

AN UNPUBLISHED FRAGMENT OF ESSENE HALAKHAH (4Q ORDINANCES)

By J. M. ALLEGRO

The following text is composed of twelve scroll fragments pieced together from batches of Fourth Cave material recovered by purchase from the Bedouin since 1952. Other fragments of this document have also been isolated and the whole of the extant material will be published in due course in the appropriate volume of *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*. In the meantime the information to be gleaned from this piece of Essene life and attitude to the Temple tribute makes its earlier publication worth while. It will also serve to emphasize the fact that the Qumran library contained material of relevance to Essenism at large as well as to the peculiar circumstances of the monastic community at Qumran.

The parchment of the scroll is still very soft and pliable, of a fawn colour with patches of darker brown. The bottom and internal margins are of 2.4 cm. and 2 cm. respectively. The ruling is regular, at intervals of 0.85 cm. and well defined. The writing is in a beautifully shaped and proportioned book hand, bearing a marked resemblance, if not identical, with that of 4Q Florilegium (*Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXVII (1958), 350-4).

TEXT*

Col. i

1. ...]t
2. ...];
- 3.
4. ...]l

Col. ii

1. ...]hw 'l •[...]nhl ly[
2. ...]l 't m[šw?]wtyw wlkpr lkwl pš'yh[m
3. ...w]šh 'yš mmnh gwrn wgt hb' lgwr[n

* A small circle above the letter implies a possible but quite uncertain reading; a dot that the reading is probable; a circle on the line implies the existence of a quite unreadable letter; a row of dots on the line indicates merely that an indeterminate number of letters are missing.

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4. ʾšr by[šrʔ]l ʾšr ʾyn lw yʾwklnh wkns lw wlb[ytwʔ]
5. hšdh yʾkl bḥpyhw wʾl bytw lwʾ ybyʾ lhnyḥw
6. ʾl [...]ksp hʾrkym ʾšr ntaw ʾyš kpr npšw mḥšyt[hšql]
7. rḡ p[ʾm] ʾḥt ytnnw kwl ymyw ʾšrym grh hšql b[šql hqwdš]
8. lšš mʾ[w]t hʾlp mʾt kkr lšlyšyt mḥšyt hkkṛ
9. wlmšym mḥšyt hm[n]h[ʾšrym w]hmšh šql hkw[...]
10. hmnh š[.]m[.]l[...šlʔ]wš lʾšrt hmnym[...]
11. ...hmʔ]šh kšp mʾšr h[mnh ʔ...]
12. ...šql hqwdš mḥš[yt...]
13. ...hʾyph whbt tkwn ʾḥdʔ...]
14. ...š]lwšt hʾšrwnym .[...]
- 15.
16. ...ʾʔ]l hʾm wʾl b[ḡ]dy[hmʔ...]
17. ...y]šrʾl šrp mwš[h...]

TRANSLATION

Col. ii

[.] ¹apportion to [.] his *com[mand]ments* and to make atonement for all th[eir] sins[.] ³and if] one should make of it a threshing floor or wine press: he who comes to the threshing fl[oor,] ⁴who is in I[*sr*]ael, who has nothing, shall eat and gather for himself and for [his] *house- [bold. . .]* ⁵the field shall eat for himself but shall not bring (it) to his house to deposit it. ⁶Concerning [...] money of Valuations that a man gives as a ransom for his soul: half a [shekel.] ⁷Only once shall he give it during his lifetime—the shekel is twenty gerahs according to [the shekel of the Sanctuary.] ⁸For The Six Hundred Thousand: one hundred talents; for The Third: half a talent; ⁹and for The Fifty: half a mi[n]a—[*twenty*]-five shekels; the *total* [...] ¹⁰the mina[...*th*]ree for ten minas [¹¹. *fl*]ve (shekels) of silver: a tenth of a [mina ¹². shek]el of the Sanctuary, hal[f ¹³.] The ephah and the bath are of the s[ame] measure [¹⁴. th]ree tenths [¹⁵. *concern*]ing the people and concerning [*their* ¹⁶. *gar*]ments [¹⁷. I]srael, Moses burnt[...]

