

# In this number

CHRISTIAN SEPPÄNEN &  
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## **The Bible before the Canon: Authority in the Qumran Texts**

What can we know about “sacred texts” in the Judaism of the Second Temple? In this article, we discuss the holiness and authority of texts with reference to the Qumran collection. The discovery of the Qumran texts made it apparent that around 1 AD the textual content of the Hebrew Bible or even the canon of books it included had not yet been finally established. The relative authority of a particular text may be evaluated on the basis of: 1) references to authoritative texts, 2) the number of surviving manuscripts of the text, 3) use of the text as a source for new literature, 4) translations made of the text, and 5) the representations of the text as sacred. The Qumran material indicates that the authoritative status of certain texts had been established but that there was as yet no firmly canonised collection of holy scripture.

JUTTA JOKIRANTA

## **The Qumran Movement without Qumran: The Religious Communities of the Qumran Texts**

The question of the religious communities behind the Dead Sea Scrolls (the Qumran texts) continues to puzzle scholars. In the early phases of research,

the scrolls – especially the best-preserved manuscripts from the first cave discovered – were considered to be texts of a remote sectarian (Essene) community living in the buildings of Qumran. Texts found in Cave 4 have changed our understanding considerably. This article discusses recent developments in research on the rule documents. The Community Rule and the Damascus Document reveal a wider socio-religious movement with small-group gatherings as its basic structure. The rule documents are not handbooks of any individual community and can be fruitfully studied without placing them in any single location.

HANNA TERVANOTKO & JESSI ORPANA

## **Rewriting the Pentateuch: Significance of Qumran Findings for Understanding of the Evolution of Literary Traditions**

While some early rewritings of the Books of Moses have been known for a long time, the scrolls discovered at Qumran have uncovered a number of earlier unknown writings that rework the Pentateuchal traditions. They shed new light on the processes of rewriting during the Second Temple period. Generally, the rewritings of the Pentateuchal traditions promote specific ideas and types of interpretation. The available evidence demonstrates that rewriting took place in multiple forms in this period. Moreover, rewriting was not a marginal

phenomenon within Judaism; on the contrary, the discovered material suggests that various groups engaged in this activity.

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### **Wisdom and Revelation in the Qumran Wisdom Texts**

The article aims to investigate the relationship between wisdom and revelation in late Second Temple Jewish literature and particularly in the wisdom material included in the Qumran collection. Early Hebrew wisdom is known to be fairly universal and secular, whereas the late sapiential texts attest to various processes of particularisation and a shift in understanding the origin of wisdom. Wisdom became the revealed property of the selected few. Since the later texts differ from Biblical wisdom, they raise the question of the generic definition of wisdom literature, which is touched upon in the article. The major focus, however, is on examining the divine sources of wisdom: certain texts merge wisdom with the Torah, while others claim that divine revelation is needed in addition to the Torah given by God to Israel.

MIKA S. PAJUNEN & KATRI ANTIN

### **The Functions of Psalms in the Late Second Temple Period and the Canonisation of the Book of Psalms**

This study concerns the multiple ways in which psalms functioned in the late Second Temple period. A tripartite development of these functions will be presented. Firstly, psalms had a liturgical function throughout the period alongside the other functions. Secondly, the psalms migrated to the sphere of wisdom teachers and became objects of study that were carefully scrutinised in order to learn more about the nation's past and to gain ethical guidance. Thirdly, the psalms ultimately also came to be seen as prophetic messages from God, written under divine inspiration.

HANNA VANONEN

### **The Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness in the War Scroll from Qumran**

The War Scroll from Qumran (1QM) was originally named the Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness. However, as this article indicates, the terms "sons of light" and "sons of darkness" do not actually occur very frequently in the text. It is also demonstrated – with the help of literary critical criteria and the parallel war text fragments from Qumran Cave 4 – that the passages including light and darkness vocabulary date from a late point in the redaction process of the Scroll. The language that expresses sharp confrontation was probably used in order to create, or at least to strengthen, the sense of threat in the community that used and reworked 1QM.

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