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A 'SLAIN MESSIAH'
IN 4Q SEREKH MILHÛAMAH (4Q285)?

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Almost by definition, the scholarly study of Ancient Judaism rarely makes for exciting headlines. It is all the more remarkable, then, that amidst the breathtaking events of 1991 academic controversy around the Dead Sea Scrolls should repeatedly have featured in the international mass media.

First came the news that Professor John Strugnell of Harvard Divinity School had been deposed in late 1990 as head of the international editorial team which has overseen the official publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls since their discovery in 1947. The most immediate reason for Strugnell's dismissal after only three years at the helm reportedly lay in his increasingly acerbic anti-Jewish pronouncements in a series of press interviews.[1]

All this transpired amidst mounting scholarly protest at the creeping pace of publication and the editorial committee's continuing refusal to release the photographs of the Scrolls. The Editors' infuriating practice of writing articles on unpublished scrolls long before their actual publication had led to a growing impatience among Qumran scholars barred from access to these materials. In consequence, 'samizdat' copies of manuscript transcriptions began to proliferate in the academic community. Thus, for the past two years or more, photocopies of otherwise unidentified handwritten transcriptions of 4QMMT have been circulating; this document is a letter from the Qumran community to the religious authorities in Jerusalem explaining their differences over the halakhah of sacrifices, temple purity, fornication, etc. Although to this day that important

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[1]See *The New York Times*, 11 December 1990, p. C2 and 16 December 1990, p. IV/7; Hershel Shanks, 'Silence, Anti-Semitism and the Scrolls', *Biblical Archaeology Review* 17.2 (1991) 54–60; Edward Rothstein, 'The Battle of the Scrolls', *The Independent Magazine*, 18 May 1991, 30. Strugnell's pronouncements to the press culminated in an interview with Avi Katzman in *Ha–Aretz* on 9 November 1990 (English version in *BAR* 17.1 (1991) 64–72).

text is still not officially published, 4QMMT has been discussed in publications and senior seminars in numerous locations.[2]

Partly in response to increasing scholarly pressure, in 1988 the editorial team authorized a limited release of a preliminary concordance of the Scrolls, many of which remained unpublished and under a tight seal.[3] The acquisition of a copy by Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio led that institution's veteran Qumran scholar Ben Zion Wacholder to collaborate with his research student Martin Abegg on a computer-produced reconstruction of the texts originally analyzed in the Qumran concordance. Amidst a fanfare of publicity, this work was released on 4 September 1991 as *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls—The Hebrew and Aramaic Texts from Cave Four* (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society).[4] Not surprisingly, the official Qumran editorial team were incensed at what they perceived to be a breach of scholarly propriety.

However, the pace of developments continued to increase further when in September the Huntington Library in San Marino, California unilaterally decided to make its photographs of the Scrolls (deposited there for safekeeping) available to researchers;[5] in late

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[2]See e.g. Elisha Qimron & John Strugnell, 'An Unpublished Halakhic Letter from Qumran', in *Biblical Archaeology Today* (Jerusalem, Israel Exploration Society 1985), 400–407 (a shorter version of this article appeared in *The Israel Museum Journal* 4 (1985) 9–12); Lawrence H. Schiffman, 'The New Halakhic Letter (4QMMT) and the Origins of the Dead Sea Sect', *Biblical Archaeologist* 53 (June 1990) 64–73; *idem*, '*Miqṣat Maʻaseh ha-Torah* and the Temple Scroll' *Revue de Qumran* 14 (1990) 435-57. An unofficial publication of the text appeared in the Cracow–based Polish journal *The Qumran Chronicle* in December 1990.

[3]*A Preliminary Concordance to the Hebrew and Aramaic Fragments from Qumrân Caves II-X Including Especially the Unpublished Material from Cave IV*, distributed by Hartmut Stegemann, 5 vols. (Göttingen, privately printed, 1988). The concordance is based on a card index originally prepared in the 1950s and early 1960s by R.E. Brown, J.A. Fitzmyer, W.G. Oxtoby and J. Teixidor. Cf. further *BAR* 16.2 (1990) 23; *BA* 54.3 (1991) 172.

[4]See e.g. *The New York Times*, 5 September 1991, p. A1.

[5]*The New York Times*, 22 September 1991, p. A8.

October the Israeli Antiquities Authority dropped its initially fierce resistance to the release of the photographs.

