

MORE ISAIAH COMMENTARIES FROM QUMRAN'S FOURTH CAVE

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JUST as Isaiah seems to have been the favorite prophet of the Qumran Essenes (to judge from the number of fragmentary scrolls found among the biblical works),¹ so the *p'sārim* of Isaiah outnumber the others. Here are some further² examples of these commentaries from the Fourth Cave fragments.

4QpIsa^b

A fairly coarse skin, wrinkled, and torn or cut in antiquity.³ The top margin is of 1.9 cm., the ruling is irregular and carelessly made (note the double line at the top), of intervals varying between .6 cm. and .95 cm. The margins are of 1.75 cm. and 2 cm. respectively. The column width is about 12 cm.

The script is a bookhand with letters some .25 cm. high, and whose irregularity in cols. ii and iii owes something to a blunt writing point.

Col. i

[I took away its hedge and it was(?) for burning; I broke down its fence and it was for trampling.	1	<u>יהסר משוכתו ויהי(ת) לבשר פרץ</u> <u>גדרו ויהי למרמס אשר</u>
...] The interpretation of the phrase is that he has forsaken them	2	ו. פשר הדבר אשר עזבם
..] and as it says, <i>But there shall come up briars</i>	3	וְרֹאשׁוֹ אָמַר יַעֲלֶה שִׁמְרִי

¹ Cf. P. W. Skehan, *Revue Biblique*, LXIII (1956), 59.

² Cf. also my publication of 4QpIsa^a in *JBL*, LXXV (1956), 177-82.

³ There are a number of similar indications in the Fourth Cave fragments of such

[and thorns . . .] and as	4	וְאֵשׁ וְאֵשׁ	וְשִׁית
[it says(?) . . .] the way of	5	וְנָתַתְּ דֶרֶךְ	אֲמַרְתָּ
. . .] their eyes	6	וְעֵינֵיהֶם	

Col. ii

The interpretation of the phrase concerns the end of days, at the desolation (?) of the earth before the sword and famine, and it shall be	1	פְּשָׁרֵי הַדָּבָר יִלְאָחֲרֵיהֶם הַיָּמִים לְחֻבְתָּם הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵי הַחֶרֶב וְהָרֶעֱב וְהָיָה
in the time of the visitation of the earth. <i>Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night till wine</i>	2	בָּעֵת פְּקֻדַת הָאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה מְשָׁכִימֵי בִבְקָר שֶׁכָּר יִרְדְּמוּ מֵאַחֲרֵי בִנְשָׁף יַיִן
<i>inflame them! And the harp and the lute, the tabret and the pipe, are the wine that they drink; but the deed of Yahweh</i>	3	יִדְלָקֵמָּן וְהָיָה כְּנֹר וּנְבֵל וְתוֹפֵי וְחָלִיל יַיִן מִשְׁתִּיהֶם וְאֵת פֶּעַל יְהוָה
<i>they regard not, neither have they considered the works of his hand. Therefore my people have gone into captivity, for lack of knowledge: and their honorable men are famished,</i>	4	לֹא הִבִּיטוּ וְהִמְעִיטוּ יְדֵיהֶם לֹא רָאוּ לִכֵּן גָּלָה עַמִּי מִבְּלֵי דַעַת וּכְבֹדֵיהֶם מִתֵּי רֶעֱב
<i>and their multitude are parched with thirst. Therefore Sheol hath enlarged her gullet, and opened her mouth without measure:</i>	5	וְהִמְנוּ צָחִים צָמָא לִכֵּן הִרְחִיבָה שְׂאוֹל בְּשֵׁשׁ וּמְעֹרָה פִּיהָ לְבֵלֵי חֻקֵּיהֶם

⁷ Commentary on 5 10.

⁸⁻⁹ For the position of this phrase before the specific reference of the *pesher*, cf. Pap 4Qp1sa^d fgt. 10, l. 10; see below, n. 48.

⁹ Probably for חֲרוּבָה, a form of חָרֵב 'dryness, drought.' Note also, however, Arabic خُوبَة, 'state of barrenness' (Lane, I, ii, 819c). For the idea of the failing of the land in the Last Days, cf. 4QpPs 37, fgt. 1, col. ii, l. 1; col. iii, l. 4.

