, Kristin De Troyer and Shani Tzoref, FRLANT 239 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 117-26.

⁵ Emanuel Tov, 'A Modern Textual Outlook Based on the Qumran Scrolls', HUCA 53 (1982): 21. For a criticism of Tov's views, see Bruno Chiesa, 'Textual History and Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Old Testament', in *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Madrid 18-21 March,* 1991. Volume One, ed. Julio Trebolle Barrera and Luis Vegas-Montaner, STDJ 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 257-72.

⁶ Shemaryahu Talmon, 'Aspects of the Textual Transmission of the Bible in Light of Qumran Manuscripts', *Text* 4 (1964): 95-132.; see also Eugene Ulrich, 'Horizons of Old Testament Textual Research at the Thirtieth Anniversary of Qumran Cave 4', *CBQ* 46 (1984): 613-36.

It should be remembered in passing that even a clearly non-Septuagintal text such as the great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran might have some surprise in store for us in this regard. If Millar Burrows wrote in 1948 that 1QIsa^a

agrees with the Masoretic text to a remarkable degree ... in wording. Herein lies its chief importance, supporting the fidelity of the Masoretic tradition,⁷

Joseph Ziegler has carefully collected and, most importantly, evaluated a huge number of agreements between the LXX of Isaiah and 1QIsaª against the Masoretic text.⁸

Moreover, it is possible to see in 1QIsa^a possible hints of a reworking of the text from a sectarian point of view. Isaiah 52:14 reads as follows:

בַּאֲשֶׁר שְׁמְמִוּ עָלֶיּדְ רַבִּים בֵּן־מִשְׁחַת מֵאֶישׁ מַרְאֵהוּ ...

As many were astonished at him – his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance \ldots

1QIsa^a has an interesting variant reading, which might be intended as referring to a messianic interpretation of the passage:

... כאשר שממו עליך רבים כן משחתי מאיש מראהו

This might be translated as follows:

Just as many were astonished at you, so I anointed his appearance beyond anyone else...

I will not enter now the long-debated question of the interpretation of this Qumran reading of Isaiah 52:14, which has been carefully re-examined by Emiliano Urciuoli in a study appearing in the *Revue de Qumran* ten years ago.⁹ The point here is simply to highlight the free attitude toward the biblical text even in the 'biblical' manuscripts from Qumran.¹⁰

 ⁷ 'Variant Readings in the Isaiah Manuscript', BASOR 111 (1948): 16-17; see the comments of Paolo Sacchi, 'Il Rotolo A di Isaia. Problemi di storia del testo', Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere 'Colombaria' 30 (1965): 31-111.

⁸ Joseph Ziegler, 'Die *Vorlage* der Isaias-Septuaginta (LXX) und die erste Isaias-Rolle von Qumran (1QIsa)', *JBL* 78 (1959): 34-59; and see Francolino Gonçalves, 'Isaiah Scroll', in *ABD* 3: 471-80.

⁹ See Emiliano Rubens Urciuoli, 'A Suffering Messiah at Qumran? Some Observations on the Debate about 1QIsa A', *RevQ* 24 (2009): 273-81; see also Piero Capelli, 'Appunti sugli usi di Isaia 6 nell'ebraismo rabbinico della tarda antichità', *Annali di Scienze Religiose* 5 (2000): 111-30.

¹⁰ Alexander Rofé, 'The History of Israelite Religion and the Biblical Text: Corrections Due to the Unification of Worship', in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. Shalom M. Paul, Robert A. Kraft, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Weston W. Fields, VTSup 94/1 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 759–93; Julio Trebolle, 'Kings (MT/LXX) and Chronicles: The Double and Triple Textual Tradition', in *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A. Graeme Auld*, ed. Robert Rezetko, Timothy H. Lim and W. Brian Aucker, VTSup 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 483–

The same attitude might be presumed to be extant in 1QIsaiah^b.¹¹ It is true that this scroll does not offer any significant variation from the consonantal skeleton of the MT, but it is just as true that a careful analysis and measurement of the manuscript's lacunae allow us to see a text much shorter than the MT.¹²

2. Textual Instability and Reception of Jewish Scripture in the Exegetical Qumran Texts

A free approach to scripture is the main trait of the so-called parabiblical texts.