One of the first scholars to take advantage of the newly released holdings of the Huntington Library was Robert H. Eisenman, Professor of Middle East Religions at California State University in Long Beach. By December 1991 Eisenman, together with Professor James M. Robinson of the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center at Claremont, California, had published *A Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls* in two volumes of photographs (Biblical Archaeology Society).

While sifting the Huntington Library's photographs, Eisenman came across a small fragment (c. 58 mm x 40 mm) which in its complete form is included on two photographic plates previously identified only under the codicils PAM 42.370 and PAM 43.325.[6] This six-line text (4Q285 frag. 5, which has also been variously discussed as 4QSerekh Milḥamah or 4QBerakhot Milḥamah)[7] not only has evident Messianic connotations, but it appeared to Eisenman to contain the striking statement that the coming Messiah would be killed. The idea of a Messiah being slain is widely held to be absent from pre-Christian Jewish texts; Eisenman took his potentially explosive discovery to the press and thereby released on 8th November a torrent of international media coverage which is only now beginning to abate.[8]

In the wake of this publicity, a special seminar convened at the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies on 20 December 1991 to discuss the relevant photographs available in the Oxford collection. Chaired by Professor Geza Vermes and attended by scholars from the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London and Reading as well as two media observers, this seminar concluded that while the fragment in question is clearly Messianic, contextual

[6]Cf. Eisenman/Robinson, *Facsimile Edition*, pl. 795, 1352 (as cited in Geza Vermes, 'The Oxford Forum for Qumran Research Seminar on the Rule of War from Cave 4 (4Q285)', forthcoming in *JJS* 43 (1992).

[7]This text was first reported and linked with 1QM by J.T. Milik in 'Milkî-SÛedeq et Milkî-Res]aᶜ dans les anciens écrits juifs et chrétiens', *JJS* 23 (1972) 143: [ ]
[ברחמ[יכה] את מיכאל ג[בריא]ל [שריאל ורפאל   .ברחמ[יכה] I am indebted for the identification to Professor Vermes, 'Oxford Forum'.

[8]Beginning with *The New York Times*, 8 November 1991; *The Times*, 9 November 1991; etc.

considerations suggest that it is the Messiah who slays his enemy, and
not vice versa.

The remainder of this article offers a transcription of the
fragment along with textual annotations, translation, interpretative
comments and some concluding reflections on the relevance of this
text to the debate about a suffering and dying Messiah.[9]

The Text

Our fragment shows six lines of text; line 6 is only very partially
preserved and all six lines are incomplete on both the right and left
margins. A certain amount of conjecture about the width of lacunae
between the lines is, however, possible. The gap between lines 1 and
2 may be reconstructed with some degree of confidence (see the Notes
on the Text below). That restoration, along with the last two letters in
line 4 (צמ]ח דויד?) and the final *mem* at the beginning of line 5,
suggests that the loss is not insignificant.

The brittle condition of the leather has meant that a vertical
strip, c. 9 mm in width, has flaked off on the left, but has been
rejoined with the main fragment for the purposes of the photographs
mentioned above.[10] Since this vertical strip is less creased than the
rest, there is an obvious gap between the two pieces in lines 3-5 and,
more significantly, a downward slippage of lines 1 and 2 of the main
piece by approximately 2.5 mm. Orthography and letter formation are
typical of other Dead Sea Scrolls from the period of the first centuries
B.C. and A.D.

We offer the following transcription of the text:

1   בספר] ישעיהו הנביא וניקפ]ו סבכי היער בברזל ולבנון

2   באדיר י]פול ויצא חוטר מגזע ישי]
3   צמח דויד ונשפטו את]
4   והמיתו נשיא העדה צמ]ח דויד[
5   ם ובמחוללות וצוה כוהן]הרואש
6   ח]ללל]י] כתיים]]לל]

[10]In PAM 41:708, an earlier photograph, the fragment appears without this
vertical strip on the left.

Translation

(1) in the book of] Isaiah the prophet (Is. 10:34): 'and hacked down will be [the thickets of the forest with an axe, and Lebanon (2) by a mighty one will f]all. And a shoot shall come forth from the stump of Jesse [... (3)] the Branch of David, and they will enter into judgment with [(4)] and the Prince of the Congregation, the Bran[ch of David] will kill him [(5)]s and with wounds; and [the chief] Priest will order [... (6) the s]lain Kittim...

