

The Peculiar Prayer of 4QPsAp (4Q448)

A paper submitted to
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Table of Contents

	page
Overview of the Text	1
The Problem	1
The Questions	2
Resolving the Questions	3
Deciphering the text	3
Identifying “King Jonathan”	5
Determining the Qumranites’ attitude toward the Hasmonaeans	7
Exegeting the text’s posture toward King Jonathan	8
Reconciling texts with the sect’s views	13
The Text	17
Translations	18
Bibliography	19

Overview of the Text

The Qumran text labelled “4QApocryphal Psalm and Prayer” has generated interest far out of proportion to its size. The text itself is quite short; it consists of three columns of poetry, each with nine or ten short lines. In total, parts of 64 words are preserved. The script is very hard to read and is a rare example of the semi-cursive script, a hybrid of formal lettering and cursive writing. The first (top) column (I) appears to have been written by a different scribe than the two lower columns (II and III).¹ Column I contains part of Psalm 154, known from the Syriac. Columns II and III appear to be a composition not known from elsewhere.

The Problem

The reason for the high level of interest in 4Q448 is the mention of “King Jonathan” in the prayer of columns I and II. Most scholars have come to the conclusion the Qumran sect opposed the Hasmonaeans, on basis of the Qumran pesharim.² But when the Eshels first published this text,³ they called it a “Prayer for King Jonathan,” and identified the “King Jonathan” as the Hasmonaean Alexander Jannaeus. This identification caused a stir among Qumran scholars. How could a pro-Hasmonaean text exist at Qumran?

Several attempts have been made to explain this text’s presence at Qumran:

1. This text was not written by a sectarian; it was brought in from some other Jewish group in Second Temple Judaism (Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni; Flusser⁴).

¹ For more on this difference, see below, page 4.

² 4QpIsa^a (=4Q161); 4QpNah (=4Q169); 4QpHos^b (=4Q167).

³ E. Eshel, H. Eshel, C. Newsom, B. Nitzan, E. Schuller, and A. Yardeni, in consultation with J. C. VanderKam and M. Brady, *Qumran Cave 4. VI: Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 1. DJD XI*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

⁴ “Some Notes about the Prayer for the King Jonathan,” *Tarbiz* 61 (1992): 297–300.

2. The text was written by a sectarian before Alexander Jannaeus came into disfavour with the sect in 88 B.C.E. (Eshel and Eshel⁵).
3. The Qumranites were actually pro-Hasmonaeen; the pesharim have been misinterpreted (Eisenman and Wise⁶).
4. The text is not in praise of King Jonathan; the preposition לַעֲ is ambiguous, it could mean “for” or “against” (Harrington and Strugnell⁷).
5. The text is actually *against* King Jonathan; the text parallels certain biblical passages which oppose kings (Main⁸).
6. “King Jonathan” is not Alexander Jannaeus, but Jonathan Maccabee; the script is older than the first century B.C.E., so could not refer to Alexander Jannaeus (Vermes⁹).
7. “Jonathan” may not even be mentioned in the text; instead of “King Jonathan” we could read “the king’s joy” (Alexander¹⁰).

The Questions

To determine the significance of this text’s presence at Qumran, we must answer at least the following questions implicitly posed by the above solutions:

1. Has Yardeni deciphered the text correctly?
2. To whom does “King Jonathan” most likely refer?
3. Has the evidence for the “anti-Hasmonaeen” view of the Qumran sect been interpreted correctly?
4. Is the text in favour of or against “King Jonathan”?
5. Must everything found at Qumran be in agreement with the sect’s views?

Of course, some of these questions are more easily answered than others. Let us start by examining the simpler questions, and then move on to the larger questions.

⁵ H. Eshel and E. Eshel, “4Q448, Psalm 154 and 4QpIsa^a.” *Tarbiz* 67 (1997): 121-130.

⁶ R. Eisenman and M. Wise, “Paeon for King Jonathan (Alexander Jannaeus – 4Q448)” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered.: The First Complete Translation and Interpretation of 50 Key Documents Withheld for Over 35 Years* (Rockport, Mass.: Shaftesbury, 1992).

⁷ D. J. Harrington and John Strugnell, “Qumran Cave 4 Texts: a New Publication.” *JBL* 112 (1993): 498.

