
MESSIANIC FIGURES AND IDEAS IN THE QUMRAN SCROLLS

The opportunity to survey the “messianic” or “eschatological” materials in the corpus of scrolls found at Qumran, usually known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, is a source of both satisfaction and trepidation. The satisfaction stems from the central role which these still recent finds (we are now in the fortieth year since the discovery of the scrolls) must play in the reconstruction of the history of the messianic idea in Judaism and Christianity. The trepidation results from two concerns. First, there is little need for another in the long series of syntheses which attempt to present “the” messianism of the scrolls. Second, serious methodological problems—better, pitfalls—await anyone who seeks to investigate this area of Qumran studies.

Chief among these problems is the definition of the corpus to be studied. The Dead Sea Scrolls include a variety of materials. Central to our study will be the texts authored by the Qumran sect. Other materials, composed by earlier or related circles, including various apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works, some previously known and others not, constitute background for our work. Finally, biblical materials are important as they shed light on the state of the scriptural sources which underlie the messianic ideas of the Qumran sect. (A detailed study of the eschatology of those materials not authored by the sect itself would also contribute greatly to our understanding of the background of the messianism of Judaism and Christianity, but unfortunately space does not permit it here.) We must also be mindful that fully 25 percent of the Qumran material, some 50 percent of the titles in the corpus, remains unpublished. Except for a few hints from those entrusted with publication, we shall have to limit our study to the published texts. Our conclusions, then, must at best be regarded as tentative.

This corpus, even as we have defined it, will provide us with a variety of messianic or eschatological approaches. This pluralism of ideas is susceptible to two possible explanations. It may result from the coexistence of different approaches within the group. Such is the case, for example, in regard to

eschatological matters in the rabbinic tradition.¹ It may also be indicative of historical development within the group. Certain ideas may be earlier; others later.

More difficult to reckon with, and probably the case at Qumran, is the confluence of both these factors. The traditions of pre-Hasmonean Judaism, new ideas evolving both within the sect and in the general community outside, and the momentous historical forces at work in this period all join together to produce a set of related but differing concepts distributed over both time and text, echoing certain common elements, yet testifying to diversity and pluralism, even within the Dead Sea sect.

These considerations make it virtually impossible to separate instances of historical development from those of the coterminous variety, except in certain particular cases. For this reason, it will be advisable to analyze the major texts of the Qumran corpus individually, to determine the messianic and eschatological teachings of each. In this respect we will follow a method similar to that of J. Neusner's *Messianism in Context*² which deals with rabbinic literature. Like Neusner, we shall also be mindful of the absence of messianism in specific texts, and, further, of the absence of certain motifs and ideas which we have come to identify with the end of days. We shall also attempt to pay careful attention to the terminology used in the various texts. Yet at the outset it must be admitted that there is little likelihood that we shall be able to sort out the complex history and variety of messianic figures and ideas in the Qumran scrolls in a definitive manner.

THE ZADOKITE FRAGMENTS (*DAMASCUS DOCUMENT*)

The Zadokite Fragments is certainly a composite work, consisting of an Admonition which serves as the preface to a number of short legal collections. Even within the Admonition, different documents may be discerned. Yet the final product presents a consistent approach to eschatology.³ In CD 2.12, the phrase *mēšīh[ê] rūah qōdšhō*, "those anointed with his holy spirit (of prophecy)," appears, parallel to the probable emendation *hōzê 'ēmet*, "true prophets." CD 6.1 also uses *mēšīhê ha-qōdeš* (emended from *bmšyhw*), "holy anointed ones," to refer to the prophets. Clearly, the term *māšīah* has not yet acquired its later, virtually unequivocal meaning of "Messiah."

1. See L. H. Schiffman, "The Concept of the Messiah in Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature," *Review and Expositor* 84 (1987) 235–46.

2. J. Neusner, *Messianism in Context*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1984). See also my review "Neusner's *Messiah in Context*," *JQR* 77(1987) 240–3.

3. See L. H. Schiffman, *Sectarian Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Courts, Testimony, and the Penal Code* (Chico, Calif., 1983), pp. 7–9.