Notes on the Text

Line 1f.: Not much survives of וניקפו, and the legitimacy of this reading may seem doubtful. However, the beginning of line 2 preserves enough of the word יפול to show that the quotation of Isaiah 11:1 must have been preceded by 10:34. The two verses form a continuous context in the Qumran Isaiah commentary (4QpIsaᵃ) and in other early Jewish Biblical interpretation.[11] While the words 'Isaiah the prophet' in line 1 stand outside the quotation, they may most naturally be thought to introduce it (e.g. אשר כתוב בספר ישעידהו הנביא 'as it is written in the prophet Isaiah': thus 4QFlor 1:15). How much can be quoted between here and the beginning of the next line? Either one or both stanzas of verse 34, but surely no more than that. Compensating 2.5 mm of slippage, one arrives at a series of letters which approximates וְנִקַּף in Isaiah 10:34 (probably Piel 'and he will hack down').[12] This suggestion does seem tantalizingly close, but the *nun* in our text is clearly followed by either *waw* or *yod*. A simple recourse to *plene* orthography (i.e. וניקף) might seem the simplest solution, but the shape of the last visible letter suggests medial, not final, *peh*. The problem of the consonantal text can be solved, however, by following the Biblical text as quoted in 4QpIsaᵃ, which has וניקפו or ונוקפו (i.e. either Niphal/Piel or Pual). To decide

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[11]See G. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, Studia Post- Biblica 4, (Leiden, Brill 1973²) 35.

[12]Commentators and dictionaries differ on whether וְנִקַּף is a Niphal or Piel, recent works tending to prefer the latter (as also in Job 19:26). The issue is somewhat complex: verse 33 has the LORD, tall trees and lofty ones as subjects, with corresponding verbs in the Piel, Qal passive and active. The choice for the verb in verse 34a is therefore between taking the thickets of the forest as the plural subject (the verb being a somewhat awkward Niphal singular), and supplying the LORD as the subject of the verb taken as a Piel (which is clumsy because of the intervening subjects of v. 33b and c).

between these two forms is a complex task, and not a vitally important one for our purposes; one should perhaps tentatively opt for the Niphal.[13] In any case, the meaning seems relatively clear and all the damaged letters are thus accounted for.

Line 2.   The *resh* of חוטר is largely obscured by the crease, but is clearly required by the context.

Line 3. David is typically spelled *plene*.

Line 4. One of the critical questions for the interpretation of the text may be thought to be whether one points וְהֵמִיתוּ ('and they will kill') or וֶהֱמִיתוֹ, ('and he will kill him'). Both are grammatically possible, and the case must be decided on the basis of syntax and context.

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[13]Neither Niphal nor Piel seems to occur elsewhere in Biblical or Qumran Hebrew (though 1QpHab 4:7 has Hiphil). In Mishnaic Hebrew the Piel is used in the context of trimming or cutting plants, e.g. *t.B.Q.* 11:18 (2x); *b.B.Q.* 119b (Baraita); *b.Git.* 59b, etc.; the Niphal here occurs e.g. together with the Hiphil in the sense of cutting the 'corner' of the hair (*b.Nazir* 57b: 'both he who cuts הניקף and he whose hair is cut המקיף are equally culpable'). I have been unable to find any evidence for a Pual in either Biblical, Qumran or Mishnaic Hebrew.

In 4QpIsa^a frs. 8-10, line 6, the *plene* spelling is added in supralinear position; originally the scribe had ונקפו. The accidental omission of *waw* from a Pual form would seem rather less likely than the insertion of *yod* to distinguish Qal from Niphal or Piel. (In our fragment note e.g. the Polel participle ובמחוללות in line 4.) At the same time, *plene* spelling in a short prefix syllable would be unusual: see Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Harvard Semitic Studies 29 (Chico, Scholars 1986), 19 n. 5; and *idem,* ' ההבחנה בין וי׳ו ליו׳ד׳ בתעודות מדבר יהודה', *Beth Mikra* 52 (1973) 102–112, 130).

The three options, therefore, present themselves as follows: (i) Pual would be the only orthographically and grammatically satisfactory solution, but it does not appear to exist anywhere else. (ii) Piel has the advantage of agreeing with current scholarship on Isa. 10:34, but it is difficult to find a subject (even יהוה in v. 33, which modern Bible translations use for ונקף, would not do with a plural verb. Dr. G.I. Davies kindly points out to me that while the subject could be indefinite (cf. e.g. Bruce K. Waltke & M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Eisenbrauns 1990) 70f.), 'text critical' considerations suggest that the plural verb, which is syntactically *lectio facilior*, would most likely have arisen from taking סבכי as the subject. This in turn would require a passive verb. (iii) Niphal would fit syntactically, and its use is later attested in Mishnaic Hebrew (with *plene* prefix).