Parabiblical is, as far as I know, a definition created especially for some Qumran works¹³ that may be summarized as follows:

a literature that begins with the Bible, which retells the biblical text in its own way, intermingling it and expanding it with other, quite different traditions. Every one of these compositions has its starting point in specific texts of the Torah or of the Prophets but, unlike the exegetical literature, rather than interpreting the biblical text, they elaborate on it, augmenting it with other material.¹⁴

A case in point is the *Temple Scroll*. As is well-known, the *Temple Scroll* is usually considered an exegetical work, in which the laws of Deuteronomy are presented as given directly from God, without Moses' mediation. Well, it is clear that in this case we are on the border between text and interpretation. In fact, if we ask ourselves

501; Corrado Martone, 'Sectarian Variant Readings and Sectarian Texts in the Qumran Corpus and Beyond: Reflections on an Elusive Concept', in *Ricercare la sapienza di tutti gli antichi (Sir. 39,1): Miscellanea in onore di Gian Luigi Prato*, ed. Marcello Milani and Marco Zappella, Supplementi alla Rivista Biblica 56 (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2013), 393-400.

- ¹¹ On 1QIsa^b see Peter W. Flint and Eugene Ulrich, 'The Variant Textual Readings in the Hebrew University Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^b)', *JJS* 60 (2009): 60–79; Peter W. Flint, 'Variant Readings and Textual Affiliation in the Hebrew University Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (1QIsa^b)', in *Qumran Cave 1 Revisited: Texts from Cave 1 Sixty Years after Their Discovery. Proceedings of the Sixth Meeting of the IOQS in Ljubljana*, ed. Daniel K. Falk, Sarianna Metso, Donald W. Parry and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, STDJ 91 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 33–53; idem, 'Non-Masoretic Variant Readings in the Hebrew University Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^b) and the Text to be Translated', in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture: Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (July 6-8, 2008*), ed. Adolfo D. Roitman, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Shani Tzoref, STDJ 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 105-17.
- ¹² Giovanni Garbini, '1QIsa^b et le texte d'Esaïe', Hen 6 (1984): 17-21. See also Dominique Barthélemy, Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament. Tome 3: Ézéchiel, Daniel et les 12 Prophètes, OBO 50 (Fribourg [Suisse]/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 24-36.
- ¹³ For a history of the term, created in 1967 by L.H. Ginzberg, see Daniel K. Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Sriptures among the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 4-5.
- ¹⁴ Florentino García Martínez ed., The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English, trans. Wilfred G.E. Watson, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill/Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 218.

if the *Temple Scroll* may be considered an authoritative text, the short answer is yes. Which text might be more authoritative than one in which God himself speaks in the first person to his people?¹⁵ And in my opinion this well-known feature of the *Temple Scroll* makes it somehow difficult to label our text as an exceptical text: as far as I know, no exceptical text adopts the voice of God.¹⁶ The *Temple Scroll* does not explain or at least does not explain any norm or rule: it simply promulgates norms and rules.

So the *Temple Scroll* may not be considered a simple commentary, but on the other hand in Second Temple times the time for writing a Torah was over. How could its author convince its readers of the authenticity of this work in the Second Temple period? Was it possible to rewrite the text of Deuteronomy and to have people accept it in about the 2nd century BCE? As has been put forward by Ze'ev Falk, by that time the authenticity of a new Torah could easily be checked.¹⁷ Again we are faced with the problem of blurred boundaries between a given scripture and its reception.