⁸ Emanuelle Main, “For King Jonathan or Against? The Use of the Bible in 4Q448,” in *Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. M. Stone and E. Chazon. STDJ 28. (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 113–135.

⁹ Geza Vermes, “The so-called King Jonathan Fragment (4Q448).” *JJS* 44 (1993): 294–300.

¹⁰ P. Alexander, “A Note on the Syntax of 4Q448,” *JJS* 44 (1993): 301–302.

Resolving the Questions

Deciphering the text

Though I have not seen the manuscript in person, I will venture some comments based on comparing photo PAM 43.545 (see below, page 17) with the colour photo in Sussmann and Peled's *Scrolls from the Dead Sea*.¹¹

Is the first word of Column II עור or עיר or something else?

Eisenman and Wise's suggestion that the first letter of column II is a šin is clearly incorrect; šins have a longer right than left arm. But the second letter is less clear. Because *yôd* and *wāw* are indistinguishable in this manuscript, there is some question as to whether to read עיר or עור. If the second letter of the first word of column II is a *yôd*, the word could be one of several nouns: "city", "excitement" or even "ass." But the sentence needs a verb; it is impossible to construe a complete sentence if this word is a noun. Vermes' translation, "Holy City for King Jonathan and all the congregation of Thy people Israel who are in the four corners of heaven" is to be rejected because it is not a complete sentence.

We can look for a verb in one of three places: in עור, in קדש, or in the last line of the previous column.¹² The last two options are unlikely. Little sense can be made by taking קדש as a verb, whether *qal* or *pi'êl*. In the *pi'êl* קדש is transitive, but our sentence lacks an object. If we

¹¹ A. Sussmann and R. Peled, eds. *Scrolls from the Dead Sea: An Exhibition of Scrolls and Artifacts from the Collections of the Israel Antiquities Authority* (Washington: Library of Congress and Israel Antiquities Authority, 1993).

¹² We cannot look to על to supply the verb; no Hebrew verb would be spelled that way.

took it as *qal*, we would have to read something almost as implausible: “A city is consecrated regarding Jonathan the King.” קדש is not the verb we need.

It is possible that the scribe of columns II and III *could* have continued the poem from column I. In that case, the end of that line would provide the missing verb. But against this proposal are the observations that (1) the previous column has a slightly different hand,¹³ (2) the column placement is very strange – off to the right, (3) the column width is much narrower in column II than in column I,¹⁴ and (4) the psalm in column I began with “halleluyah”, and chances are also ended that way¹⁵, in which case there would be no verb for the next line. Hence, I conclude that column II begins a new composition, and its first word is the verb עור.

“King Jonathan”

In column II, line 2, Yardeni has י ונתן. Philip Alexander finds this reading awkward because he reads עיר in line 1. Instead of יונתן על, he follows Wacholder and Abegg in reading על יצת, “the king's joy” (302). As Alexander notes, the *wāw* and the *nûn* are not clear in either photo. He suggests that the mark which Yardeni read as a *wāw*



“Jonathan” in II, 2.

is the arm of a *šādê*. I disagree; the *šādê* of column I, line 10 and those of the other scripts tabulated by Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni are much wider than this supposed *šādê*. On the colour

¹³ Although Eshel Eshel and Yardeni allow the possibility that the top and bottom sections were written by the same scribe at different times (DJD XI, 405), their suggestion does not explain the difference in the shapes of *ʾālep* and *mēm* in the bottom compared to the top.

¹⁴ The width of column I can be reconstructed from the text of Psalm 154. Eshel, Eshel and Yardeni reconstruct lines containing 31 to 39 characters (DJD XI, 420). Column II is intact, and its lines contain five to eleven characters.

¹⁵ The phrase *halleluyah* was most often used to begin and end a psalm, as in Psalm 106, 113, 117, 135, 146, 147, 148, and 149.

photo, the disputed mark of PAM 43.545 is clearer, and shows itself to be neither a *wāw* nor the arm of a *šādê*, but a fissure in the leather.