Since the consonantal text is not affected, we will leave this question to be addressed below.

While the reconstruction offered above seems almost certainly correct, the last letter on the line could just possibly be a *beth* (cf. line 5). In this case the word in question might be צבא or צבאות, which is also found in the context of the eschatological battle (e.g. 1QM 4:11; 2:4). Syntactically, however, its asyndetic appearance here seems less likely.

Line 5. The appearance of a priest in this context is unsurprising, since the same occurs both in 1QM and in 4QpIsaᵃ. The proposed reconstruction is based on 1QM 16:13, 18:5, 19:11 (כוהן חרואש).[14]

Line 6. Nothing is visible except two *lameds*, traces of five other letters (arguably *kaph* followed by *taw*, and possibly two *yods* and hence the otherwise less obvious final *mem*, producing כתיים). On the basis of related passages like 1QM 19:13 (par. 4QM492 13) one might therefore suggest that the double *lamed* makes likely the reading חללי כתיים ('the slain of the Kittim'; cf. 17:13f. and passim, and note the chief priest in the immediate context, 19:11).[15] There is also an isolated *lamed* nearer the end of the line.

Context

On the most recent photograph (43:325, in which several previously separate fragments have been pieced together) our fragment is grouped together with approximately ten others, which were therefore evidently thought to belong to the same or a related scroll. This assumption is corroborated by the observation that all the pieces on these photographs appear to stem from the same hand. This fact, not noted in the major media reports, could potentially be of great significance in providing a context for the interpretation of our fragment. Nevertheless, as a matter of caution it is worth remembering that of course a scribe might well write on different scrolls, or even reproduce different documents on one and the same

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[14]Note also אחד מכוהני השם in 4QpIsaᵃ 8-10, line 24 (similarly Vermes, 'Oxford Forum', citing Timothy H. Lim).

[15]Cf. now similarly Vermes, 'Oxford Forum'. An appearance of the Kittim would fit both the context (cf. 4QpIsaᵃ frs. 8-10 ll. 3, 5) and the visible letter traces (on PAM 43.325 the Kittim are mentioned in the second fragment bottom left, line 3; the word חללים occurs in the second fragment top left, line 6).

scroll.[16] Because of their potential relevance, however, a brief survey of the three most substantial other fragments seems advisable.

The most substantial portion of text consists of two contiguous combinations of fragments arranged with another two tiny scraps at the top right hand corner of PAM 43:325 (not yet collated in PAM 42:370). This probably corresponds to 11Q14 (Berakhot).[17] Indeed a number of gaps in van der Woude's fragments can be filled in, and several of his transcriptions corrected. This text, when compared with 11Q Berakhot, presents a blessing to be pronounced by a Priest or High Priest on an unspecified occasion; as such it shows similarities with Biblical motifs (e.g. Nu. 6:24f.; Lv. 26:4ff.; Dt. 28:3ff.) as well as with other Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g. 1QS 2:2ff.; 1 QSb 1:3ff).

Another contiguous piece of text, composed of two fragments, is located at the bottom right hand corner of PAM 43:325. This speaks about the final eschatological battle against the Kittim (a common Jewish code name for Gentile enemies, especially the Romans),[18] when the Prince of the Congregation נשיא העדה will defeat the enemies of Israel and apparently pursue them to the ocean. This 'Prince of the Congregation' as a Messianic leader is well known from other sectarian texts including the Damascus Document: according to CD 7:19-21 he is the 'sceptre' who 'shall rise out of Israel' and 'smite all the children of Seth' (Nu. 24:17).[19] Significantly, the same title also occurs in the fragment we are here considering.

Finally, a set of three other small fragments (bottom left hand on PAM 43:325) mentions the Kittim as well as the archangels

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[16]This was also pointed out by Timothy Lim at the seminar on 20.12.1991.

[17]Published by A.S. van der Woude, 'Ein neuer Segensspruch aus Qumran (11 Q Ber)', in *Bibel und Qumran: Beiträge zur Erforschung der Beziehungen zwischen Bibel- und Qumranwissenschaft. Hans Bardtke zum 22.9.1966*, ed. Siegfried Wagner (Berlin, Evangelische Haupt-Bibelgesellschaft 1968) 253–8 and plate. This identification, first suggested by Milik, 'Milkî-ṣedeq et Milkî-rešaᶜ', 143, is now confirmed by Vermes, 'Oxford Forum'.