NOTES

Col. ii

1. 3 *gwrn wgt*: for *gwrn wyqb* of BH (Deut. xv. 14; xvi. 13); so also in CD xii. 9–10; cf. Rabin, *The Zadokite Documents* (Oxford, 1954), p. 61, who thinks the choice of *gt* in the scrolls may have something to do with the unusual *tyrnš* in 1QS vi. 4 (cf. Milik, *Dix Ans de Découvertes dans le Désert de Juda* (Paris, 1957), pp. 68 f.).



VOL. VI. PART I

Photo: Palestine Archaeological Museum

(Facing p. 72)

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l. 4 *šr bysr'l*: perhaps meaning "who is within the Essene community", i.e. the "true or Elect of Israel", cf. CD iv. 3-4.

šr 'yn lw: cf. Exod. xxii. 2. The Essenes were allowed to feed the destitute without reference to a higher authority (Josephus, *War*, II, § 134).

ll. 3-5 Deut. xxiii. 25-6 allows anyone to eat his fill of another's vineyard or standing grain, but not to carry the fruit away or reap the corn. This text follows the second provision but allows free access to the threshed corn also, which, being no longer "standing grain" (*qāmab*), may be taken away to feed the poor man's family. This extension of the biblical law is presumably to make possible the kind of communal ownership of agricultural produce noted of the Essenes by Josephus (*War*, II, §§ 124, 134).

l. 6 *ntnw 'yš*: cf. Exod. xxx. 12.

l. 7 *rq p'm'ht ytnnw kul ymyw*: contrary to normative Judaism of the post-exilic period where the half-shekel atonement money was paid annually (in Nehemiah's time a third of a shekel: x. 33). Certainly nothing in the Torah required this tribute annually, its institution in Exod. xxx. 11-16 (cf. xxxviii. 26) referring the tax to the time of Moses' census of Israel (Num. i). The Essenes apparently linked this once-for-all atonement money with the Vow of Valuation of Lev. xxvii. 1-8. This apparently quite unique understanding of the half-shekel tax as being required only once in a lifetime seems to have been shared by Jesus when he rebuked Peter for indicating to the tax collectors of Capernaum that his master paid the annual tribute (Matt. xvii. 24-7), and may account for some of his hostility towards the perfectly legitimate money-changing activities in the Temple courts (Matt. xxi. 12-13). *šrym grb hšql*: Exod. xxx. 13; Num. xviii. 16.

l. 8 *šš m'wt b'lp*: Exod. xii. 37; Num. xi. 21. The totals which follow presumably relate to the total levy which may be expected from the ideal Israel in the Last Days when the "second Moses" was perhaps expected to take a new census.

ššyšyt: presumably an army division like the "Six Hundred Thousand", and the "Fifty". The "half-talent", or 30-mina (1500 shekels) levy implies a force of 3000 men. The origin of this military division stems perhaps from David's arrangement of the people into three companies (II Sam. xviii. 2; cf. also xxiii. 18, 19 where read *šl(y)šyt* for *šlšb* (Keth. once *šlšy*)).

l. 9 *wlhmšym*: cf. 1QS^a ii. 1.

[*šrym w\bmšb šql*: i.e. the mina consisted of 50 shekels as in Ezek. xlv. 12 (LXX); cf. l. 11 below.

l. 13 *b'yph*: the *yodb* first omitted and then inserted above the line. For the equation of ephah and bath, cf. Ezek. xlv. 11 and 4QD I. ii. 2.

tkwn: M.T. Ezek. *tōkēn* (defect.).

l. 14 *šlwšt b'srunym*: cf. Lev. xiv. 10; Num. xv. 9; xxviii. 12, 20, 28; xxix. 3, 9, 14.

l. 16 *bgdyhm*: so possibly to be reconstructed, since fragments 2-4 of this work, lines 6-7, refer to the biblical ordinance of Deut. xxii. 5 against a man's wearing feminine apparel. The exact sequence of these columns of the text is, however, not entirely clear.

l. 17 Possibly a reference to Exod. xxxii. 20.