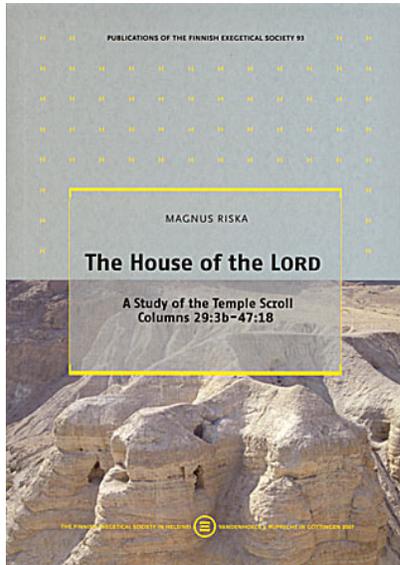


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Riska, Magnus

***The House of the Lord: A Study of the Temple Scroll
Columns 29:3b-47:18***

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For his doctoral dissertation, Magnus Riska completed a study on *The Temple Scroll and the Biblical Text Traditions* (Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 81; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2001) in which he analyzed closely 11Q19 columns 2-13:9. His concern there was to determine the relationship between the text of 11Q19 and biblical textual traditions. The comparison was made for the most part with known biblical witnesses, the MT, the LXX, and the Samaritan Pentateuch. Anything that was considered paraphrastic was differentiated from what was deemed to reflect literally, even in a single word, a biblical *Vorlage*. The labor was laudable in its rigor and raised many interesting observations about what might suitably be read and restored in a number of places, but there remained a set of significant problems that were never faced head on. Those problems concerned Riska's virtually exclusive use of the known biblical witnesses as the basis for determining what might be deemed to reflect a biblical *Vorlage* in the Temple Scroll.

To avoid those problems, at least three factors have to be borne in mind by all those who engage with authoritative scriptural texts as those are reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The first is that, although there are clearly many manuscript copies of scriptural books from the Judean desert sites, apart from a few small fragments that do not provide an adequate evidence base, it is only in finds from the first century C.E. and later that texts

exist which are either identical with the MT or virtually so. From the Qumran caves, apart from those few small fragments, there is no so-called biblical manuscript that is literally, letter for letter, like any other known exemplar. Some do indeed come very close and so earn a label such as pre- or proto-Masoretic, but it is not possible to assume that the form of the Hebrew text as it is found in the MT can be used virtually exclusively as a determinative for comparison in the construction of a textual *Vorlage* for a second-century B.C.E. composition (or compilation) such as the Temple Scroll. This issue of variety of text form does not concern just the MT, since manuscripts like 4QpaleoExod^m and some copies of the so-called Reworked Pentateuch reflect varieties of readings close to those of the Samaritan Pentateuch but not identical with it. In other words, there needs to be some careful discussion of which forms of the Pentateuch might be suitably used in the reconstruction of the *Vorlage* of the Temple Scroll before comparisons are established on largely anachronistic evidence.

The second factor to be remembered really takes priority over the first. Although nearly all scholars are willing to accept that the Torah in some form was authoritative for most Jews from the fifth century B.C.E. onwards, it is not easy to be precise about what textual form or forms of the Torah should be held up as authoritative or to be clear about for whom any particular form of text might have been authoritative. The point can be made starkly to begin with. If, for example, it could be shown that the Temple Scroll used some form of the book of Jubilees as a source (which might indeed be the case for part of column XXIX, for which Riska acknowledges E. Qimron's use of 4QpJub 1:7), then presumably any literal use of Jubilees would need to be understood as biblical, given the authoritative status of the book of Jubilees for some Jews in the late Second Temple period and for some Christians thereafter. To put matters less starkly, there is a very real debate emerging about whether some of the so-called Reworked Pentateuch manuscripts contain an authoritative text and deserve the label "Bible." Given that it is likely that some fragments of 4Q365a should really be put back together with 4Q365 (a significant version of the Reworked Pentateuch) and that some of those fragments of 4Q365a are indeed very close to parts of the Temple Scroll, it seems highly likely that such portions of the Temple Scroll should be deemed to be copying from a biblical *Vorlage*. And so on and so forth. In other words, it is not just a matter of admitting that the Pentateuch existed in a variety of different textual forms but also a matter of finding a way to factor in a number of compositions that might well have been thought of as "Bible" with equal or greater authoritative status as textual sources than those preserved for us in later forms of the biblical text, whether Hebrew or Greek.

The third factor relates to the other two and perhaps even takes priority over both. This is a much larger set of issues concerning the definition of authoritative traditions in the precanonical era. For example, it is clear to many students of these things that the MT

does not necessarily contain the earliest form of each scriptural book. When the so-called biblical manuscripts from the Qumran caves are set alongside a range of other materials, both from the caves and from elsewhere, that might seem to be secondary versions or rewritings, and the question is asked about which form of the text was deemed to be authoritative, then it becomes increasingly difficult to see a way to a clear answer. This is partly the case because the rewritings both received their authority from and gave their authority to the texts they re-present. Sometimes the rewriting attained a greater authority than that which it rewrote; sometimes it did not. The need for greater clarity about all this is widely recognized, whether in terms of consideration of generic issues or in terms of the processes and functions of rewriting and the diversity of textual forms, or in terms of attempting to understand and appreciate more holistically the whole transmission process of authoritative texts in the Second Temple period. In fact, Finnish scholars are taking a lead here with the publication of a set of proceedings from a 2006 conference that forms the first volume in a new series, *Studies in Rewritten Bible*: A. Laato and J. van Ruiten, eds., *Rewritten Bible Reconsidered: Proceedings of the Conference in Karkku, Finland, August 24–26 2006* (Turku: Åbo Akademi University; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008).