In 4.4 the author refers to the period of the life of the sect as *'ahārīt ha-yāmīm*, “the end of days.” This usage betrays the text’s concept of the periodization of history. The author sees the present age as being an intermediate step from the present into the future age. With the rise of the sect this intermediate stage began. It will end when the final age is ushered in. These stages are designated with the term *qēš*, meaning “period” in the terminology of Qumran. This term appears in CD 4.9–10, 5.20, and elsewhere. The present *qēš* (*qēš hā-reša^c*, “the period [or age] of evil,” CD 6.10, 14) requires that the sect separate itself from the house of Judah because of various violations of Jewish law (CD 6.11–7.4). Indeed, to the author of the *Damascus Document*, the primary difference between this period and that of the future age is the correct observance of the Law, both the revealed (*nigleh*) and hidden (*nistar*).⁴ Indeed, the *qēš hā-resha^c* will come to an end when “there shall arise the one who teaches righteousness (*yōreh ha-šedeq*) in the end of days (*'ahārīt ha-yāmīm*)” (6.10–11). It is not yet clear, however, if this refers to the teacher of the sect himself, the sect’s own period being the end of days, or if these terms refer to an eschatological teacher who is yet to arise. Unfortunately, the syntax of this passage is exceedingly difficult.

Further evidence for the notion that the author saw the eschaton as having already partially dawned comes from 7.18–21. Here Num 24:17, a passage taken in later tradition as eschatological, is understood to refer to the sect and its leaders. “The Star is the searcher of the Law (*dôrēš ha-tôrâh*). . . . The Sceptre is the prince of all the congregation (*nēšî⁷ kol hā-‘ēdāh*).”⁵ It has been suggested that the imagery of exile to Damascus used in 7.15–18 (immediately preceding) should also be taken as messianic. Evidence has been cited from various Jewish and Christian sources to confirm the widespread use of the Damascus motif.⁶

The clause *bē-bô⁷ mēšîaḥ* or *mēšîh[e] 'ahārôn we-yiśrā'ēl* “with the coming of the Messiah” or “Messiahs” “of Aaron and of Israel” in 19.10–11 is certainly a reference to an eschatological era which is yet to arrive. Some seek to claim that this text expects one messianic figure, representative of the priesthood and the people of Israel. Others emend so that the text describes two Messiahs, the Aaronide, high-priestly Messiah, and the lay, temporal Messiah. A further possibility is to eschew the emendation, yet to understand *mēšîaḥ* (construct) as distributive over both modifiers, i.e., referring to two Messiahs.

The problem is more acute in regard to 20.1 where the text has *'ad 'amôd māšîaḥ mē-⁷āhārôn ū-mi-yiśrā'ēl*, “until the rise of a Messiah from Aaron and from Israel.” Here there are only two possibilities. We can conclude that the text envisions only one Messiah, or we can understand the word *māšîaḥ* as

4. See L. H. Schiffman, *Halakhah at Qumran* (Leiden, 1975), pp. 23–60.

5. Trans. C. Rabin, *The Zadokite Documents* (Oxford, 1954).

6. N. Wieder, *The Judaeen Scrolls and Karaism* (London, 1962), pp. 1–51.

being modified by both prepositional phrases, yielding a two-Messiah scheme. In 4QD^b, the still unpublished Qumran manuscript corresponding to CD 14.19, the editor informs us that the text has ‘*ad ‘āmôd mēšîah ‘ahārôn wě-yîsrā’ēl*, which he takes as showing that it is one Messiah who was expected.⁷ Whatever interpretation we follow, it is clear from the context of this passage that the present age is that between the death of the Righteous Teacher and the coming of the messianic era. According to 20.15, this period, like that of the desert wandering, is supposed to span forty years.

Attention must be called to the appearance of David in 5.5. Yet David is in no way linked to the end of days or to a messianic role. The Messiah of Israel, even if he is distinct from the Aaronide Messiah in the Damascus Document, is not singled out to be Davidic.

THE MEGILLAT HA-SERAKHÎM (RULE SCROLL)

The Rule is clearly a composite document. At the very least it is comprised of three distinct compositions: the Rule of the Community (Manual of Discipline), Rule of the Congregation, and the Rule of Benedictions. These three components were joined by a redactor, or at least by a scribe. We shall have to treat each component separately and then inquire about the unified scroll.

Rule of the Community

The Blessing and Curse ritual, 1QS 2.19 tells us, will continue only through the period of the reign of Belial. This certainly is evidence of a notion that a new age will dawn at some time. The appointed period (or end) of this rule is termed *qēš* in 3.23. The same notion appears in 4.16–17 where reference is made to *qēš ‘ahārôn*, “the final period (age).” Indeed a final destruction of all evil (*pēqudâh*, “visitation [for destruction]”) is expected to take place after which the world will be perfected (4.18–20, 25–26). Here the text is speaking of a sort of Day of the Lord, although the term does not appear.