This situation is to be found also in the so-called exegetical texts from Qumran, though to a minor degree. I will content myself with some examples taken from the

¹⁵ See James C. VanderKam, 'Authoritative Literature in the Dead Sea Scrolls', *DSD* 5 (1998): 382-402; see also Molly M. Zahn, 'New Voices, Ancient Words: The Temple Scroll's Reuse of the Bible', in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day, JSOTSup 422 (London: T & T Clark International, 2005), 435-38: 'The great lengths to which the author went to make the Sinaitic claim as believable as possible seem to make the conclusion unavoidable that *TS* was indeed intended as authoritative Torah' (p. 452).

¹⁶ See Johann Maier, trans. and ed., Die Tempelrolle vom Toten Meer und das 'Neue Jerusalem', 3rd ed., Uni-Taschenbücher 829: Theologie, Judaistik und Archäologie (München: Reinhardt, 1997), 45.

¹⁷ Ze'ev Wilhelm Falk, 'The Temple Scroll and the Codification of Jewish Law', *JLA* 2 (1979): 33-44. On this, see the learned essay by Zahn, 'New Voices, Ancient Words', 435-58. Zahn rightly remarks on the confusion of terminology regarding pseudepigraphy: 'The key questions are thus not whether the Scroll is Torah or pseudepigraph, but what precisely is meant by the pseudepigraphic claim to be Torah, what that claim implies about the Scroll's relationship to the canonical Pentateuch, and what difference that claim makes to the composition of the Scroll' (p. 441); see also Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). In Levinson's view, Deuteronomy itself is a sort of pseudepigraphon, in that it reworks earlier traditions: 'Imitation becomes the sincerest form of encroachment' (p. 150). For a discussion of this topic, see Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 5-7 (with extensive bibliography on the complex relationship between forgery and pseudepigraphy). According to Najman, 'the goal of rewriting was not to replace but rather to honor the past, while re-presenting it to their distinctive audience(s)' (p. 44); see also Maxine L. Grossman, 'Beyond the Hand of Moses: Discourse and Interpretive Authority', *Prooftexts* 26 (2006): 299; as well as Corrado Martone, 'Authority and Text in the *Temple Scroll', Hen* 36 (2014): 21–34.

so-called *pesharim*.¹⁸ In the well-known Habakkuk *pesher* it is possible to clearly distinguish between scripture and exegesis,¹⁹ even if we must remember that it shows us that a two-chapter version of the book of Habakkuk existed in the Second Temple period. The *pesher* literature may be defined as a form of exegesis that intends to reveal the right sense of the biblical text, reading it in the light of the corresponding vicissitudes of the Community itself.²⁰ Further, the *pesher* exegesis is based on the assumption that the time of the final redemption is going to be fulfilled in the near future, so that Florentino García Martínez has rightly defined such a methodology as a process of systematically bestowing an eschatological character onto scripture.²¹ Needless to say, the author (or authors) of the *pesharim* consider(s) the meaning that the biblical text has for the present situation to be much more significant than its original historical context. It may be added as an aside that in this regard it would be perhaps more appropriate to speak of a *pesher* 'hermeneutic' than of a *pesher* exegesis.

The *pesher* to Habakkuk clearly asserts the right of the Teacher of Righteousness to a personal approach to the scripture. I quote from 1QpHab vii 1-5:²²

יאשר vac 3 וידבר אל ^{אל} חבקוק לכתוב את הבאות על 2 על הדור האחרון ואת גמר הקץ לוא הודעו 3 אמר אמר אל איז חבקוק לכתוב את גמר הנבאים אמר למען ^{יחק} הקורא בו 4 פשרו על מורה הצדק אשר הודיעו אל את 5 כול רזי דברי עבדיו הנבאים

¹⁸ On the Qumran pesher literature, see the classic studies by Maurya P. Horgan, Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books, CBQMS 8 (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979); Michael Fishbane, 'Use, Authority and Interpretation of Mikra at Qumran', in Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading, and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, ed. Martin Jan Mulder and Harry Sysling, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988), 339-76. More recently Yael Fisch offers a finely honed analysis of the modes of biblical interpretation in different areas of ancient Judaism, pointing out how similar interpretations are enacted with different ends in mind; "Midrash-Pesher": A Shared Technique of Interpretation in Qumran, Paul, and the Tannaim', RevQ 32 (2020): 213–33.

