

first fascicle. In Fascicle One, the reconstruction of the Damascus Covenant was aided by the medieval copies from the Cairo Genizah; that of the calendars by their internal harmony—their language and sequence was virtually always certain. Often, this was not the case with the redaction of this volume. Not only are these remains much more fragmentary, but the majority of them lack biblical or Qumranic antecedents. Without such antecedents interpolation is often difficult. In addition, the aphoristic content of many of these texts, their physical deterioration and the newness of their literary genre made reconstructions more time consuming and less certain.

Since Fascicle Two is several times larger than Fascicle One, a thoroughgoing reconstruction of these texts would have delayed its publication. Happily, many of the works published in this volume are attested in more than one manuscript. Consequently, some lines or parts of lines are contained in more than one witness. This occurs, for example, in 4Q416-418 where different copies not only corroborate readings, but also help fill the gaps in what has perished in other copies.

The Dead Sea Scrolls in this fascicle are new in two ways. They are new because they are made available to the world here for the first time. They are also new because they reveal the existence during the Second Temple period of a genre of writing hitherto unknown at Qumran or elsewhere. The novelty of these works becomes apparent in the titles assigned by the scholars who first transcribed them. They named the first three compositions (4Q299-301) Mysteries; 4Q415-426 are called Sapiential Works. Still others were assigned names such as God, Creator of Light and Darkness (4Q392) or Beatitudes (4Q525). Missing in these titles is any real inkling of the contents of the manuscripts. In fact, the works designated Mysteries hardly diverge from those called Sapiential.

We stress that our knowledge of these writings is truly preliminary. Yet at this early stage of study it seems that the remains of the first 19 manuscripts published in this volume reveal a class of compositions that contain the vestiges of a lost literary tradition; a lost literature related to the biblical tradition, yet distinct and apart from it. Remarkably, the authors of the Qumranic writings themselves articulate both the relationship of these writings to the Hebrew Scriptures and their distinctiveness.

The Mystery of Being (*Raz Nihayeh*)

The ancient writers characterize these texts by the phrase *raz nihayeh*, attested dozens of times. Literally rendered, *raz nihayeh* translates as “the mystery of what we shall be,” “the mystery of our being,” or, more simply, “the mystery of being.” Again and again, the ancient authors call upon their readers to seek solutions to problems by searching the *Raz Nihayeh*. These problems may relate to religion or ethics—such as how to distinguish between good and evil, how to solve riddles; or practical—how does one pay tribute to one’s parents? The standard answer is always a variant of “search the Mystery of Being.”

What exactly is the sense of the words *raz nihayeh*? J. T. Milik, who published several fragments containing this phrase in 1955 (1Q27 f1i:3, f1i:4), characterized these lines as “mysteries and Deuteronomistic,” meaning apparently that the writings resemble the Deuteronomistic dualism between good and evil. Milik did not have before him the numerous uses of this expression, many of which are to be found in this volume.

Two interpretations suggest themselves. One is that the appeal to searching and studying the *Raz Nihayeh* refers to a work, or works, that had been available to the author(s) and readers of these compositions but has since perished. The other possibility is that *Raz Nihayeh* is the sectarian title for many of the works found in this fascicle. If so, the references to the Mystery of Being tell the reader to search for enlightenment in the remains of the works included here.

Another work recorded in these remains is the Vision of the Haguy or Hagoy, a “Book of Memory.” Here again the question arises as to whether “the Haguy” refers to an independent work, now lost, or to the texts included in this volume. Another problem is the relationship between the Vision of the Haguy and the Mystery of Being (*Raz Nihayeh*). Were they disparate compositions, or variant names of the same work? Present indications are that the Vision of the Haguy and the Mystery of Being refer to the same compositions that are included in this fascicle.

The Vision of the Haguy, with variant spellings, is well known from other Qumran citations. The Damascus Covenant (10:6 and 13:2) prescribes that every judge must be expert (*mebonen*) in the “Book (*Sepher*) of Hago.” The Community Rule (1QS*a*) 1:7 makes the “Book of Hagi” the required study of every youth. This may have been the book which was to be studied during one-third of the evening throughout the year (1QS*erek* 6:7).