The most significant passage for our purposes is 9.11–12. Here it is stated that the prohibition on mingling property with those outside the sect is to remain in effect ‘*ad bô’ nābî ū-mēšîhē ‘ahārôn wě-yîsrā’ēl*, “until the coming of a prophet and the Messiahs [or anointed ones] of Aaron and Israel.” In this text, as opposed to the Damascus Document, there can be no question that we are speaking of two Messiahs, as is the case in the Rule of the Congregation. This passage, however, is the conclusion of the section of 8.15b–9.11

7. J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea*, trans. J. Strugnell (London, 1959), pp. 125f. This text is now published in B. Z. Wacholder, M. G. Abegg (eds.), *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls: The Hebrew and the Aramaic Texts from Cave Four* (Washington, DC, 1991) frag 18, col III, 1.12 (p. 20).

which is reported to be missing in MS. E, identified as the earliest copy of the Rule of the Community.⁸ On the basis of this omission, it has been assumed by some that the original sources of the Rule of the Community made no mention of these messianic figures and that they were introduced either by the redactor of the Rule of the Congregation or even by the compiler of the entire *Megillat Ha-Serekhîm*.

It is difficult to accept such conclusions as long as the manuscript evidence is unavailable for inspection. Further, the priestly role was strongest in the earliest stages in the history of the sect and gradually weakened as lay power increased. We would therefore expect to encounter the notion of priestly preeminence in the end of days early in the history of the sect, not later on. Second, the two-Messiah concept is known from various other Second Temple sources,⁹ and it could have entered the sect's thinking at any time.

Most important is the omission again of David from this scheme. The Messiah of Israel is nowhere said to be Davidic. On the other hand, an eschatological prophet appears here alongside the Messiahs. This prophet is to join the Messiahs in deciding outstanding controversies in Jewish law.¹⁰ This role was understood to belong to Elijah in later rabbinic traditions.

The communal meals of the sect are described in 1QS 6.2–5. At these repasts, the priest presided and received the first portions. Elsewhere we have shown that these meals were a reflection of the sect's eschatological banquets as described in the Rule of the Congregation. These eschatological banquets were to be presided over by the high priest and the Messiah of Israel. The meals in the present age were led only by the priest, however.¹¹ The description in this same passage (6.6–7) of the *'iš dôrēš ha-tôrâh*, "the man who interprets the Torah," as "alternating, each with his fellow," shows that at least in the context of 6.6–7 this is not an official and certainly not a messianic figure.

What emerges here is that there may or may not have been a two-Messiah concept in the original text of the Rule of the Community. There was a notion of periods of history and the eventual destruction of the wicked on a day of visitation. Neither David nor Davidic descent plays any role whatsoever.

Rule of the Congregation

This text, also known as *Serekh Hā-Ēdāh* (1QSa), is an appendix to the Rule of the Community, at least in the present manuscript.¹² Nonetheless, it

8. Milik, *Ten Years*, p. 123.

9. See the sources cited in Schiffman, *Halakhah at Qumran*, p. 51, n. 202, and Schiffman, *Sectarian Law*, p. 208, n. 94.

10. See 1Mac 14:41, 4:46.

11. Schiffman, *Sectarian Law*, pp. 191–210.

12. See my detailed study of this text, *The Eschatological Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls: A Study of the Serekh Hā-Ēdāh*, the SBL Monograph Series 38 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).

may have originally been a separate composition. It begins by referring explicitly to itself as a *serekh*, a list of sectarian legal prescriptions for the life of the sect in the end of days (*'ahārīt ha-yāmīm*). Foremost among these regulations is the series of stages of life which are described in detail, as well as the scroll's requirement of the absolute purity and purification of the members of the community, who are expected to fulfill the laws required for fitness for priestly service found in the Pentateuch.¹³

This text does not refer to the notion of historical ages since it concerns only the period after the dawn of the eschaton. The list of the stages of life does refer to subduing the nations (1.21) and to various military officers (1.24–25, 28–29). In these matters, the text stands roughly in agreement with the War Scroll (to which we will turn below). The Rule of the Congregation emphasizes the role of the Zadokite priests as leaders of the eschatological council (2.3).