¹⁹ See Alex P. Jassen, 'The Pesharim and the Rise of Commentary in Early Jewish Scriptural Interpretation', *DSD* 19 (2012): 363–98; Reinhard Gregor Kratz, 'Biblical Interpretation and Redaction History', *HBAI* 9 (2020): 209–46.

²⁰ Timothy H. Lim, Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

²¹ Florentino García Martínez, 'El Pesher, Interpretacion Profética de La Escritura', *Salm* 26 (1979): 125-39; idem, 'Escatologizacion de Los Escritos Proféticos En Qumran', *EstBib* 44 (1986): 101-16; see also, more recently, Ulrich Dahmen, "Keine Widerrede"! Die Pesharim aus Qumran zwischen Auslegung und absolutem offenbarungstheologischen Exklusivitätsanspruch', in *Das Alte Testament und seine Kommentare: Literarische und hermeneutische Orientierungen*, ed. Christoph Dohmen, SBB 81 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2021), 105–25.

²² Transcriptions of Qumran texts are taken from Emanuel Tov and Donald W. Parry, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 6 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2004); translations are taken from Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr. and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Harper, 2005).

1 Then God told Habakkuk to write down what is going to happen to 2 {to} the generation to come; but when that period would be complete He did not make known to him. 3 *vac* When it says, 'so that ^{with ease} someone can read it', 4 this refers to the Teacher of Righteousness to whom God made known 5. all the mysterious revelations of his servants the prophets.

The Teacher's interpretation of scripture goes beyond the self-understanding of the Prophets, concerning what they were saying or writing. In fact, this interpretation is the result of God's revelation, which allows the Teacher's *easy* reading of the words of scripture. Besides, it is interesting to note that such a statement is, in turn, based on a peculiar interpretation of Habakkuk 2:2 and of the verb <code>vriy</code>, which may be plainly translated as follows: 'Write the vision and make it plain upon the tablets, so that the one reading it may run'.²³

From this passage we may also understand that the content of the revelation given to the Teacher of Righteousness deals with the eschatological time, which the Community considered already present, as clearly stated in 1QpHab ii 5-10:²⁴

7 וכן vac פשר הדבר[על הבו]גדים לאחרית א 6 הימים המה עריצׂ[י הבר]ית אשר לוא יאמינוא 7 בשומעם את כול הבאֶ[ות ע]לֿ[]הדור האחרון מפי 8 הכוהן אשר נתן אל ב[לבו בינ]ה לפשור אֶתׂ כול 9 דברי עבדיו הגביאים[אשר]בידם ספר אל את 10 כול הבאות על עמו יש[ראל]

5 and finally, *vac* it refers [to the trai]tors in the Last 6 Days. They are the enem[ies of the covena]nt who will not believe 7 when they hear everything that is to co[me up]on the latter generation that will be spoken by 8 the Priest in whose [heart] God has put [the abil] ity to explain all 9 the words of his servants the prophets, through [whom] God has foretold 10 everything that is to come upon his people Is[rael].

On the other hand, the *pesharim*'s relationship with the scripture fits another trait of the ideology of the Community, namely, the strict determinism described and theorized in the well-known *Doctrine of the Two Spirits* (1QS iii 13-iv 26). If the history of the Community is considered to be foretold in the Prophets' words, this will surely strengthen a concept of human history as fixed forever by God.²⁵ Moreover, the Qumran group used this fluid approach to the text of scripture in order to elucidate the historical vicissitudes of the group itself and of its leader, as well as to provide its own ideological views with a (stronger) scriptural basis.

²³ See Paolo Sacchi, *The History of the Second Temple Period*, JSOTSup 285 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 313-15.