The other mark that Alexander disputes, the final *nûn* of ןנתן, also looks like a shadow in PAM 43.545, too wide to be a vertical pen stroke. But again, in the colour photo the *nûn* is more visible. The width of this vertical line is due to overlap with the *lāmed* from the line below. If I have interpreted the photo correctly, Alexander's suggestion is impossible, and Yardeni's requires only slight correction. What we have here is ןנתן, a defective spelling of "Jonathan".¹⁶

Identifying "King Jonathan"

Who was called "Jonathan"?

The only rulers called Jonathan that we know of from the ancient historians are Jonathan Maccabee (ruled 161-143 B.C.E.) and Alexander Jannaeus (ruled 103-76 B.C.E.). Eshel, Eshel and Yardeni identified the "King Jonathan" of our text with Alexander Jannaeus, but Geza Vermes appeals to palaeography to identify him with the more popular and earlier Jonathan Maccabee.¹⁷

The date of the script

Vermes argues that palaeography indicates this manuscript is older than the time of Alexander Jannaeus. Because *nûn* is the only letter with a final form in this document (all other letters are in medial form, even at the end of words), Yardeni determined that the manuscript

¹⁶ Jonathan is spelled *yntn* on a bulla probably referring to Alexander Jannaeus (N. Avigad, "A Bulla of Jonathan the High Priest," *IEJ* 25 (1975): 8--12), and on "many" coins (Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni, *DJD* XI, 414, citing Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins*, 199--202; Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, 133--4).

¹⁷ Vermes, "The so-called King Jonathan Fragment."

was written before a strict distinction between medial and final letter forms had “crystallized”.¹⁸ Vermes appeals to the Nash papyrus, dated to the middle of the second century B.C.E.¹⁹, to establish the time when final letter forms became standard. The Nash papyrus consistently distinguishes between medial and final forms.²⁰ Consequently Vermes argues that 4Q448 should be dated at least as early as the the Nash papyrus, and that it is most likely from the first half of the second century, the time of Jonathan Maccabee.

Vermes’ remarks on final forms are valid, but the palaeographic evidence is not consistent. While it is true that the lack of final forms points to an early date for this manuscript, other palaeographic indicators point to a later date. The majority of characteristics Yardeni identified are shared with the late Hasmonaean or early Herodian period, though some features are attested as early as the fifth century B.C.E. and as late as 135 C.E. Because the palaeographic evidence points to a broad range of dates, and is therefore not conclusive, we should look to other ways of identifying “King Jonathan”.

Who was called “King”?

One major problem with Vermes’ suggestion is Josephus’ testimony that Jonathan Maccabee was not a king. Josephus attaches great import to transformation of the government into a kingdom: Ἀριστόβουλος, τὴν ἀρχὴν εἰς βασιλείαν μεταθεὶς, περιτίθεται μὲν διάδημα πρῶτος²¹; he even calculates the number of years and months during which the land had been kingless.²² The rulers before Aristobulus 1 (104–103 B.C.E.) were not kings. His successor,

¹⁸ DJD XI, 405.

¹⁹ Ada Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew Script: History, Palaeography, Script Styles, Calligraphy, and Design* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1997), 45, 172.

²⁰ Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew Script*, 172.

²¹ B. J. 1.70

²² B. J. 1.70 and *Ant.* 13.301

Alexander Jannaeus, however, was “king”. Coins from Alexander Jannaeus confirm the kingly title in both Greek and Hebrew.²³

Because the palaeographic evidence pointing to an early date is much more ambiguous than Josephus’ testimony that Jonathan Maccabee was not a king, it is preferable to identify “King Jonathan” with Alexander Jannaeus. Vermes was motivated to find an alternative identification for “King Jonathan” partially because the thought the prayer was too complimentary to apply to Alexander Jannaeus, a murderer of whom the sectarians could hardly approve.²⁴ Let us turn then, to examine how the sect esteemed the Hasmonaeans.

Determining the Qumranites’ attitude toward the Hasmonaeans

Eisenman and Wise are not at all surprised to find a pro-Maccabean text at Qumran. Quite the opposite; they are very pleased to find vindication for their theory that the sect was actually pro-Maccabean.²⁵ But their theory is implausible because they do not satisfactorily make sense of the sectarian commentary on Nahum, which speaks of certain events which best fit the actions of Alexander Jannaeus. According to Josephus, in 88 B.C.E. the Jewish people invited Demetrius 3 of Syria to help them attack Alexander Jannaeus. When Alexander Jannaeus returned from this conflict²⁶, he crucified the instigators and butchered their wives and children before their eyes. The author of peshar Nahum is horrified by this action; in commenting on Nahum 2:13, he writes,

²³ Some read ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ on one side and יהונתן המלך on the other (DJD XI, 412).