This scroll also describes the eschatological assembly, as well as the banquet presided over by the high priest and the Messiah of Israel. We will not discuss the restoration of 2.11 except to note the possibility that it refers to the birth of the Messiah. Line 12 refers to the Messiah (*ha-māšīaḥ*) in the singular alongside the priest, *ha-kôhēn* (restored). In 1QSa 2.15 there is another reference to the Messiah of Israel, and in 19–21 the priest and the Messiah of Israel are again mentioned together. The priest is given prominence both in seating and in the recitation of the benediction over the bread and the wine. This dinner is an eschatological reflection of the almost identical pattern we observed in the Rule of the Community for the pre-messianic era. Indeed, the communal meals of the sect constituted an attempt to live in the present age in a way similar to that of the end of days. In the life of utmost purity and perfection, that goal was ultimately to be achieved.¹⁴

It is important to emphasize a distinction between what appears here and what is the case in the Rule of the Community and, according to most readings, in the Damascus Document. Whereas in 1QS two Messiahs, both termed *māšīaḥ*, are expected, in the Rule of the Congregation there is a priest and a *māšīaḥ* of Israel. The term *māšīaḥ* only refers to the lay Messiah.

Again, David is not mentioned, only Israel. There are no details regarding the onset of the eschatological era or of the notion of periods in the history of the world. This is, indeed, a text describing the fulfillment of Jewish law and sanctity in the end of days.

13. Those physically deformed are therefore to be excluded from the eschatological community. See Schiffman, "Purity and Perfection: Exclusion from the Council of the Community in the *Serekh Hā-ʿĒdāh*," *Biblical Archaeology Today*, ed. J. Amitai (Jerusalem, 1985), pp. 373–89.

14. See above, n. 12.

Rule of Benedictions

The last item in this trilogy is the Rule of Benedictions, also called the *Serekh Ha-B'ērakhôt*. Opinions differ on the exact reconstruction of this fragmentary series of blessings for various figures. It appears that 1QSb 4.22–28 is a fragment of a benediction for the high priest. It follows a benediction for the Zadokite priests (1QSb 3.22–28). Neither of these is in any way eschatological in character. Yet, after the blessing of the high priest, in another fragmentary passage (4.18), there is mention of the *qišê'ad*, “periods of eternity.”

According to Licht's restoration, 5.20, the beginning of a benediction for the *něšî' hā-ēdāh*, “the prince of the congregation,” refers to an eschatological leader.¹⁵ This restoration is supported by the fact that the benediction for the prince which follows is based on Isa 11:2–5, a passage referring to the Davidic Messiah. If so, we have here another designation for the Messiah of Israel, clearly based on the Ezekiel tradition (Ezek 34:24, 37:25). Ezekiel saw the eschatological community as led by a *nāšî'* (chaps. 44–48, passim). No idea of how the messianic era will come about is provided here.

The Rule of Benedictions, then, to the extent that it can be reconstructed, assumes a Davidic Messiah to arise in the end of days. As we have seen, this is not the case with most of the Qumran sectarian writings. The author apparently has a notion of the periods of history. No explicit mention of a priestly Messiah appears, but it is possible that the full text did make a reference to such a figure.

War Scroll

The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness is generally understood to describe the war which will usher in the end of days in the teaching of the Dead Sea sect. This scroll uses the key word *qēš*, “period, age” (cf. 1.8), and talks about the complete destruction of the wicked (1.5–7) which is predestined (1.10). This battle is to be fought not only on this earth but by the heavenly beings above (1.15). The statement of 1QM 6.6 regarding victory, “And the kingdom will belong to the God of Israel . . .,” must refer to the eschaton. This notion is so central to the scroll that it is repeated in 12.15 (partially restored) and 19.8

Israel and Aaron appear on the banner of the entire congregation along with the names of the twelve tribes (1QM 3.12). According to 5.1–2, on the shield of the *nāšî'* of the entire congregation is written his name, Israel, Levi, and Aaron, as well as those of the twelve tribes. Again we see the same duality of Aaron and Israel which we have encountered elsewhere, but no mention is made here of two Messiahs. But it is important to note that the term *māšîah* in 11.7–8 refers to prophets in the phrase *měšîhēkā hōzē*

15. J. Licht, *Megillat Ha-Serakhim* (Jerusalem, 1965), p. 288.

tē'ūdôt, "your anointed ones, the seers of things ordained."¹⁶ We cannot simply assume that *māšīah* must refer to a messiah. Although 11.1–3 mentions David's defeat of Goliath, the passage has absolutely no messianic overtones. Num 24:17–19 is interpreted noneschatologically in 11.6–7,¹⁷ in contrast to the interpretation of this passage in the Damascus Document.