[18]See 1 Macc. 1:1; 8:5 (Greeks); Dn. 11:30 and LXX; 1QpHab 6:3-5; the term is first used in Gn. 10:4 and Nu. 24:24.

[19]Cf. e.g. 4QpIsaᵃ 5-6:3; 1QSb 5:20.

Michael and Gabriel (...[את מיכאל ג[בריא[ל]). In 1QM 9:14-16 the names of the four archangels are inscribed on the shields of the defensive towers in the final battle. Michael himself was widely seen as the heavenly patron of Israel and, at Qumran, the leader of the army of Light.[20] The War Scroll, in describing the eschatological defeat of the Kittim, speaks of Israel being delivered by the glorious might of the angel of the kingdom of Michael (בגבורת מלאך האדיר למשרת מיכאל, 1QM 17:6; cf. 17:7).[21] While it would of course be unwise to jump to conclusions, one or two significant contextual considerations appear to impose themselves on the basis of this brief survey. All the fragments on the photograph are from the same hand and were thought by the original collators to belong to the same collection. All three sets just examined manifest eschatological battle imagery and terminology of a kind which seems to be fully compatible with the scene envisioned in the Qumran War Scroll.[22] For this reason it is advisable, *caeteris paribus*, to proceed on the cautious assumption that eschatological battle imagery may well be the most natural context within which to situate the interpretation of the disputed Messianic fragment. To this we must now turn.

Interpretation

Our fragment begins abruptly with an explicit quotation from Isaiah. The passage in question is 10:34–11:1, a text whose Messianic

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[20]See 1QM 13:10; 17:5-8 (see below); 1QS 3:20; and cf. CD 5:18. See already Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1. Michael appears in Rev. 12:7-9 as the leader of the righteous in the eschatological battle; cf. *2 En.* 22:6; 33:10 (Michael as the Lord's mediator and *archistratig*); and *Hermas Sim.* 8:3 'the great and glorious angel Michael, who has power over this people and governs them').

[21]In his capacity as Israel's military leader and heavenly deliverer, Michael also appears to be identical with the redeemer figure Melchizedek in 11QMelchizedek (indeed Milik, 'Milkî-ṣedeq', 142 somewhat daringly proposed the restoration ובי[דכה מלכי צד]ק for the lacuna in 1QM 13:10, which would identify Melchizedek with the Prince of Light).

[22]Two otherwise disjointed fragments (one of which has been pieced together of four tiny pieces) at the top left hand corner of PAM 43:325 do not provide significant conclusions, although they contain certain terms generally relevant to the context described, including [עדה ('congregation') and עת קץ ('the time of the end'). Two minute shreds to the left of our main text do not permit of confident interpretation.

connotations are well attested from ancient Judaism and early Christianity;[23] in at least one later Rabbinic interpretation the combination of the fall of Lebanon and the shoot from the rod of Jesse is used to link the destruction of the Temple with the coming of the Messiah.[24]

Line 3 identifies the Shoot of Jesse as the Branch of David, another Biblical title for the coming Messianic leader (Je. 23:5; 33:15; cf. Zc. 3:8; 6:12) which recurs repeatedly in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[25] Grammatically, צמח דויד may be asyndetic (e.g. in apposition, with a preceding הוא), but the leading lacuna permits no certainty. In any case it seems plausible to take ונשפטו את as the beginning of a new clause: 'and they will enter into judgment with....'[26] The idea of messianic judgment comes as no surprise in the context (see Is. 11:3f. and cf. 4QpIsaᵃ 8-10 lines 21, 23); what is interesting is that the verb here occurs in the *plural*, rather than being predicated simply of the Messianic leader. On the other hand, the War Scroll's battle slogans inscribed on the standards of the Sons of Light in fact leave no doubt that their collective business is to execute God's judgment on the Sons of Darkness (see 1QM 4:6ff., note משפט אל in 4:6; 6:3, 5 etc.); in this judgment God 'will accomplish mighty deeds by the saints of his people' (1QM 6:6). Thus it is presumably the whole army of the sons

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[23]In addition to the earlier references, see e.g. Targum Jonathan and in the wider context various NT texts (Mt. 2:23; Rev. 5:5 etc.).