²⁴ Vermes, “The so-called King Jonathan Fragment,” 299.

²⁵ R. Eisenman and M. Wise, “Paeon for King Jonathan (Alexander Jannaeus – 4Q448),” 274.

²⁶ *B. J.* 1.92–98; *Ant.* 13.372–83.

פֶּשֶׁרוֹ עַל כַּפִּיר הַחֲרוֹן
 [אֲשֶׁר יִמְלֵא חוֹרָה רַוּב גְּרִי לַעֲשׂוֹת נֶקְמָה בְּדוֹרְשֵׁי הַחֲלָקוֹת אֲשֶׁר יִתְּלֶה אֲנָשִׁים חַיִּים
]עַל הָעֵץ לַפְּעוֹל תּוֹעֵנָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה[בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מִלִּפְנֵימֵי כִּי לְתַלּוּי חַי עַל הָעֵץ]וַיִּקְרָא
 Its interpretation concerns the Angry Lion
 [who filled his cave with a mass of corpses, carrying out rev]enge against those looking
 for easy interpretations, who hanged living men
 [from the tree, committing an atrocity which had not been committed] in Israel since
 ancient times, for it is [hor]rible for the one hanged alive from the tree.²⁷

Presumably the sectarian commentator's views were representative of the whole community.

They did not approve of the "Angry Lion" Alexander Jannaeus.²⁸ Though it is possible, as Yadin argues, that the sect approved of Alexander Jannaeus at first (before 88 B.C.E.), it is unlikely, as Vermes points out²⁹, that they would praise someone who began his rule by killing his brother.³⁰ We turn, therefore, to the question of whether this prayer praises or opposes this King Jonathan.

Exegeting the text's posture toward King Jonathan

The question of whether to interpret the text in favour of King Jonathan or against him revolves around some details of Hebrew grammar, particularly near the beginning of column II. If עוֹר is a verb, as we determined above (page 4), it can only be an imperative. No other finite form would be spelled with a *wāw* or a *yōd*, and the infinitive would not yield a complete sentence any more than a noun would. But the meanings of the imperative עוֹר and of the preposition על in this context are disputed, as is the conjunction *wāw* in line 3.

²⁷ 4Q169 3+4 I 6-8, taken from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*; 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill), 1:336-337.

²⁸ Although Yadin argues that the sobriquet "Lion of Wrath" was not critical of Jannaeus ("Peshar Nahum (4QpNahum) Reconsidered," *IEJ* 21 (1971) 1-12. Even so, 4QpNahum cannot be construed as speaking approvingly of Alexander Jannaeus' behaviour.

²⁹ Vermes, "The So-called King Jonathan Fragment," 299.

³⁰ *Ant.* 13.323.

Is עור "Guard" or "Arise"?

We have already argued above on page 8 that עור must be an imperative of the root עור, as Elisha Qimron suggested.³¹ The verb עור in Biblical Hebrew carries meanings of rousing, waking and stirring up, both transitively and intransitively. Qimron, in keeping with the pro-Hasmonean proposal put forth by the Eshels, argued that this imperative was addressed to God, to exhort God to *protect* King Jonathan. Despite the fact that the vast majority of the instances of עור in the Hebrew Bible (85x) are antagonistic, Qimron cited some instances in which עור was used in a positive sense, particularly Job 8:6,³² which also uses the preposition על "על אם-גוף וישר אתה כי-עתה יעיר עליך ושלם ננת צדקתך: על he will rouse himself for you and restore to you your rightful place."

An examination of the uses of עור in the Hebrew Bible shows that Qimron's passive-protective meaning is not attested for the imperative עור. The 23 instances of עור in the imperative always carry a meaning like "awake," "rouse oneself," "get going," "become active," or "take action."³³ Never is it "guard" or "watch over" in a defensive sense as Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni suggest (421); it is always offensive. It is most often in parallel with קום (8 times), strength (6 times), and opposed to rest (3 times). In every case it invokes someone or thing to change from a state of rest to one of vigorous activity.