¹⁰ Cf. 5 11 f.

and their glory and their multitude and their tumult (and) he that rejoices in her shall descend (into it). These are the Men of Scoffing

who are in Jerusalem. Those are they who have rejected the law of Yahweh, and the word of the Holy One of

Israel they have despised. Therefore is the anger of Yahweh kindled against his people and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them, and the hills

did tremble, and their carcasses were as refuse in the midst of the streets. For all this [his anger] is not turned away

[and his hand is stretched out still.] That is the congregation of the Men of Scoffing who are in Jerusalem . . .

6 וירד הדרה והמנהיג ושאוהי²⁵ עליז²⁶
כאני אלה הם אנשי הלצון²⁷

7 ²⁸אשר בירושלים²⁹ הם אשר ²⁷מאסו
את תורת יהוה³⁰ ואת אמרת קדוש

8 ישראל נאצו על כן חרה אף יהוה
בעמו ויט ידו עליהם ויכהו וירגזו

9 ההרים ותהי נבלתם כמטהי³¹ בקרב
החוצות³² בכל זאת לא שב

10 אפו ועוד ידו נסויה³³ הוא עדת אנשי
הלצון אשר בירושלים

Col. iii

. . . and none to deli[ver And he shall roar against him in that day]

1 וינאין מצויל
ההוא³⁴ ³⁵עניוהם עליו ביום

²⁵ MT והסנה.

²⁶ MT ושאוהי.

²⁷ MT ועלו. ²⁸ MT בה.

²⁹⁻³⁰ Cf. 1. 10, Isa 28 14, CD xx.11, and i.14 (איש הל').

³¹⁻³² Cf. 1. 10, 1QpHab xii.7 (of הכוהן הרשע), ix.4 (כורתי י'), 4QpNah, fgt. 2, col. i, 11. 2, 11 (JBL, LXXV [1956], 90) and Pap 4QpIsa^a, l. 11, below.

³³ Cf. 5 34c ff.

³⁴ MT+צבאות.

³⁵ MT כסוהה.

³⁶ MT חוצות.

like the roar[ing of the sea. And if one look unto the land, behold darkness (and) distress, and the light is darkened]

in the cl[ouds thereof . . .]

2 כְּהַמְנוֹת יָם וּנְבִט לְאֶרֶץ וְהָיָה חֹשֶׁךְ צַר
וְאֹרֶךְ חֹשֶׁךְ

כְּעֵרָן יִפְיֶה

הוֹאֵן

הָאֱלֹהִים

הַבְּאִינָם

אָמַר

יִבְרָאוּ רָגְאוּ וְאֵל תִּדְעוּנִי (?)

תְּבִינֹו

Pap 4QpIsa*

Written on papyrus, with a breadth of column of about 8.5 cm., side margins about 1 cm., and lines spaced at intervals of between .5 and .6 cm. The letters form a neat, regular bookhand, about .2 cm. high. The pieces described here form the largest connected fragment of this work.

]. . .	1	אֵל הַיָּמִים [אֵל כּוֹל] אֵל הַיָּמִים
. . .	2	יִשְׂרָאֵל
Thus said [Yah]weh, the Holy One of [Is]rael, In returning and rest ye shall be saved;	3	יְבִיחֵ אֲמַרְיִי (יְהוָה) קֹדֶשׁ [יִשְׂרָאֵל] בְּשׂוֹבֶה וְבַנְחַת תּוֹשַׁעַן
in quiet]ness and trust shall be your strength. And you would not but you [said,]	4	בְּהַשְׁקָט וּבַשְׁתִּי תִהְיֶה גְבוּרַתְכֶמָּה יִי וְלֹא אֲבִיתֶמָּה יִי וְתִנְאֶמְרוּ
No, but we shall flee upon horses. Therefore shall ye flee away. And, We shall ride upon swift steeds. Therefore	5	לֹא כִיָּא עַל סוּס גְּנוּס עַל כֵּן תִּנְסַחַן וְעַל קַל נֹרֶכֶב עַל כֵּן
your pursuers shall be swift. A thousand shall flee [at] the threat of one, at the threat of	6	יִקְלֹוּ רֹדְפֵיכֶמָּה יִי אֵלֶיךָ אֶחָד (מֵאֶלֶף) גְּעַרַת אֶחָד מִפְּנֵי גְעַרַת

11-13 Cf. 6 f., with IQIsa* against MT וראו ראו. This seems preferable to 6 f. since the letter following cannot be y of עיני.