So, now to focus on Riska's recent book. It takes forward the project of his earlier work and applies a similar approach to another section of 11Q19, namely, columns XXIX–XLVII, columns in which there are descriptions of the construction of the temple and its furnishings. Once again most of the book (8–141) is a very rigorous textual examination of each column, line by line, to determine what might be a citation from a known biblical witness in order that a contribution might be made to the reconstruction and translation of the scroll. Beyond that, Riska is also interested in trying to provide information about “parts of a biblical text-tradition in an earlier stage of development than [the MT]” (1).

Riska's review of the proposals of earlier scholars available in the principal and other editions of the Temple Scroll is a summary of the various options, with clearly stated preferences for one reading or another based on a range of old images and other relevant criteria. In many instances Riska presents distinct readings of his own, though often these reflect his decisions to be more cautious than other scholars in how much text can really be read. The text that is presented is thus on the conservative side, reflecting a general tendency among the younger generation of editors of the Dead Sea Scrolls toward avoiding overly enthusiastic readings and reconstructions. This is all highly commendable and will need to be taken into account by all future students of the Temple Scroll. An intriguing result of Riska's analysis is his finding that in the part of the Temple Scroll that is the subject of this monograph there is very little that he is willing to classify as direct biblical quotation. In fact, apart from the use of Lev 1:8b in 11Q19 XXXIV, 11–12 and Lev 15:13a in 11Q19 XLV, 15, the reading of most interest might be the comparison of evidence for

bmym hyym of Lev 15:13b in 11Q19 XLV, 16b. In this last instance there is agreement between 11Q19, MT, LXX, and the Samaritan Pentateuch, but LXX^{B,A} present a text that possibly reflects *bmym* alone in their *Vorlage*, possibly the more original reading.

A larger category of seventeen readings is labeled as biblical paraphrases: ten of those are based on Leviticus. For these paraphrastic readings a scriptural *Vorlage* is changed in minor ways so that the text fits its new context, or a singular is changed to a plural. In three instances Riska applies text-critical criteria to see whether the Temple Scroll provides any evidence of an earlier form of the scriptural text than is represented in other witnesses. Riska comments: "Sometimes a section of the Scroll can be very close to a quotation but cannot be identified as such due to our strict definition of a quotation, i.e. it needs to be the same literally word by word" (149). Here the problem laid out in response to Riska's first monograph remains. If one works solely with known versions of the biblical texts, then his categorization may well be appropriate, but if one allows that the range of authoritative source materials and their forms was considerably more diverse, then it is necessary to rethink the categories that might be suitably used for describing the data.

For Riska, in many places there seems to be evidence that scriptural phraseology has influenced what is formulated, but for him such influence does not constitute a citation, since what he understands to be the original context of the phrasing has not been retained, nor is it close enough to be considered a paraphrase. In these instances, such as the use of 1 Kgs 6:21 and Ezek 44:5 in 11Q19 XXXI, 8–9 or the use of Exod 30:18 and 1 Kgs 7:39 in 11Q19 XXXI, 10, Riska labels the phenomenon "Rewritten Bible." In his summary he presents over fifty examples of such Rewritten Bible (about 25 percent of the extant text of this section), six of which are discussed text-critically; in three of those six instances there is some distinctive affinity between 11Q19 and the Greek versions. Overall, the most common feature of such rewriting is the change of the Lord speaking in the third person to the use of the first-person singular. There are also several places where scriptural phraseology is used, but without attention to its original context. Over against the three preceding categories, the largest amount of text in this section of the Temple Scroll is classified by Riska as "Individual Composition." This categorization applies to nearly 70 percent of the section.

Riska's careful presentation of the text of the section of the Temple Scroll in which there are descriptions of the construction of the temple and its furnishings is a worthwhile achievement, correcting earlier scholarly readers of the text in several ways and offering cautious readings of his own. As to the analysis of the scriptural language of the section in four categories, there has to be some concern that the categories are not really appropriate any longer. In addition, it is not surprising that there is more that is composed in this

section of the Temple Scroll. If one of the functions of the scroll was to provide evidence for a divine blueprint for the details of the construction of the temple and its furnishings that are self-evidently absent from the Torah, then much has to be put together in other ways, by reference to nonpentateuchal sources or through priestly knowledge of the temple and its courts. For this reviewer, Riska has advanced our reading of the text of this section of the Temple Scroll, but in part because of anachronistic and unsuitable categories, he has not really contributed much to the understanding of how it came to be the way that it is or how it should best be talked about.