³¹ Elisha Qimron, "Concerning the Blessing over King Jonathan," *Tarbiz* 61 (1992): 565-567.

³² Also cited by *BDB* s.v. על II.7.a.(c).

³³ The following references are the 23 instances in the Hebrew Bible to עור in the imperative: Judg 5:12 (4x); Isa 51:9 (3x), 51:17 (2x), 52:1 (2x) ; Joel 4:9; Hab 2:19; Zech 13:7; Ps 7:7, 35:23, 44:24, 57:9 (x2) , 59:5=108:3, 80:3; Cant 4:16.

Thus we see that the author of our poem is asking for an aggressive act, not a protective stance. The question remains: Is this aggressive act a positive one or a negative one for King Jonathan?

Is על “for” or “against”?

Generally על in the Hebrew Bible is used to indicate the scope of a verb, i.e. what the verb applies to; in this way it is similar to the dative case.³⁴ Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni confuse the issue when they note that the object of requests and thanksgiving in prayers are often introduced by על.³⁵ The preposition has a much different force after a verb of thanksgiving than after a verb of rousing. When used in the phrase “rise up for King Jonathan,” “for” is synonymous with “for the benefit of.” But על is more often used in a hostile sense than a beneficial sense³⁶. The hostility is even more pronounced when על is combined with עור. The vast majority of the combination על עור is hostile.³⁷ Examples of עור with על meaning “against” include Zech 13:7, 9:13; 2 Sam 23:18, Isa 13:17; 2 Chr 21:16; Dan 11:25.

I believe it is only because Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni were originally uncertain as to the interpretation of the first word that they were able to call this poem a “blessing” on King Jonathan.³⁸ It is much the opposite. If the Eshels had originally read עור in line 1, I doubt that

³⁴ BDB s.v. על II.8

³⁵ DJD XI, 411.

³⁶ BDB s.v. על II.7.d. (The verbs שמר and שקד are exceptions.)

³⁷ Even Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni recognize: “the common biblical meaning of (wr (l---‘rise against’,” but they claim it does not fit the context (421).

³⁸ Eshel, Eshel and Yardeni find 4Q448 reminiscent of Psalms 21 and 72, prayers for the welfare of Kings David and Solomon (DJD XI, 412). But these two Psalms speak repeatedly of “he” and “his”; they are full of third-person masculine singular forms, of which our text has none.

they would have missed its antagonism towards King Jonathan. As Harrington and Strugnell first suggested, we have here “an anti-Jananean incipit to a pro-Israel hymn.”³⁹

What or Who is “holy”?

If עור is an imperative, not a noun (“song” or “city”), קדש must be a substantive: either the object of the verb, or a vocative. The imperative is not directed to Jonathan; his name is in the prepositional phrase. Judging by the second person suffixes in rest of the poem (your name be blessed, your kingdom, your people who are in the four winds), the addressee is God. Rather than reading קדש as the noun קדש, which would make no sense here, it is better taken as קדוש spelled defectively. This reading, as an epithet of God, would fit with the addressee.⁴⁰

At first glance there are a couple of difficulties with reading the vocative substantive adjective קדוש. One apparent difficulty is the defective spelling. Qumran documents are characterized by full spellings. An examination of 4Q448, however, reveals that defective spelling is the rule. Jonathan is not spelled with a *wāw*, and neither is כל. Vowel letters are even less common in 4Q448 than in the MT. The other apparent difficulty with קדוש is the lack of an article on the vocative adjective. Normally, vocatives (especially following the *qal* masculine singular imperative) are definite; they are either proper names, have pronominal suffixes, or have the article. Yet exceptions exist; of the two sequences in the Hebrew Bible of Imperative-vocative adjective-preposition, the adjective in Num 12:4 is definite⁴¹ and those in Ps 33:1 and 97:12 are indefinite.⁴² These two difficulties are therefore not insurmountable; both have

³⁹ D. J. Harrington and John Strugnell, “Qumran Cave 4 Texts,” 498.