[24]*Y.Ber.* 2.4 (5a, ll. 15-31: R. Yudan b. Aibu A5; R. Abun A4). Might this have been in the mind of Yoḥanan ben Zakkai when he interpreted Isaiah 10:34 of the Temple's destruction (*A.R.N.* A 4:64ff. (ed. Schechter p. 12a), par. *b.Git.* 56a)? For Isa 10:34 as predicting the fall of the Temple cf. further Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*, 34f.; H.F.D. Sparks, 'The Symbolical Interpretation of *Lebanon* in the Fathers', *JTS* N.S. 10 (1959) 270f.; and Markus Bockmuehl, 'Why Did Jesus Predict the Destruction of the Temple?' *Crux* 25.3 (1989) 13f.

Writing to the Jews, Tertullian argues for a similar link of the Messiah's coming with the fall of the Temple on the basis of Dn. 9:26 (*Adv. Iud.* 8; cf. LXX βασιλεῖα ἐθνῶν φθερεῖ τὴν πόλιν καὶ τὸ ἅγιον μετὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ', and similarly the Vulgate). Daniel 9:25 is interpreted messianically in 11QMelchizedek 1.17f. (but see Timothy H. Lim, '11QMelch, Luke 4 and the Dying Messiah', an appendix to Vermes, 'Oxford Forum'). Cf. further Dn. 11:22; also Justin *Dial*. 14.

[25]4QFlor 1.1.11; 4QPBless 3f. (where he is identified as 'the Messiah of Righteousness, משיח הצדק).

[26]The Niphal of שפט with את occurs in this sense e.g. in 1 Sm. 12:7; Je. 2:35, Ezk. 17:20; 20:35,36 (2x); 38.22; Pr. 29:9.

of Light who, under the leadership of the Branch of David (and of Michael) enter into judgment with the enemy.[27]

In line 4 we come to what is in some ways the crux of the passage. We must read either וְהֵמִיתוּ 'and *they* will kill' or וֶהֱמִיתוֹ, 'and *he* will kill *him*'. Syntactically, if the sentence continues from the previous line, the third person plural might seem more likely; but in that case, נשיא העדה 'the Prince of the Congregation' as the object of killing would invite (though not perhaps require) the presence of an ta object marker.

In actual fact, however, וֶהֱמִיתוֹ, 'and *he* will kill *him*' is to be preferred for a combination of both syntactical and contextual reasons. The words ונשפטו את ('and they will enter into judgment with') in the previous line call for an adversary to be named in the lacuna immediately following. Given the context of the eschatological battle, this must be the Sons of Darkness and their leader (perhaps the king of the Kittim).[28] This in turn would of course be exceedingly difficult to square with the Messiah being slain in the very next line! Indeed the Messiah's defeat and destruction of his enemies is one of the staple doctrines of eschatology not just at Qumran but in other Jewish literature of the period.[29]

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[27]According to 1 Cor. 6:3 the Christians will be involved in judging the fallen angels. Cf. Mt. 19:28par.

[28]1QM 15:2 has מלך הכתיים; cf. possibly 1QM 1:4. Lebanon is variously identified with the Kittim: 4QpIsaᵃ frs. 8-10 lines 3, 5; cf. *Targ Jon.* Is. 2.13 and Zc. 11:1 (the nations); Is. 10:34 (Gentile warriors). See further Sparks, '*Lebanon*', 267f.; and R.P. Gordon, 'The Interpretation of 'Lebanon' and 4Q285' (Appendix 2 to Vermes, 'Oxford Forum'). Vermes moreover refers to the possible mention in 'fragment 4' (PAM 43.325 bottom right, discussed above) of a male figure being brought before the Prince of the Congregation (whwaybyw in the last line). Compare further *2 Bar.* 39:8- 40:1, and note 29 below.

[29]4QpIsaᵃ 8-10:21 'his sword shall judge all the nations'; 1QSb 5:27; *Ps. Sol.* 17:22ff. (cf. 17:35 with Is. 11:4); *2 Bar.* 40:1-6; 72:2; 4 Ezra 12:32f.; 13:37f.; *Sib.Or.* 5:418f.; *1 En.* 46:4ff.; 62:2; *Targums Ps.-Jonathan, Neofiti* and *Fragment Targum* to Gn. 49:11; *Targum Jonathan* to Isaiah 10:27; see also 2 Thes. 2:8 (cf. Is. 11:4) and Rev. 19:11–16. Dr. W. Horbury pointed out the particular significance of *2 Bar.* 40 at the seminar on 20 December 1991: the Messiah convicts the wicked enemy leader in a judgment scene and then proceeds to kill him (v. 1f.). The context of this passage (*2 Bar.* 36-39) compares the destruction of the Babylonians and Romans to that of the cedars of Lebanon before the revelation of the Messiah's kingdom, and is thus immediately relevant to Jewish interpretation of Isaiah 10:34ff. (Cf. also Vermes, 'Oxford Forum').