²⁴ See Corrado Martone, 'Torah, Legge e Sacre Scritture a Qumran: La Bibbia di una comunità sacerdotale in polemica col sacerdozio', *RStB* 16 (2004): 219–30; see also Ludwig Monti, 'L'esegesi variegata di testi profetici a Qumran come espressione di un vincolo di subordinazione', *RStB* 23 (2011): 75–89.

²⁵ See Sacchi, History of the Second Temple Period, 328-53.

I will not deal with the many historical allusions quoted in the *pesharim* on which there is no agreement among scholars because of the obscure references in the texts. It is worth noting, however, the only case in which we may identify a precise historical event, in a well-known passage from the Nahum *pesher* (4Q169 3-4 i 1-3):²⁶

1 [...]מדור לרשעי גוים vac אשר הלך ארי לביא שם גור ארי 2 [ואין מחריד פשרו דמי]טריס מלך יון אשר בקש לבוא ירושלים בעצת דורשי החלקות 3 [...]ביד מלכי יון מאנתיכוס עד עמוד מושלי תיים ואחר תרמס

1 []a dwelling-place for the wicked of the Gentiles. *vac* 'Whither the lion went to bring the lion's cub 2 [and there was none to frighten' (Nahum 2:12). Its interpretation: concerning Deme]trius, king of Greece, who sought to come (upon) Jerusalem at the counsel of the Seekers-after-Smooth-Things 3 []*byd* the kings of Greece from Antiochus until the rising of the rulers of the Kittim. And afterwards will be trampled.

In this passage, the text of Nahum is interpreted as referring to Demetrius III's siege of Jerusalem during Alexander Jannaeus' reign in 88 BCE. The *pesher* also uses Nahum's text to describe and explain Alexander Jannaeus' cruel retaliation against the Pharisees (4Q169 3-4 i 4-10):²⁷

4 [*v*]*ac* 'The lion tears at his cubs, and strangles his lionesses for prey' (Nahum 2:13). 5 [...] upon the Young Lion of Wrath who will smite his great ones, and the men of his counsel 6 ['And he fills with prey] his holes and his lairs with torn flesh' (Nahum 2:13). *vac* Its interpretation: concerning the Young Lion of Wrath 7. [...]*mwt* on the Seekers-after-Smooth-Things, that he will hang people alive 8 [...] in Israel aforetimes, for of one hanged alive o[n the tree is to be re] ad: 'Behold I am against [you'], 9 it is the declar[ation of the Lord of Hosts. 'I will burn in smoke you]r [multitude,] and your young lions the sword will consume. I will cut [off p]rey, [from the land] 10 and no [longer will be heard the voice of your messengers' (Nahum 2:14).

As mentioned above, the biblical text is used to explain and comprehend the historical vicissitudes of the group and of the world around it, and the key to these explanations lies in the revelation given to the Teacher by God directly.

²⁶ See James H. Charlesworth, The Pesharim and Qumran History: Chaos or Consensus? (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002). For a different, though idiosyncratic, interpretation of this passage, see Gregory L. Doudna, 4Q Pesher Nahum: A Critical Edition. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

²⁷ This episode has been related by Josephus, Ant. 13.379-380.

Since the relationship of the Teacher (and his followers) with God is based on a revelation, it comes as no surprise that the Teacher and his followers do not hesitate to use a free approach to God's word, when necessary.

This is the case in 1QpHab v 8-12, which quotes and interprets Habakkuk 1:13 as follows:

8 ... למה תביטו בוגדים ותחריש בבלע 9 רשע צדיק ממנו vac פשרו על בית אבשלום 10 ואנשי עבתם אשר נדמו בתוכחת מורה הצדק 11 ולוא עזרוהו על איש הכזב vac אשר מאס את 12 התורה בתוך כול עד

'How can you look on silently, you traitors, when 9 the wicked destroys one more righteous than he' (Habakkuk 1:13b)? *vac* This refers to the family of Absalom 10 and the members of their party, who kept quiet when the Teacher of Righteousness was rebuked, 11 and they did not help him against the Man of the Lie, *vac* who had rejected 12 the Law in the presence of their entire company.