⁴⁰ 4Q405 20 II 21--22 has קודש as an epithet for God. Eshel, Eshel and Yardeni say both קדוש and קודש are used as names of God (DJD XI, 422).

⁴¹ צאו שלשתכם אל-אֶהָל מוֹעֵד "Come out, you three, to the tent."

⁴² רְנְנִי צְדִיקִים בְּיְהוָה "Rejoice, righteous, in the LORD."

precedent in the Hebrew Bible, and we can read translate lines 1 and 2, “Arise, Holy One, against King Jonathan.”

Two grammatical difficulties remain. First, if the prayer is against King Jonathan, what are we to do with the juxtaposed “all the congregation of your people”? Certainly the poem cannot be hostile to God’s people. In Emanuelle Main's view, the *wāw* “does not link two elements dependent on the same verb, but two different sentences.” She translates, “and as for the whole congregation...” Eshel and Eshel expect such a contrasting sentence to begin with the verb⁴³ rather than with a nominative absolute. The most recent work on the Hebrew conjunction *wāw* confirms the classic view⁴⁴ that the contrastive relationship between clauses is expressed more by word order than by the conjunction.⁴⁵ The contrasting element is fronted, with a prefixed *wāw*. If, as I propose, the author intended a contrast between King Jonathan and God's people, it would be natural for him to begin the sentence with the phrase **כל קהל עמך** rather than with the verb.

The other difficulty Eshel and Eshel point out is **כלם** in II, 7, which they consider redundant.⁴⁶ Main suggests that **כלם** is there to emphasise that *all* Israel, even those not in the geographic diaspora, are in ideological exile.⁴⁷ But such speculation is not necessary to explain the syntax. If the phrase **כל קהל עמך** was taken from its expected position in the sentence and

⁴³ H. Eshel and E. Eshel, “4Q448, Psalm 154 and 4QpIsa^a.”

⁴⁴ “It connects *contrasted* ideas, where in our idiom the contrast would be expressed explicitly by *but*; in such cases prominence is usu. given to the contrasted idea by its being placed immed. after the conj” (BDB s.v. ׀ 1.e., 252).

⁴⁵ R. Steiner, “Does the Biblical Hebrew Conjunction -׀ Have Many Meanings, One Meaning, or No Meaning at All?” *JBL* 119 (2000): 260.

⁴⁶ Eshel and Eshel, “4Q448, Psalm 154 and 4QpIsa^a.”

⁴⁷ Main, “For King Jonathan or Against?” 130.

fronted to contrast with King Jonathan, the *casus pendens* simply needs a resumptive pronoun (suffixed onto an adjective, in this case) at the appropriate point in the sentence. Thus the objections of Eshel and Eshel are not forceful enough to require a interpretation which is favourable toward King Jonathan.

Reconciling texts with the sect's views

We began with the problem of reconciling the presence of this seemingly pro-Hasmonean text with the anti-Hasmonean impression we get from other texts at Qumran. We deciphered the text in agreement with Yardeni, against Eisenman-Wise and Alexander⁴⁸. We identified "King Jonathan" with Alexander Jannaeus, rather than with Jonathan Maccabee. We determined that the Qumran sect was opposed to Alexander Jannaeus, not in favour of him. Finally, we exegeted our poem to discover that it is antagonistic toward "King Jonathan;" it is not a prayer for his welfare. It may seem, then, that we have already attained our objective; this poem's presence at Qumran can be explained by its antagonism toward the Hasmonean king. We need not address the question whether this text is sectarian or not.

But it so happens that our little manuscript is peculiar at Qumran in many ways. Of course, the usual method for determining whether a text is sectarian is to compare it to texts known to be sectarian, and note whether its peculiarities are shared by known sectarian texts, or whether they are unique. In addition to the usual categories of comparison (theology, vocabulary, and orthography), I will add a few more which may be relevant in this case. The following peculiar features led me to question the sectarian origin of this document.

⁴⁸ Alexander, "A Note on the Syntax of 4Q448." Alexander's reading is also that of Wacholder-Abegg ("4Q448 Poetic Fragment" in *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls: The Hebrew and Aramaic Texts from Cave Four. Fascicle 2*. [Washington, D. C.: Biblical Archeological Society, 1994], 285-286), which presumably originated with Strugnell.