The War Scroll, despite its clear description of an eschatological battle, does not mention the messianic figures, although the idea of stages of history lies behind it. At the same time, the omission of messianic figures can be explained as the result of the text's describing only the events leading up to the messianic era, not that era itself. If, on the other hand, the prince of the congregation is identical with the lay Messiah, we would look in vain in this text for a two-Messiah concept.

The Thanksgiving Scroll

The Thanksgiving Scroll (*Hôdayôt*) contains a poem in 3.5–18 which seems to describe the birth of the Messiah. He is designated by reference to the "wondrous counselor" of Isa 9:5. The poem as a whole recounts the initial spread of evil, followed by the rise of the Messiah, and then the destruction of all evil. In this sense it is apocalyptic in character. There is no mention of the word Messiah, however, nor of David nor Aaron. 1QH 3.35–6 seems to foretell the destruction of the wicked as does 15.19. It has been suggested by some that the *nēšer* of 6.15, 7.19, and 8.6 is to be taken as a messianic figure, based on the prophetic background of this word (Isa 11:1).¹⁸ However, there is little in the context of the Qumran hymn itself to support such a conclusion. It is more likely that this term is based on Isa 60:21 and refers to a plant.¹⁹

All in all, there is no real messianism to speak of in the Thanksgiving Hymns. There is no Messiah, Davidic or otherwise, and only the echoes exist of the eventual dawning of an age in which the destruction of the wicked will take place.

PESHARIM

The biblical commentaries from Qumran provide a form of contemporizing biblical exegesis which sees the words of the scriptures as being fulfilled

16. Trans. in Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness*, trans. B. and C. Rabin (Oxford, 1962), p. 310.

17. *Ibid.*

18. See J. Carmignac ("Les Hymnes," in *Les Textes de Qumran*, ed. J. Carmignac, P. Guilbert [Paris, 1961], vol. 1, pp. 222f.), who also rejects this view.

19. J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic 'Elect of God' Text from Qumran Cave 4," in *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Missoula, Mont., 1974), p. 132.

in the age of the author. These texts and related materials contain a significant amount of eschatological material.

Pesharim on Isaiah

4Q161 (*Pesher Isa^a*) refers to *ʾahārīt ha-yāmīm*, “the end of days,” in interpreting Isa 10:28–32 (frags. 5–6). The Qumran passage speaks of the *něsí hā-ʿēdāh*, “the prince of the congregation,” who will participate in an eschatological battle. The same text, in frags. 8–10, lines 11–24, interprets Isa 11:1–5 as referring to a Davidic Messiah who will arise in the end of days and rule over the nations ([*pišrō ʿal šemaḥ*] *dāwīd hā-ʿōmēd bē-ʾahārīt ha-yāmīm*]²⁰). The fragmentary material suggests that he will judge his people according to the rulings which the priests will teach him.

4Q162 (*Pesher Isa^b*) speaks of the end of days in which there will be *pēquddat hā-ʾāreṣ*, “a visitation [of punishment] on the earth” (2.1–2), but the context is insufficient to determine what is being discussed. The passage may even refer to events of the author’s own time period. In 4Q 163 (*Pesher Isa^c*), frags. 4–7, 2.10–14, Isa 10:24 is taken to refer to the end of days in which, it appears, the evildoers will be taken into captivity.²¹ Yet frag. 23, 2.10, shows how for the author the present Greco-Roman period can also be called the end of days. In this period there will arise the “seekers of smooth things” (*dōrēšē ḥalāqōt*), probably a pun meant to designate the Pharisees. 4Q 164 (*Pesher Isa^d*) frag. 1.7 refers to the heads of the twelve tribes in the end of days. This fragmentary passage appears to be messianic.

The author or authors of the *Pěšarīm* on Isaiah clearly expected the sect to be led in the end of days by the prince of the congregation and/or the Davidic Messiah. These texts expect a final destruction yet do not speak of the periodization of history. No mention of a priestly eschatological figure appears in the preserved portions of the text.