The *pesher* changes the appeal to God in the biblical text ('why do you look on the traitors'/ לְמָה תַבִּיטֹ בְוֹגִדֹים) to an invective against unidentified traitors guilty of not helping the Teacher of Righteousness when he was attacked by his enemies ('how can you look on silently, you traitors'/ למה תביטו בוגדים'). In this case the author of the *pesher* has added commentary and changed Habakkuk's text on the basis of his own interpretive-needs.²⁸

3. Reception of Scripture and the History of the Qumran Sect

The same can be said for the works that have been labelled as sectarian. The use and mode of the reception of scripture that we find in some of them might shed some light on the group's historical evolution and in particular on the establishment of the Zadokite element within it. In fact, a number of Qumran texts ascribe the greatest importance to the Zadokite element, seen as the elite of the sect. This makes at least plausible the identification of the Community's elite with a group which no longer acknowledges the Jerusalem priesthood as the legitimate priesthood after the end of the Zadokite descent.²⁹

We find an interesting variant reading in the *Community Rule*: in the manuscript 1QS v 1-4 we find a passage where it is clear that the leadership of the group was Zadokite. Well, in the parallel passages in two other manuscripts from cave 4 of the same work there is no reference to a Zadokite leadership. It should be also noted that both of the 4Q manuscripts represent an earlier stage than the one represented

²⁸ On the concept of ideological variant readings, see Alessandro Catastini, '4QSam^a: I. Samuele il "Nazireo", Hen 9 (1987): 161–95; idem, '4QSam^a: II. Nahash il "Serpente", Hen 10 (1988): 17–49.

²⁹ See also Giovanni Garbini, *Mito e storia nella Bibbia* (Brescia: Paideia, 2003), esp. pp. 133-37.

by 1QS in the redaction of the *Community Rule*.³⁰ Therefore, this variant reading may well provide us with a trace of a change in the leadership of the group: at some point a group of Zadokites took over the Essene/Enochic tradition because of its eschatological elements. After the death of Onias III, the Zadokite descent is definitely removed from the historical scene and only these eschatological elements may offer a last hope to see the legitimate priesthood re-established in its office.³¹

This shift of the Zadokite priesthood from a historical to an eschatological level is pointed out in CD iii 21-iv 4, where, again, a sort of creative reception of scripture may be detected:³²

[Col. iv] 12 [Col. iv] הקים אל להם ביד יחזקאל הנביא לאמר הכהנים והלוים ובני [Col. iv] 1 צדוק אשר שמרו את משמרת מקדשי בתעות בני ישראל 2 מעלי הם יגישו לי חלב ודם vac הכהנים הם שבי ישראל 3 היוצאים מארץ יהודה והנלוים עמהם vac ובני צדוק הם בחירי 4 ישראל קריאי השם העמדים באחרית הימים

iii 21 God promised them by Ezekiel the prophet, saying, 'The priests and the Levites and the sons of iv 1 Zadok who have kept the courses of My sanctuary when the children

 ³⁰ On this topic, see Corrado Martone, La 'Regola della Comunità': edizione critica, Quaderni di Henoch 8 (Torino: Zamorani, 1995); idem, 'Nuovi Testimoni Qumranici della Regola della Comunità', Hen 16 (1994): 173-87; Sarianna Metso, The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule, STDJ 21 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); eadem, 'The Textual Traditions of the Qumran Community Rule', in Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Cambridge, 1995: Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten, ed. Moshe J. Bernstein, Florentino García Martínez and John Kampen, STDJ 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 141–47; eadem, 'The Redaction of the Community Rule', in The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years after Their Discovery. Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20-25, 1997, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman, Emanuel Tov and James C. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society – The Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, 2000), 377–84; see also Alison Schofield, From Qumran to the Yaḥad: A New Paradigm of Textual Development for The Community Rule, STDJ 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