As to the identity of this Book of Haguy, researchers have expressed a variety of opinions. Some have felt that it referred to the name of an unknown sage, others to the community rules. The current consensus is that “Haguy” is a variant of *hegeh* (speech or thought), an appellation of the Torah and the Hebrew Scriptures.

This resolution of the sense of the Book of Haguy seems to be mistaken since the Qumran writings require the mastery of the Book of Haguy in addition to the study of Scriptures and the other writings containing the elements of the covenant (*yesodoth haberith*). 4Q416-418 confirm the impression that the Book of Haguy refers to a work other than either the Hebrew Scriptures or the standard sectarian texts:

“For the law (*mehogeq*) is etched by God for all [] sons of Seth. And the Book of Memory (*zikkaron*) is inscribed before him (God) for those who observe his word. And it (Book of Memory?) is the Vision of the Haguy (*behaguy*), as a Book of Memory. And he (Seth?) bequeathed it to Enosh with the people of the spirit. Because he created it as a sacred blueprint (*tabmith*). But Haguy had not as yet been entrusted to the spirit of flesh since it (spirit of flesh) had as yet not known the distinction between good and evil.”

4Q417 f2i:15-18

Puzzling as this passage is, it resolves the problem of the identity of the book cited at Qumran. It was evidently etched on the heavenly tablets for Seth, son of Adam, who in turn handed it over to Enosh, who kept it secret, since the people did not know the difference between right and wrong. Every member of the sect studied this mysterious work and judges were obliged to be experts in it.

The exact identity of the Mystery of Being (*Raz Nihayeh*) and the Vision of the Haguy is a subject for further investigation. What is apparent, however, is that the existence of such works settles a basic controversy among students of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It involves the question of the sect’s fundamental tradition. Some scholars opined that although the Hebrew

Scriptures constituted an essential source, the Qumranites were in possession of other works that were regarded as equal, or at least nearly equal, to Scripture. In recent years, however, the prevailing opinion maintains that Scripture, and Scripture only, was regarded as authoritative. Many of the texts in this volume appear to indicate that this judgment is erroneous, and that the researchers who maintained that Qumran attests to a non-biblical component were correct.

The *Hokhmah* or Wisdom Texts

A few preliminary words need to be said about the genre of writings that evidently included the Vision of the Haguy and the Mystery of Being. The best word to describe this genre is *hokhmah* (wisdom; Greek, *sophia*), where this word embraces reason, science and the knowledge of God. In this respect the *hokhmah* texts resemble the ideas found in the books of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and, above all, Daniel. Nevertheless, although these biblical books place much emphasis on wisdom and knowledge, rightness (*tzedek*) and truth (*emet*), the works given here are entirely devoted to it. Wisdom in these texts embraces much that is mundane as well as what is divine. The Hebrew word *raz*, of Persian derivation, rendered "mystery," has its pre-Greek sense as the depth of understanding of the world, fellow humans and the divine will. It meant not so much what could not be known, but what, with some effort, could be known. Mystery was almost synonymous with *hidah* (riddle or puzzle).

Language and Style of the Wisdom Works

A cursory perusal provides glimpses into the language and style of the Wisdom works. The Hebrew is by and large classic, though with an admixture of Aramaic. Anyone familiar with the sayings quoted from the visions of Balaam in Numbers 23-24 will have little difficulty understanding much in these works. Many texts are difficult to follow, at least to us. Often words familiar to us seem to have an unfamiliar meaning. Many locutions that are found once or twice in the Hebrew Scriptures appear to have been standard usage in the Wisdom works. The phenomenon of bibericizing, that is to say, the construction of new sentences from biblical texts, so familiar in many Qumranic compositions, is hardly evident in these texts. What we do find are Bible-like lines diverging from their biblical formulations. A single citation will suffice here:

"HONOR thy father in thy head and thy mother in thy steps
For as God is to man so is his father (*abohi*)
And as the Lord (*adonim*) to the mighty (*geber*) so is one's mother.
Since they are the furnace of thy conception."

4Q416 f2iii:15-17

The kinship of these lines with Exodus 20:12 is obvious, but their exact relationship is puzzling. What seems to be true of this passage may perhaps apply to the entire body of the Wisdom works. Researchers will have to unravel the question not only of how these texts relate to the Hebrew Scriptures, but also their similarities to the sapiential heritage of the ancient Near East.