MORE UNPUBLISHED PIECES OF A QUMRAN COMMENTARY ON NAHUM (4Q pNah)

By J. M. Allegro

In an article dealing with new documentary evidence for the history of the Qumran sect, I published a fragment from Qumran's Cave 4 of one column of a commentary on Nahum. The pieces now published for the first time represent successive columns of this work, and amount to almost the whole of what remains today of the original scroll. A complete publication of the document will appear eventually in the relevant volume of Discoveries in the Judean Desert, but the relatively complete preservation of this important text makes its preliminary publication worthwhile.

I am delighted to have this opportunity for adding my congratulations to Professor Driver in this commemorative volume.

TEXT

Col. 11: Quotations from Nahum iii. 1–5 and pesher.

1 J.B.L. xxv (1956), 89–95.

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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QUMRAN COMMENTARY ON NAHUM (Q pNah)

Col. iii: Quotations from Nahum iii. 6–9 and pēter.

[Text in Hebrew]

Col. iv: Quotations from Nahum iii. 10–12 and pēter.

[Text in Hebrew]
QUMRAN COMMENTARY ON NAHUM (4Q pNah)

TRANSLATION

Col. ii

'and "his messengers'": they are his envoys whose voice will no longer be heard among the nations. "Woe city of blood, all full of [lies and rap]line." 2Its interpretation: it is the city of Ephraim, the Seekers-after-Smooth-Things at the end of days, who in "lies" and falsehood[s] conduct themselves. 3"Prey departeth not and the sound of the whip and the sound of the rattling of wheels, and galloping horses and bounding chariots, the horseman charging, a blade and flashing spear and a multitude of slain and a great heap of carcasses: and there is no end to the corpses and they shall stumble over their bodies." Its interpretation concerns the rule of the Seekers-after-Smooth-Things 5when there shall not depart from the midst of their congregation the Gentile sword, captivity and plunder, and heated strife among themselves, and exile from fear of the enemy, and a multitude of guilty corpses shall fall in their days and there shall be no end to the total of their slain, and furthermore, in their fleshly natures they shall stumble over their own guilty counsel. 7"Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that seloth nations through her whoredom and families through her witchcrafts." 8[Its] interpretation [concerns those who lead Ephraim astray, who, by their false teaching and their lying tongue and lip of deceit, will lead many astray, 9kings, princes, priests and people together with the resident alien. Cities and families will perish through their counsel, 10[ob]les and rul[ers] will fall because of what they say. "Behold I am against thee, says Yahweh of hosts, and thou shalt lift up thy skirts over thy face and show nations thy nakedness and kingdoms thy shame." Its interpretation [. . . 12]cities of the east, for the "skirts"

Col. iii

1the nations between them [. . . the det]ested things of their abominations. "And I will cast upon thee detested things, and I will treat thee with contempt and make thee repulsive and all who look on thee will flee from thee." 3Its interpretation concerns the Seekers-after-Smooth-Things whose evil deeds will be revealed at the end of time to all Israel, 4and many will discern their iniquity and hate them and consider them repulsive because of their guilty insolence and the ruin of Judah's glory. 5The
simple ones of Ephraim will flee from the midst of their assembly and forsake those who mislead them and join themselves to Israel. And they shall say, "Nineveh is laid waste; who will mourn for her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?" Its interpretation concerns the Seekers-after-Smooth-Things whose counsel will perish and their gathering be broken up and they will not again mislead [the] assembly and the simple [ones] 8will no more sustain their counsel. "Art thou better than Ammon that dwelt by] the rivers?" 9Its interpretation: "Ammon" is Menasseh, and "the rivers" are the nobles of Menasseh, the honoured ones of the [...] 10"Waters are around her, whose rampart is the sea and waters her walls." 11Its interpretation: they are her warriors, mighty men of [war]. "Ethiopia is her strength [and Egypt too, without limit." 12... "Put and the Libyans are thy helpers...."