³¹ This is not the place to delve into the complex and unresolved issue of the temple possibly founded by Onias IV at Leontopolis. Suffice it to say that the temple of Leontopolis was not (and could not be) considered a wholly legitimate temple, as can be seen both from the fact that it is not mentioned at all in the narrative of 2 Maccabees and from the discussion in rabbinic literature (see e.g. *m. Mena*ħ. 13:10). On the matter see Fausto Parente, 'Onias III's Death and the Founding of the Temple of Leontopolis', in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith*, ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers, StPB 41 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 69–98; Corrado Martone, 'The Qumran "Library" and Other Ancient Libraries: Elements for a Comparison', in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran and the Concept of a Library*, ed. Sidnie White Crawford and Cecilia Wassen, STDJ 116 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 55–77 (p. 75n86).

³² See Corrado Martone, 'Zadokite Interpolators at Work: A Note on CD III, 21-IV, 4', in *Textual Criticism and Dead Sea Scrolls Studies in Honour of Julio Trebolle Barrera*, ed. Andrés Piquer Otero and Pablo A. Torijano Morales, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 157 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 235–39.

of Israel strayed 2 from Me, they shall bring Me fat and blood' (Ezekiel 44:15). *vac* 'The priests': they are the repentant of Israel, 3 who go out of the land of Judah, and the Levites are those accompanying them; *vac* 'and the sons of Zadok': they are the chosen of 4 Israel, the ones called by name, who are to appear in the last days.

The scriptural passage quoted here is Ezekiel 44:15, which is a little bit different:

וְהַכֹּהַנִים הַלְוּיָם בְּנֵי צָדוֹק אֲשֶׁר שָׁמְרוּ אֶת-מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִקְדָּשִׁי בִּתְעוֹת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעָלִי--הַמָּה יִקְרְבוּ אֵלִי לְשֶׁרְתַנִי; וְעָמְדוּ לְפָנֵי לְהַקָרִיב לִי חֵלֶב וְדָם—נְאֵם אֲדֹנֶי יְהוָה

'But the levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me; and they shall attend me to offer me the fat and the blood', says the Lord God.

The quotation in the *Damascus Document* plays subtly and skilfully with the conjunctions and reads הכהנים והלוים ובני צדוק אשר שמרו את משמרת מקדש. It is clear, in my opinion, that our text aims at a distinction of the Zadokites from other priests. This way the Zadokite priests are provided with a central role: they are no less than the באחרית הימים באחרית הימים 3³³. So it comes as no surprise to see the Zadokite priesthood raised to an eschatological level and given a central role in a well-known passage of 1QS^a (i 1-3):

1 וזה הסרך לכול עדת ישראל באחרית הימים בהאספם[ליחד להתה]לך 2 על פי משפט בני צדוק הכוהנים ואנושי בריתם אשר סר[ו מלכת ב]דרך 3 העם המה אנושי עצתו אשר שמרו בריתו בתוך רשעה לכפ[ר בעד האר]ץ

1. This is the rule for all the congregation of Israel in the Last Days, when they are mobilized [to join the Yahad. They must l]ive 2. by the law of the Sons of Zadok, the priests, and the men of their covenant, they who ce[ased to walk in the w]ay 3. of the people. These same are the men of His party who kept His Covenant during evil times, and so aton[ed for the lan]d.

In my opinion, this same concept is even more patent in 4Q174 (4QFlorilegium), 1–2 i, 21:16–17:³⁴

16 העִׁם הזה והמה אשר כתוב עליהמֶה בספֹ[...]רְ יח[...]זֶׁקאל הנביא אשר לו[א יטמאו עוד בכול] 17 גַּלֹ[ו]ליהמה המה בני צדוק וֹאָ[נו]שי עִצֹ[תמ]ה רוחָ[קים מרע] אָחְריהמָה [בעצת] היחד

16 ... And they (are) the ones about whom it is written in the book of Ezekiel the prophet, who ['shall] ne[ver defile themselves with all] 17 their id[o]ls' (Ezekiel 37:23).