- five ye shall flee, [until] you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain* 7 חמשה תנוסו⁴¹ [עד] אם נותרתמה⁴²
כתרן על ראשי⁴³ הרי⁴⁴
- and like a signal on a hill. Therefore the Lord waits to be grac[ious to] you; and therefore he exalts himself* 8 וכגס⁴⁵ על גבעה⁴⁶ ולכן יחכה אדוני⁴⁷
לחג[נכ]מה⁴⁸ ולכן ירום
- to show mercy to you. For Yahweh is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.* 9 לרחמכמה⁴⁹ כיא אלהי משפט יהוה
אשרי כול חוכי לו
- The interpretation of the phrase, at the end of days, concerning the congregation of the Seekers-after-Smooth-Things 10 פטר הדבר ללאחרית הימים⁵⁰ על
עדת דנורשי⁵¹ החלקות⁵²
- who are in Jerusalem [] 11 אשר בירושלים⁵³. ה. ת. 1.
in the Law, and they will not 12 בתורה ולוא יהיו (ח)
[be (?) . . .]
- heart, for at the head of [. . .] 13 לב כיא לרושי⁵⁴
- As robb[ers] wait for a man, [so the priests are banded together (?)]* 13a כיחכה איש גדו[נים] חבר כהנים⁵⁵ (ח)
- the Law they have rejected [. . .] 14 התורה מאסת
- Yea, O people of Zion [who dwell in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of]* 15 כיא⁵⁶ עם בציון נישב בירושלים
בכו לוא תכבה חנון יחנכה לקול
- your cry; when he he[ars] it he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction,]* 16 זעקתה⁵⁷ כשמנעחו עוך ונתן לכמה
אדוני לחם צר ומים לחץ

⁴¹ MT תנוסו; 1QIsa^a תנוסו.

⁴² MT & 1QIsa^a נותרתם.

⁴³ MT ראש; 1QIsa^a adds *waw* above the line.

⁴⁴ MT ההר; 1QIsa^a = 4Q (cf. LXX ἡ ὄρος).

⁴⁵ Cf. LXX ἐπι βουεῖς; MT & 1QIsa^a תבעה.

⁴⁶ MT & 1QIsa^a יהוה.

⁴⁷ So MT (לחנכתם), but possibly restore לחונ[נכ]מה, cf. 1QIsa^a (לחנכתם).

⁴⁸ MT & 1QIsa^a לחנכתם.

<p>yet he will not hide [your teacher(s) any more, but your eyes shall see your teacher(s).]</p> <p>And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk in it,]</p> <p>when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left . . .]</p> <p>concerning (against ?) the iniquity of . . .]</p>	<p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p>	<p>ולוא יכניח⁵⁵ עונד מורכה וחיו עיניה <u>ראות את מורכה</u></p> <p>ואוזניה⁵⁶ תשמעה דבר מאחריה <u>לאמר זה הדרך לכו בה</u></p> <p>כיא תימנינ⁵⁷ וכיא תשמאל⁵⁸</p> <p>על עון ע⁵⁹]</p>
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4QpIsa^a fgt. 1

This, the largest fragment of this work so far found, also bears traces of being cut or torn in antiquity. The skin is fairly thick, but fine-grained. The top and right-hand side margins measure 1.8 cm. and 1.2 cm. respectively. The ruling is heavy, at intervals of .8 cm., and the letters stand some 2.5 to 3 mm. high.