Col. iv

1Its interpretation: they are the wicked ones of its [army], the House of Peleg, who have joined themselves to Menasseh. "Yet she was carried away, [she went into captivity: even] 2her young children will be dashed in pieces at the tops of all the streets; and they will cast lots for her honourable men and all [her nobles [were bound] 3in chains." Its interpretation concerns Menasseh at the end of the age when his rule over Israel will fall [...] 4his wives, his infants and his children will go into captivity, his warriors and his nobles by the sword [...] "Thou also shalt be drunken] 5and shalt be dazed." Its interpretation concerns the wicked ones of Ephraim [...] 6whose cup shall come after Menasseh [...] "Thou also shalt seek] 7a stronghold in the city from the enemy." Its interpretation concerns [...] 8their enemies in the city [...] "All their fortresses shall be] 9(like) fig trees with [their first-ripe figs...."

NOTES

Col. ii

L. 1, Nahum iii. 1: וינני as var. Heb. MS. M.T. omits the article.
L. 5: שֵׁם. M.T. has שִׁם.
L. 7: אֵלָה. M.T. omits the conjunction.
L. 8: אֵלָה. M.T. has אֵלָה.
L. 9: עַרְבּ. M.T. has עַרְבּ.
QUMRAN COMMENTARY ON NAHUM (4Q pNah)

M.T. has Kesheh.

as var. Heb. MS. and M.T. Qere. M.T. Keth. has Kesheh.

v. 3: an error for 'nav (M.T.). Cf. similarly in 3QInv; see Allegro, The Treasure of the Copper Scroll (1960), p. 134, n. 3.

L. 6: מַחְצַה. Cf. 1QM xiv. 3 and אֶתָּלֹא (vi. 17).


M.T. has הָעַרַכָה.

M.T. has זְהַרְוָה.

L. 10, v. 5: מַחְצַה. M.T. has זְהַרְוָה.

M.T. has מַשָּׁרֵה.

This is followed by an erasure.

Col. iii

L. 1: Nahum iii. 6: שַׁסְקָנַשׁ. M.T. defect.

L. 2: כַּעַס וַאֲרָבָא, apparently a pa'al part. fem. of כַּעַס (a weakened form of כְַעַס). Cf. l. 4 for the pi'el of the verb. M.T. has 'ayin.

v. 7: מַרְגָּא. M.T. defect.

M.T. has מַרְגָּא. M.T. defect.

M.T. hassingular verb.

L. 5: מַרְגָּא. M.T. has sing. verb.


M.T. has מַרְגָּא.

L. 8, v. 8: שַׁסְקָנַשׁ. M.T. has שַׁסְקָנַשׁ.

M.T. has מַגָּנַשׁ (LXX καταβαίνων). M.T. has מַגָּנַשׁ.

L. 10: מַגָּנַשׁ. M.T. has מַגָּנַשׁ.

M.T. has מַגָּנַשׁ.

M.T. has מַגָּנַשׁ.

L. 11, v. 9: מַגָּנַשׁ, preceded by a semi-erased 'ayin.

M.T. has מַגָּנַשׁ.

M.T. has מַגָּנַשׁ.

Col. iv

L. 1: בַּתָּלָה. Cf. C.D. xx. 22, being those who “went out from the holy city” but later caused dissension among the people and apostatized, joining the party of the ruling house (“Menasseh”) apparently as warriors, cf. אֲשַׁשׁ הַיָּלַד, who “returned (to be) with the Man of Lies” (C.D. xx. 14–15; cf. i. 13–21).

Nahum iii. 10: לָלָלָה. M.T. has לָלָלָה.

L. 2: שֵׁלָלָה. M.T. has שֵׁלָלָה.

M.T. defect.

M.T. has שֵׁלָלָה.

L. 3: מַסְרֵה. The שֵׁלָלָה was at first omitted and then written above the line.

L. 5, v. 11: מַסְרֵה. M.T. omits the conjunction.

L. 7: בַּתָּלָה. M.T. has לָלָלָה, additional to M.T. and possibly inserted the better to conform with the peser (l. 8).