Pesher Habakkuk

Pesher Habakkuk 7.7 and 12 allude to the *qēš hā-ʾahārôn*, “the final age,” but it is not clear if in these passages the author speaks of the messianic future or of his own day. It is most likely that he sees his own times as the beginning of the future age, soon to lead to the eschatological fulfillment. This period, according to the author, is to be longer than the prophets had expected. The end of days mentioned in 9.6 must refer to the years preceding the dawn of the eschaton when the evildoers will be punished.

This text, then, seems to mention the periodization of history, believing the author’s own day to be the very verge of the end of days. Yet no mention of any specific messianic figures occurs here.

20. Restoring with J. M. Allegro, *Qumrān Cave 4, I (4Q 158–4Q 186)* (DJD V; Oxford, 1968), p. 14.

21. See frags. 13 and 14, which also mention the end of days.

Pesher Hosea and Pesher Nahum

4Q166 (*Pesher Hos^a*) 1.9–10 refers to *qēš*, “period,” and *dôr ha-pēqudâh*, “the generation of the visitation [for punishment],” and line 12 mentions the *qišê ḥārôn*, “periods of wrath.” According to 4Q169 (*Pesher Nahum*) 3.3, in the final period (*bē-ʾaḥārît ha-qēš*), the evil deeds of the *dôrešê ḥalāqôt* (“seekers after smooth things”), a term for the Pharisees, will be revealed to all Israel. In 4.3 the author tells us that in the final age (*lē-qēš haʾ-aḥārôn*), Menasseh (probably a hellenistic or Sadducean group) will cease to rule over Israel.

While these texts have a sense that there will be a better future in the end of days, they exhibit nothing like the developed messianism of other texts. This is especially surprising in the case of *Pesher Nahum* which is so extensively preserved.

Other Pesharim

1Q14 (*Pesher Micah*) frags. 17–19.5 speaks of *ha-dôr hā-ʾaḥārô[n]*, “the final generation,” but the fragmentary context does not allow any conclusions. 4Q171 (*Pesher Pss^a*) 2.6–8 mentions a forty-year period after which all evil will be destroyed. This seems identical to the forty years of the eschatological war of the War Scroll. A fragmentary comment in 4Q173 (*Pesher Pss. ^b*) 1.5 on Ps 127:2–3 talks about *[kô]hēn lē-ʾaḥārît ha-qē[š]*, “a priest for the final age.” Needless to say, these brief references do not allow any conclusions about the messianic views of the authors of the respective texts.

4Q FLORILEGIUM

The 4Q Florilegium (4Q174) refers to an eschatological temple, *ha-bayit ʾāšer . . . [bē-]ʾaḥārît ha-yāmîm* (“the house which . . . [in] the end of days”). This temple will be of the highest purity and, accordingly, Ammonites, Moabites, the *mamzēr*, foreigners, and converts will be excluded from it (frags. 1–2, 2.3–5). In addition, in the end of days there is to arise the shoot of David (*šemaḥ dāviḏ*), clearly a Davidic Messiah, to save Israel. Along with the shoot of David, there will arise the *dôreš ha-tôrāh*, “the expounder of the Law” (frags. 1–2, 2.10–13) whom some have seen as a priestly, messianic figure. The text interprets Ps 1:1 as foretelling the rise of the sect, which is constituted of those who have turned aside from the ways of the wicked (lines 14–19). We have here the explicit notion that the rise of the sect constitutes the onset of the end of days (*ʾaḥārît ha-yāmîm*).²²

Here again we encounter explicit reference to a Davidic Messiah, as well as the notion that the rise of the sect signals the onset of the eschaton. The notion of an eschatological temple of perfect purity appears as well, but there

22. See also frag. 14, which mentions the end of days.

is really no mention of the priestly Messiah, unless we assume that the expounder of the law is to be so identified. Elsewhere, however, the function of the eschatological priest is envisioned as cultic, not educational or exegetical.

11Q MELCHIZEDEK

11Q Melchizedek is a text similar in literary character to 4Q Florilegium.²³ The text explicitly alludes to the end of days, interpreting the commandment of the Sabbatical year (Lev 25:13; Deut 15:2) to refer to this period. At that time, Melchizedek will proclaim release for the captives (?). He and his lot (*naḥālāh*) will also be granted a special Sabbatical of atonement. He will then take vengeance on Belial and his lot with the help of the angels. The eschatological Isa 52:7 is then quoted, apparently to identify Melchizedek with the herald of the future age. There is a mention of the *qiṣê ḥā[rôn]*, "the periods of wrath." But Melchizedek here is not himself a messianic figure. It seems best to see him as taking the very same role Michael takes in the War Scroll, leading the forces of good in the cosmic battle with Belial and his lot of evil. It is after this battle that the eschaton will be inaugurated.

