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BIB470
4/12/2023

Torah/Law

MMT (Misqsat Ma'ase Ha-Torah) "Some observances of the law" is the title of the scroll that we read for this week. This text appears in four sections- (1) an opening formula, now completely lost; (2) a calendar of the sect (with a 364-day year); (3) a list of more than 20 halakhot, all of which are peculiar to this group; and (4) an epilogue which discusses the separation of the group from normative Pharisaic Judaism and attempts to persuade the addressee to adopt their halakhic views. The MMT discusses the invalidity of the halakhot of the they-party; it was written by the Teacher of Righteousness and addressed to the Wicked Priest and his colleagues. 1. MMT A discusses a sectarian calendar, 2. MMT B discusses Special Rules, and 3. MMT C discusses the exhortation. "The fragmented calendar is presented in five parallel columns which originally covered eighteen lines" (Vermes 222). The MMT section of special rules discusses some of their teachings, "which are the works which we think and all of them concern (3) and the purity of.... [And concerning the offering of the wh]eat of the [Gentiles which they....](4)and they touch it.... And de[file it... One should not accept anything](5)from the wheat [of the Gentiles[and none of it is] to enter the Sanctuary (Vermes 223). This passage in the text as I interpret it is I believe discussing is offering and rules that come with a pure and righteous offering unto the Lord and that it should not be touched and be defiled by Gentiles and even accepting an offering of wheat from a Gentile is against the rules. Lastly in the third section it discusses "The Exhortation". In the text it states Remember David, that he was a man of piety, and that (26) he was also saved from many troubles and pardoned. We have also written

to you (sing) concerning (27) some of the observances of the Law, which we think are beneficial to you and your people. For [we have noticed] that (28) prudence and knowledge of the Law are with you (Vermes 229). This is a reminder to the people that David was saved from many troubles (that he had gotten himself into) and that he was pardoned by God, observing this is good for the people of Israel because the law is already with them to help them not make the same mistakes that David did, but if so there is pardon for them.