Syntactically, too, our passage is more natural and elegant if נשיא העדה 'the Prince of the Congregation' functions as the *subject* of the preceding verb: i.e. 'and the Prince of the Congregation will kill him [the Enemy]'. And, perhaps most importantly, this reading is clearly required by the context of Isaiah 11: the shoot of Jesse *judges* with equity (v. 3f.) and *slays* the wicked (N.B. ימית רשע, v. 4).

Thematically and syntactically, therefore, the preferred interpretation must be that the Messiah here slays his adversary, the leader of the evil host.

Having established the meaning of this pivotal phrase, we may cover the remainder of the text relatively quickly. The Polel of חלל in line 5 appears to mean 'woundings' or 'piercings'; Biblical passages to be compared include Ezekiel 32:26 and possibly Isaiah 51:9, 53:5.[30] Only the final *mem* survives of the word immediately to the right; a hendiadys would be plausible (Prof. Vermes suggests נגעי[ם]).[31]   These two words apparently belong to the preceding clause, although it is not clear whether they are adverbial to the Messiah's killing of his opponent (i.e. he will kill him by blows and piercings).

The sudden appearance of a priest, probably the leading priest, fits the context well, as we saw earlier. Priests are intimately involved in the eschatological battle, as the War Scroll amply demonstrates (cf. also 4Q491 frs. 1-3; 4Q493). In particular, the chief priest with his colleagues leads the Prayer in Time of War and marshals (וסדר) the army battalions to exhort them (1QM 15:4ff.; cf. 7:12; 10:2). At the end of the battle the chief priest rises and leads the worship of the leaders and the army described in 1QM 18:5ff.; 19:11-13. The Isaiah commentary from Cave 4 appears to envision a similar priestly role: asserting that the Branch of David will defeat and judge his enemies by the sword and establish his rule over the nations, the writer goes on to say that he judges 'as the priests instruct and order him' (4QpIsa[a] frg. 8-10 line 23: (...וכאשר יורוהו ועל פיהם). Presumably, then, our passage relates to the chief priest's giving

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[30]Polel and Polal in MT, but perhaps to be re-vocalized as Pual: thus L. Koehler & W. Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament*, vol. 1 (Leiden, Brill 1967[3]) *s.v.*
[31]Vermes, 'Oxford Forum'.

orders for the measures to be taken after the final defeat of the enemy forces.

Not much can be said about the likely reading 'slain of the Kittim' in line 6; the relevant parallels for this were mentioned earlier.

Summary and Concluding Observations on the 'Slain Messiah'

In the end, then, the answer to our stated question is quite straightforward: the fragment from 4Q Serekh MilhÛamah does not refer to a dying Messiah. Nor of course does it advance the question of whether there was any Jewish notion of a suffering and dying Messiah before the coming of Christ.

The debate on this latter issue, therefore, remains unchanged: the New Testament writers' attempt to prove that the suffering and death of Christ was 'according to the Scriptures' finds little support in contemporary Jewish interpretation of the relevant Old Testament passages, and probably none in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[32]

On another front, the publicity this fragment has received probably reflects something of the unfortunate effects of sensationalism and hasty publication in scholarship. Almost everyone will welcome freer access to the Dead Sea Scrolls along with responsible preliminary publications on the newly released texts. Nevertheless, this particular chapter of Qumran scholarship also demonstrates that the original intention of careful and meticulous publication had a good deal to be said for it. The recent reassignment of fragments to an expanded team of nearly 60 official editors should help to speed up this indispensable project of accurate edition.

Finally, two perspectives on the substantive question of a 'slain Messiah' are worth offering for further study. First, and not accidentally, the New Testament itself confirms not only that the Jews awaited an eternal Messiah,[33] but that even the earliest followers of Jesus were profoundly taken aback at the death of their supposed Messiah (Mk. 8:32 par.; Lk. 18:34; 24:21, etc.). A biblically founded

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[32]But see J. Starcky's remarks on the abuse of the priestly Messiah in 4QAhA: *Revue Biblique* 70 (1963) 492.

[33]Note Jn. 12:34 'We have read *from the Law* that the Messiah when he comes will abide forever' (?Ps. 89:37; Ezk. 37:25; and see Gn. 49:10 with LXX, *Targ. Onk.*); etc.

expectation of a suffering and dying Messiah, if it existed, was unknown to them until after the resurrection.