This text mentions no Messiah or Messiahs and says nothing of a Davidic rule (even though David is mentioned explicitly before a quotation from Psalms). The notion of stages of history, however, does appear.

OTHER TEXTS

In this section we will survey a few texts which, because of size or state of preservation, yield material too scant to allow useful conclusions, yet at the same time are worthy of notice. 4Q177 (*Catena (A)*) at the beginning mentions the end of days and *qiṣîm*, "periods" (frags. 1–4.10), but nothing can be gleaned from the context. The term *qeṣ* occurs as well (line 11). The mention of a second book of the Torah (line 14) has been taken by some to refer to an eschatological, new Torah, or even to the Temple Scroll,²⁴ but the fragmentary nature of the context allows absolutely no interpretation to be supported. Frag. 9.4 mentions the "seekers after smooth things" (partially restored) in an eschatological context (line 2, *bě-²ahări[t hā-yamîm]*, line 9, *bě-dôr hā-²a[hărôn]*). Again, context is insufficiently preserved for any analysis. The same is the case with frags. 12–13, 1.2 (cf. 2.3) and 4Q178 frags. 2 and 3. 4Q182 (*Catena (B)*) frags. 1 and 2 also contain eschatological references, but they are too fragmentary for consideration.

23. See J. A. Fitzmyer, "Further Light on Melchizedek from Qumran Cave 11," *Essays*, pp. 245–67.

24. Y. Yadin, *The Temple Scroll* (Jerusalem, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 396f.

4Q *Divrê Ha-Mē'ōrôt* 3.13–14 refers to 'ahārît ha-yāmîm, "the end of days," but the passage is simply a reflex of Deut 31:29 and has no eschatological significance. In 4.6–8 the text refers to God's covenant with David as permanent king over Israel. 4Q Prayers for Feasts (509) II 7.5 mentions the end of days, but the context is not understandable. The notion of periodization of history appears in 4Q Wisdom Canticles (511), frag. 35. 1Q Book of the Mysteries speaks of the disappearance of evil. The David Apocryphon (2Q22) supplies nothing messianic. The so-called New Jerusalem texts (1Q32, 2Q24, 5Q15, 11QJN) may describe a vision of the messianic Jerusalem, but they seem to be based on Ezekiel and make no reference to messianism or the end of days. 4Q Testimonies (4Q175) cites verses which may have had eschatological significance but provides no interpretation.

These minor references suffice to show that eschatological ideas were originally found in many other texts of the Qumran corpus but that these are not sufficiently preserved. We can expect additional manuscripts to be published in the future which may shed further light on the messianic consciousness of the sect.

Two texts are notable for their nonmessianic character. The so-called Psalms Scroll from cave 11 is in actuality a liturgical compilation of Psalms, some in our biblical canon and some not. The section entitled "David's Compositions" (11Q Pss^a 27.2–11) makes absolutely no reference to messianism. The same is the case in the supernumerary Psalm 151 A (11Q Ps^a 28.3–14) dealing with David's musical ability and his anointment.

Another text which should not be taken as eschatological is the Temple Scroll. This text describes a temple to be in use until the dawn of the eschaton. This is explicitly stated in col. 29. At that time, God will create his own eschatological sanctuary.

It has been maintained by some that the Elect of God Text (4Q Mess ar) speaks of the birth of the Messiah. In actuality, this text mentions the *bēhîr 'ēlāhā*, "the elect of God," and never uses the word *māšîah*. There is no evidence from within the text that *bēhîr 'ēlāhā* is a messianic designation. Further, the evidence of one manuscript reading in the Gospel of John 1:34 (*ho eklektos tou theou*) as the sole basis on which to take the text as messianic is not justified. Even if this manuscript represented the correct text, we would have to assume that this designation in John was indeed a title, and this does not seem to be the case.²⁵ Instead the Elect of God Text seems to belong to one of the previously unknown pseudepigraphal compositions now attested at Qumran. Finally, the Aramaic literature from Qumran on the whole was not composed by the sect but was imported. It is usually dated earlier than the sectarian compositions.

25. Fitzmyer, *Essays*, pp. 157–60.

CONCLUSION

If anything is clear from the foregoing survey, it is that a variety of motifs and beliefs are distributed in almost random fashion throughout the texts. Thus, either we are dealing with an example of the historical development of ideas, or of parallel approaches, or, most likely, of a combination of these factors.