³³ See also Clemens Leonhard, The Jewish Pesach and the Origins of the Christian Easter: Open Questions in Current Research (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), 250; a different evaluation in Benedikt Eckhardt, Ethnos und Herrschaft: Politische Figurationen Judäischer Identität von Antiochos III (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 364.

³⁴ On this passage see more recently Devorah Dimant, '4QFlorilegium and the Idea of the Community as a Temple', in *History, Ideology and Bible Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Collected Studies,* FAT 90 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 269–88.

They (are) the Sons of Zadok and the m[e]n of [the]ir Council who ke[ep (far) from evil] after them [in the Council of] the Community.

In this passage, the sectarian text interprets Ezekiel's prophetic dream of a reunited Israel as referring only to the בני צדוק.

In sum, the 4QS reading is more ancient and represents a first stage in the development of the Community, the origin of which may be cautiously called Essene. At some point after Onias III departs, a Zadokite element enters and gains power in this Community. As noted above, however, these Qumran-Zadokites, far from changing radically the Enochic/Essene tradition, adopt it. This new stage is represented by the 1QS reading³⁵ —and we are able to sense this situation thanks to the Qumran sect's creative reception of their scriptures.

4. One Final Remark

As mentioned above, in general terms the reception of the Bible at Qumran shows that for the author (or authors) of the *pesharim* the meaning that the biblical text has for the present situation is much more significant than its original historical context. Even better, we may say that the reception of the biblical text at Qumran represents a situation of creative reception in which a Sacred text needs to be explained under altered cultural conditions and in which the explanation of a given text does not hesitate to somehow create a new text.

All in all, even a cursory analysis of the attitude of the Teacher of Righteousness and his followers toward the text of scripture confirms Abraham Geiger's insight that polemics between the Pharisees and Sadducees led to deliberate alterations in the biblical text, and therefore

[t]he extreme care taken in more recent times to preserve the biblical text inviolate should not induce us to draw conclusions *a posteriori* that the same care was taken also in an earlier era. In older times the text was often dealt with in quite an independent,

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³⁵ On this topic see also Robert A. Kugler, 'A Note on 1QS 9:14: The Sons of Righteousness or the Sons of Zadok'? *DSD* 3 (1996): 315-20; idem, 'Priesthood at Qumran', in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 2:93-116; idem, 'The Priesthood at Qumran: The Evidence of References to Levi and the Levites', in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Technological Innovations, New Texts, and Reformulated Issues*, ed. Donald W. Parry and Eugene C. Ulrich, STDJ 30 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 465–79; Émile Puech, 'Le grand prêtre Simon (III) fils d'Onias III, le Maître de Justice'?, in *Antikes Judentum und frühes Christentum: Festschrift für Hartmut Stegemann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Bernd Kollmann, Wolfgang Reinbold and Annette Steudel, BZNW 97 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1999), 137–58. For a thorough reassessment of the matter, see now Charlotte Hempel, 'Do the Scrolls Suggest Rivalry Between the Sons of Aaron and the Sons of Zadok and If So was it Mutual'?, *RevQ* 24 (2009): 135-93.

even arbitrary manner, and the care exercised subsequently was simply a healthy reaction against this long continued process of summary text revision.³⁶

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³⁶ English citation taken from Max Wiener, *Abraham Geiger and Liberal Judaism: The Challenge of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Ernst J. Schlochauer (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1981), 219. See Abraham Geiger, *Urschrift und Uebersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwickelung des Judenthums, von Dr. Abraham Geiger* (Breslau: Hainauer, 1857): 'Die spätere ausserordentliche Sorgfalt für die Reinhaltung des Bibeltextes darf uns nicht zu einem Rückschlusse auf die früheren Zeiten verleiten. In der älteren Zeit ist die Behandlung des Textes eine weit selbstständigere, ja oft willkürliche gewesen, und die spätere Sorgfalt ist gerade als eine heilsame Reaction gegen dieses lange fortgesetzte Verfahren der eigenmächtigen Textes-gestaltung aufgetreten' (p. 97).

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