Having said that, however, early Christian *Adversus Iudaeos* literature makes massive use of an 'argument from Scripture' in support of precisely such expectation. In addition to New Testament evidence like Matthew 26:24,64; Luke 24:26f.; Acts 3:18–21, the argument that Christ had to come in humiliation before he could come in glory is taken up in the *Epistle of Barnabas* (5:12–6:7), the *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* (1.49), Tertullian (*Adv. Iud.* 10), and especially in Justin Martyr.[34] Interestingly, Trypho the Jew concedes in *Dial*. 89 and 90 (cf. 68) that the Messiah was to suffer according to the Scriptures—though not to be crucified. Origen, on the other hand, without surrendering the argument, appears to accept that the doctrine of two advents of Christ is understood only by Christians (*Contra Celsum* 1:54-56).

These Christian exegetical arguments, along with not insubstantial later Rabbinic evidence,[35] suggests to the present writer

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[34]*Dial*. 14:8 (with reference to Hosea [*sic*: read Zc. 12:10] and Daniel), 32:2 (Is. 53; Zc. 12:10–12), 52 (Gn. 49:8–12), 97 (e.g. Is. 53; Ps. 22), 110 and passim. See further *Apol.* I 32-35; 50-52. Cf. further Oskar Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy,* NTSup 56 (Leiden, Brill 1987), 154-56.

Dr. W. Kinzig of Peterhouse, Cambridge also reminds me of the widely attested, but oddly unsubstantiated, early patristic claim of a reading ὁ κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου in LXX Ps. 95:10. This argument, which is found as early as *Ep. Barn.* 8.5 (based on a testimonia tradition?), might also be usefully re-examined in the present context; see references in Skarsaune, *Proof*, 38 n. 41; Wolfram Kinzig, *In Search of Asterius*, FKD 47 (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1990), 194; and cf. Johannes Brinktrine, 'Dominus regnavit a ligno', *BZ* 10 (1966) 105-7.

[35]See esp. *b.Sanh.* 93b (Is. 11 and Bar Kokhba); 98a (Zc. 9:9); 98b (Gn. 49:10; Is. 53:4 [Tannaitic attribution]); *Pesikta Rabbati* 34:2 (Zc. 9:9), 36:2 (Ps. 22:16), 37:1 (Ps. 22:8,14f.,16; La. 3:46f.). On the *Pesiqta Rabbati* material note Arnold Goldberg, *Erlösung durch Leiden,* Frankfurter Judaistische Studien 4 (Frankfurt, Gesellschaft zur Förderung Judaistischer Studien 1978), 47-64 and passim.

Pesiqta deRab Kahana 5:8 speaks of the Messiah being hidden for a time after his first appearance; *b.Sanh.* 99a mentions his death. Cf. further the Targum's (limited) Messianic interpretation of Is. 53; the Messianic use of Zc. 9:9 in *b.Ber.* 56b, *Pirqe deRabbi Eliezer* 31 and *Yalkut ShimÆoni* 575 (435d); Zc. 12:10,12 in *b.Sukk.* 52a, *Targ. Jon.* (*v.l.*), and *Yalkut ShimÆoni* 581 (436c); and generally the later Rabbinic doctrine of the warlike Messiah son of Joseph or Ephraim who dies in battle (based on Gn. 49:22ff.; references in P.S. Alexander, 'Enoch', *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. J.H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (Garden City, Doubleday 1983) 298 n. t; and see E.G. King, *The Yalkut on Zechariah* (Cambridge, Deighton, Bell 1882) 85–108). Note further the useful discussion in W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (Philadelphia, Fortress 1980³) 274–84; and cf. *Yalkut Shimᶜoni* 499, 404d on Is. 60 (Ps. 22:8); *Sefer Zerubbabel* (A. Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch* 2:54-57). The idea of the Messiah's

at least the possibility that compatible interpretive traditions of several relevant prophetic passages may in fact already have been known in certain Jewish circles. Is it conceivable that the 'proof texts' were in some situations interpreted in ways which would naturally lead Christians to seize on them in aid of their uphill battle to establish the idea of a crucified Messiah? This controversial suggestion cannot here be developed in full, but a re-examination of some of the evidence thus far dismissed may well be overdue.

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death before the general resurrection also occurs in an isolated (?) early reference in 4 Ezr. 7:28; cf. Dn. 9:24.