J. Starcky²⁶ sought to construct a history of the messianology at Qumran which went hand in hand with the stages in the archaeologically attested occupation of the site. In the Maccabean period the teacher authored the Thanksgiving Scroll and the Rule of the Community. Messianic expectations do not appear in the hymns, and the earliest manuscript of the Rule of the Community does not contain the messianic allusion. Hence, Starcky concludes that messianic speculation was absent in this period. In the Hasmonean period, Pharisaic influence leads to the presence of messianism in the Rule (1QS), as well as in its appendices. Here we find the notion of two Messiahs. Starcky identifies the Pompeian period references in the Damascus Document where the two Messiahs have become one priestly figure: the teacher was the eschatological prophet, the interpreter of the Law. In the last period, the Herodian, the anti-Roman feeling exemplified in the War Scroll developed.

It seems to us, however, that there are numerous problems with this theory.²⁷ Chief among them is the presumption that the Damascus Document should be dated much later than the Rule of the Community and that the omission of material found in 1QS from the still unpublished MS. E of the Rule can be taken as evidence for the history of the text. Furthermore, the claim that the messianic idea only entered through Pharisaic influence is a gross oversimplification. Finally, the theory in no way accounts for Davidic versus non-Davidic lay Messiahs.

We can augment the quest for a historical explanation by recognizing the various messianic trends which existed in Second Temple Judaism. Guided by the programmatic essay of G. Scholem,²⁸ we will explore the dominant trends in Jewish messianism and the tension between them. He noted the poles of restorative vs. utopian messianism. The restorative seeks to bring back the ancient glories whereas the utopian constructs a view of an even better future, one which surpasses all that came before. The restorative can be described as a much more rational messianism, expecting only the improvement and perfection of the present world. The utopian is much more apocalyptic in character, looking forward to vast catastrophic changes in the

26. J. Starcky, "Les quatre étapes du messianisme à Qumran," *RB* 70 (1963) 481-505.

27. See Fitzmyer, *Essays*, pp. 136-40.

28. "Toward an Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism," *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York, 1971), pp. 1-36; see S. Talmon, "Types of Messianic Expectation at the Turn of the Era," *King, Cult, and Calendar in Ancient Israel* (Jerusalem, 1987), pp. 202-24.

world with the coming of the messianic age. It is not that either of these approaches can exist independent of the other; rather, both are found in the messianic aspirations of the various Jewish groups. However, the balance of creative tension between these tendencies is what determines the character of the messianism in question.

Elsewhere we have traced the roots of this distinction through biblical and early Second Temple literature.²⁹ What is important for our purposes is that these two approaches, the restorative and the utopian, ultimately are based on different biblical traditions. Restorative messianism looks forward to the reestablishment of the Davidic Empire, a process which can come about through natural developments. Utopian messianism expects a world that never was, perfect and ideal. Such a world can only be built upon the ruins of this world, after the annihilation of its widespread evil and transgression. Whereas the prophecies of the reestablishment of Israel's power and prosperity inform the restorative trend, notions such as the Day of the Lord serve as the basis for the utopian approach.

With this background, we can return to the Qumran corpus. Those texts which espouse the Davidic Messiah tend toward the restorative. They therefore emphasize much more the prophecies of peace and prosperity, and do not expect the cataclysmic destruction of all evil. The more catastrophic, utopian, or even apocalyptic tendencies usually do not envision a Davidic Messiah. They seek instead to invest authority in a dominant priestly religious leader and a temporal prince who is to be subservient to the priestly figure. In this case, there is no Davidic allegiance, and the prominent role of the priesthood in the life of the sect is transposed onto the end of days. Some of the utopians sought to limit the leadership to one messianic figure. Sometimes we may encounter both trends side by side in the same text, influencing its author equally. This is testimony to the fact that these two trends were at this very time beginning the long process of being fused into what later became the messianic ideal of Rabbinic Judaism.

We will never be able to construct an exact historical sequence of the messianic ideas and texts found at Qumran. Yet a matrix of history on the one axis and the restorative-utopian dichotomy on the other is the only framework within which to explain the rich and variegated eschatological ideas and approaches which are represented in the literature of the Dead Sea sect. This study should again caution us against seeing the materials found in the Qumran caves as a monolithic corpus, the elements of which may be harmonized with one another at will.

29. See n. 1 of this essay.