The Scroll

The scroll on which our text is found is peculiar in two ways: its fastening and its column width. Of the hundreds of fastenings found at Qumran, this is the only one Carsten identified as type 1,⁴⁹ and the column width of 4Q448 is one of the narrowest of any at Qumran,⁵⁰ five characters at its narrowest.⁵¹

Palaeography

The scripts used in our manuscript are also unusual: they are both semi-cursive. Only a very few manuscripts from the Hasmonean and Herodian periods (167 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.) use the semi-cursive script.⁵² The script of the lower columns show varying degrees of cursiveness and letter size.⁵³ It does not use the usual final forms, except for *nûn*.⁵⁴ Its writing implement, wide, flat, and held perpendicular to the lines, is common with the official Aramaic script, but unusual for the Herodian and Hasmonean period.⁵⁵

Spelling

As we noted above, page 11, we find a remarkably defective orthography in this manuscript.⁵⁶ קדש and כל are outstanding examples.⁵⁷ We find only *wāw* as a vowel letter,

⁴⁹ J. Carswell, "Fastenings on the Qumrân Manuscripts" in *Qumrân grotte 4 II, I, Archéologie*. DJD VI, Appendix I. (Oxford: 1977), 24-27, though this assessment was challenged by Eshel, Eshel and Yardeni (DJD XI, 403).

⁵⁰ Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni, DJD XI, 404.

⁵¹ ישראל in II, 4.

⁵² Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni, DJD XI, 405. Other Qumran semi-cursive manuscripts are 4QpapMMT^e (4Q398) and 4QEnoch^g.

⁵³ Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni, DJD XI, 405.

⁵⁴ Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni call this "a peculiar feature" (DJD XI, 405).

⁵⁵ Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni call this "its most striking feature" (DJD XI, 405).

⁵⁶ Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni, DJD XI, 410.

⁵⁷ Qimron's statistics given in *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1986) section 100.2 (p. 18) indicate that only 3.6% of the instances of כל at Qumran are defective.

never *yôd* or *hê*.⁵⁸ Even where the MT usually spells with a vowel letter, here we find words without. Not only is the adjective קָדוֹשׁ and the name יְהוֹנָתָן normally spelled with a *wāw* in the MT, the *qal* masculine singular imperative of עוֹר (all instances occur in Psalms) is always spelled with a final *hê* in the MT. This *hê* ending for the masculine singular imperative is a very distinctive feature of Qumran orthography; Qumran biblical scrolls commonly have it where the MT doesn't.⁵⁹ The absence of this *hê* in our text is peculiar for a Qumran document.

Vocabulary

Several phrases which occur in 4Q448 are unusual for a Qumran document. For example, the word *halleluyah* does not appear at the beginning or end of any of the sectarian hymns found at Qumran.⁶⁰ The epithet קָדוֹשׁ for God is also uncommon,⁶¹ and the phrase קָהַל עַמֵּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל is not found in either the Bible or at Qumran.⁶² Although Emanuelle Main uses the presence of the expression פִּקְדוֹן לִי to argue that the text is sectarian,⁶³ this commonality does not indicate sectarianism unless it can be demonstrated that it is unique to the sect.

Content

Finally, the imperative to God seems very unusual for a Qumran composition. Though I have not done an exhaustive search of the Hodayot, I have not found in them any imperatives

⁵⁸ According to Qimron, the second person masculine suffix ך is spelled defectively only 15% of the time at Qumran (*The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* section 100.7, p. 23).

⁵⁹ Qimron calls this “ a very salient feature of DSS Hebrew” (*The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, section 310.13, p. 47).

⁶⁰ The word appears in the non-sectarian apocryphal Psalm 151 in 11QPs^a XXVIII 3.

⁶¹ Though it does occur in 4Q405 20 II 21–22.

⁶² Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni, DJD XI, 422.

⁶³ Main, “For King Jonathan or Against?” 134. The expression occurs in 1QS IV:6–7, 11–13.

directed to God. 4QDibHam^a contains a few such imperatives, as do Psalm 155 and the Plea for Deliverance (11Q5), but the texts which are certainly sectarian exhibit a notable hesitation to command the divine the way our prayer does.