<p>. . .] all Israel like antimony they have sought thee (?) and I shall lay your foundations in lapis [lazuli. Its interpretation</p> <p>is that they have founded the Council of the Community, [the] priests and the peopl[e . . .]</p> <p>the congregation of his elect, like a stone of lapis lazuli among the stones [. . . And I will make as agate]</p>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>	<p>ן⁶⁰ כול ישראל כסוף ככור⁶¹ <u>יסדתינ⁶² בספיני⁶³ פשו</u></p> <p>אשר יסדו⁶⁴ את עצת היח⁶⁵] ה⁶⁶כהנים והע⁶⁷</p> <p>עדת בחירו⁶⁸ כאבן הספיר⁶⁹ בתוך האבנים] <u>ושמתי כדכד⁷⁰</u></p>
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⁵⁵ MT יכנף; 1QIsa^a יכסו (and מוראך (and מוריך, טוריך, טוריך).

⁵⁶ MT ואוזיך; 1QIsa^a ואוזיך.

⁵⁷ MT תאמינו; 1QIsa^a תאמינו.

⁵⁸⁻⁵⁹ Presumably the end of a *pesher* on Isa 54 11b. In 1QIsa^a this whole passage is marked marginally by crosses.

⁶⁰ If a verb, presumably 3 pl. perf. of בנה with 2 masc. suffix (cf. Isa 21 12). But the direct address would be most unusual in a *pesher*.

⁶¹ Cf. Isa 54 11c f.

⁶² 1QIsa^a יסדו with תך written above the line; cf. יסדו in l. 2.

⁶³ The work attributed to the Teacher in 4QpPs 37 col. ii ll. 15-16 (Palästina

Fragment of an ancient Hebrew text, likely Isaiah 40. The text is written in a cursive script on a damaged, light-colored parchment or papyrus. The fragment is roughly rectangular with irregular, torn edges. The text is arranged in several lines, with some characters appearing to be in a different script or a very early form of Hebrew. The text is mostly illegible due to the damage and the cursive nature of the script.



Photograph: Palestine Archaeological Museum



Photograph: Palestine Archaeological Museum

Pap 4Q p Isa^c

Handwritten text in Hebrew script, likely a fragment of a scroll. The text is arranged in several lines, though some characters are obscured by the paper's damage. The visible text includes:

... על אשכול כנף בעץ ויסודותיו יסוד
... יסודותיו יסודותיו יסודותיו יסודותיו
... יסודותיו יסודותיו יסודותיו יסודותיו
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... יסודותיו יסודותיו יסודותיו יסודותיו



Photograph: Palestine Archaeological Museum

<p><i>all thy pinnacles.</i> Its interpretations concerns the twelve [. . .] luminaries according to the order of the Urim and Thummim [. . .] that are lacking from them, like the sun in all its light, and like (?) [. . . and thy gates of carbuncles.]</p> <p>Its interpretation concerns the heads of the tribes of Israel at [the end of days (?) . . . the men of (?)]</p> <p>his lot, the offices of [. . .]</p>	<p>4 כול⁶⁶ שמשותיך⁶⁷ פשרו על שנים [עשר]</p> <p>5 מאורים כמשפט ידאורים התומים⁶⁸]</p> <p>6 הנצורות מהמה כשמש⁶⁹ בכול אורו [וכן . . . ושערך לאבני אקדח]</p> <p>7 פשרו על ראשי שבטי ישראל ל [אחרית הימים] אנשינ]</p> <p>8 גורלו מעמדי⁷⁰]</p>
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⁶⁶ > MT & 1QIsa^a.

⁶⁷ MT פסותיך; 1QIsa^a = 4Q.

⁶⁸⁻⁶⁹ For similar understanding of the Urim and Thummim as the twelve precious stones on the breastplate of judgment (Exod 28 17-21), cf. LXX's *δῆλοι* at Num 27 21 and Deut 33 8, LXX and Samaritan "upon the breastplate of judgment" at Exod 28 30 (also Jer. Targ.), and Josephus *Ant.* III.viii.9.

⁶⁹ A *lamedh* written by the scribe in error after the last *shin* has been only partly erased.

⁷⁰ Apparently a reference to the apportionment of offices in the new kingdom by casting lots (cf. Acts 1 26).