When all of the above peculiarities are combined with the observation that our manuscript contains part of the non-sectarian Psalm 154, it seems likely that 4Q448 was not a Qumran composition after all. Though Eshel and Eshel try to tentatively suggest that this document could be sectarian, composed before Alexander Jannaeus' problems with the Pharisees in 88 B.C.E. Vermes' observation still holds: the Qumran sect would not likely be favourably impressed by such a violent king at any time. They argue that the method of biblical interpretation is similar to that done at Qumran. Even so, the peculiarities of 4Q448 outweigh the commonalities with Qumran documents.

Is this text sectarian?

We now return to the final question posed at the beginning of this paper. In the intervening time we have argued that not only is this text anti-Hasmonaean, it is probably not even sectarian. It cannot be used to reconstruct the sect's views, but even so, it is in agreement with them. Its presence at Qumran is not problematic. I return to the statement made by Eshel, Eshel, and Yardeni before their change of mind: "There is no evidence that 4Q448 was written by members of the Qumran community. ... It seems, therefore, that 4Q448 was brought to Qumran by one of the sect's members." That member's views regarding King Jonathan were entirely compatible with those of the sect; for them, the downfall of King Jonathan would mean the welfare of God's people.

The Text



4Q448 in PAM 43.545

Column A

הללויה מזמו [ר] שיר]
 אהבת כא] ב
 ס ות על]
] vacat
 ויראו מס] איך
 רבים השמי] עו
 ולתמי מים]
 ועל מפארוי]
 עני מיד צרם]
 משכנו בציון כ] וחר

Column B

עור קדש
 על י ונתן המלכ
 וכל קהל עמב
 ישראל
 אשר בארבע
 רוחות שמים
 יהו שלום כלם
 ועל ממלכתכ
 יתברכ שמכ

Column C

באהבתכ אתים]
 ביום ועל ערב מ...]
 לקרוב להיות כ]
 פקדם לברכה ל...]
 על שמכ שנקרא]
 ממלכה להברכ]
 על יום מלחמה ו]
 לי ונתן המלך]
 מלך] ..]

Translations

Ln	Eshel	Vermes	Eisenman, Wise	Main
A 1	Praise the Lord, a Psal[m, a song of			
2	you loved as a fat[her			
3	you ruled over [
4	<i>vacat</i>			
5	and [your] enemi[es] were afraid[
6	of the many procl[aim			
7	and with the pure ones[
8	upon those who glorify him y[
9	the humble from the hand of adversaries[
10	Zion for his habitation, ch[oozes			
B 1	Guard (or: Rise up), O Holy One	Holy City	A sacred poem	Wake up, Holy One,
2	over King Jonathan (or: for King Jonathan)	for King Jonathan	for King Jonathan	against Jonathan the king,
3	and all the congregation of Your people	and all the congregation of Thy people	and all the Congregation of Your people	and as for the whole congregation of Thy people
4	Israel	Israel	Israel,	---Israel
5	who are in the four	who are in the four	who are (spread) in every	who is in the four
6	winds of heaven	corners (literally, winds) of heaven.	direction under Heaven,	winds of heaven---
7	Let them all be (at) peace	May the peace of them all be	may they all be well,	let them all have peace
8	and upon your kingdom	on Thy Kingdom!	Perfect before You,	and upon Thy kingdom
9	may your name be blessed	May Thy name be blessed!	and a Commonwealth in Your Name	shall be blessed Thy name.
C 1	in your love ^{ʾtys}[	I will glo[ry in] Thy love	In your love do I exalt ...	
2	in the day and until evening m...[	during the day and until evening ... [	in the day and in the evening, from wine (also possibly 'Greece') ...	
3	to approach, to be b[	to draw near to be [	to draw near so as to be ...	
4	Remember them for blessing l..[	to visit them for a blessing [	Visit them for a blessing, to ...	
5	on your name, which is called[	on Thy name which is invoked [	upon Your Name which is proclaimed ...	
6	kingdom to be blessed[	Kingdom to be blessed [	a Kingdom for Your Commonwealth ...	
7	for the day (?) of war and .[[o]n [the day] of war [the Joiners in the war/joining the war of ...	
8	to Kin[g] Jonathan[to King Jonathan (??) [Your Name for a memorial	
9	<i>mt</i> []..[... [

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