

Introduction

The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, or Angelic Liturgy, is one of the most significant previously unknown Jewish works to be discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is a liturgy written "for the *maskil*" to be used on thirteen consecutive Sabbaths of one quarter of the solar year and is devoted, as far as we can tell, entirely to the worship of an angelic priestly community in a cultic setting whose animate architecture and furniture is described in intimate detail. The XIth and XIIth Songs are devoted to chariots (*merkabot*) of the heavenly realm in reliance on biblical accounts of the vision of God's chariot throne (esp. Ezekiel 1). It is obviously, in some sense of the word, a "mystical" liturgy and since the first announcement of its discovery by J. Strugnell in 1957 it has been seized upon by students of the history of Jewish mysticism as a potentially early witness to the kind of religious experience later attested in the Hekhalot Literature.¹

Whatever its precise place in the history of Jewish mysticism, angelology and liturgy the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* was a text of considerable importance to the Qumran community whose solar calendar it presumes. Eight copies have emerged from Cave 4 (4Q400-407) and one from Cave 11 (11Q17) providing sufficient material for a reconstruction of extensive sections of the liturgy. These manuscripts range in date from the late Hasmonean period (4Q400: 75-40 B.C.) to the Herodian script of the turn of the eras (11Q17), though it is quite conceivable that the liturgy was composed earlier in the second century B.C. An assessment of the liturgy's

¹ For its role in the discussion of Jewish mysticism see especially the 2nd edition of G. Scholem's *Jewish Gnosticism* (1965, 128); Gruenwald 1980, 41; Rowland 1982, 86, 221; Schiffman 1982; Newsom 1985, 16, 19, 50-51, 56; Baumgarten 1988; Hamacher 1996 and note the several recent discussions (Murray-Jones 1998; Fletcher-Louis 1998; Davila 1999b; Lieber 2000) of the *Sabbath Songs* in the Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism Group at American meetings of the *Society of Biblical Literature*.

socio-religious life setting is complicated by the fact that a copy, dated on palaeographical grounds c. 50 A.D., has turned up in the ruins of Masada (Mas1k). This must mean that the use of the *Sabbath Songs* was not confined to Qumran. Either the liturgy is of pre-Qumran provenance or, alternatively, the Qumran community and its movement represented a significant proportion of those revolutionaries who lost their lives at Masada in A.D. 73. Either way the *Sabbath Songs* is a liturgy of considerable importance in understanding both the priestly theology of the late Second Temple period and the Qumran community.

A discussion of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* belongs in this study if for no other reason than that it can serve as a control in the testing of the hypothesis which the rest of this study aims to confirm: *if at Qumran there was a theological anthropology which gave to the righteous an angelic or divine identity, and if that anthropology was anchored in the theology and experience of the cult then the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice is the one place we should to expect such an anthropology to manifest itself.*

Newsom's Interpretative Paradigm and its Problems

The Qumran Cave 4 *Sabbath Songs* material was originally allotted to John Strugnell, and he made a very preliminary publication with comments in 1960. Full publication (with translations, commentary and interpretation) has been the responsibility of Strugnell's student Carol Newsom. Whilst the Cave 11 material has been handled by Adam S. van der Woude (1982) along with his student Eibert C. Tigchelaar (*DJD* 23 (1998)), Newsom also collaborated with Y. Yadin for the publication of the Masada copy of the *Songs* (1984). Newsom's doctoral work was published in 1985 as the first full critical edition of all the extant texts, and this served as the basis for her *editio princeps* in the *DJD* series.²

Although since the eventual publication of Newsom's 1985 critical editions, numerous studies of the *Sabbath Songs* have been made,³ by and large Newsom's thorough editorial work and commentary along with her extensive introduction and interpretation have been

² She is also responsible for the edition published in the series edited by James H. Charlesworth (1991).

³ See the bibliographies in Hamacher 1996, 152-53; Davila 2000, 93-94.

unchallenged. She has bequeathed to all those who have tried to make sense or use of this rather difficult text generally accepted conceptual parameters and interpretative conclusions. Newsom herself has changed her mind about the text's sectarian provenance since her 1985 edition,⁴ and many have added valuable details to her commentary, but the conceptual parameters of her interpretation of the text have, broadly speaking, remained unchanged.

In the next three chapters I intend to challenge the exegetical basis for her conceptual parameters at several key points and to offer a rather different reading of the *Songs* based on some detailed exegesis of key passages. The first step towards that task is an overview of some of the key interpretative decisions Newsom has made, their problems and the opportunities opened up by their re-evaluation.

(a) *A Dualistic Cosmology*

The *Sabbath Songs* describe in intimate and fascinating detail the worship of heavenly priests in a temple whose structures are themselves animate participants in the adoration of their divine creator. Sometimes the heavenly beings are explicitly called to worship (esp. the VIth–VIIIth Songs) and at other times there is simply a description of a particular part of the heavenly temple and its activity. What is the modern reader to make of all this? Who are the heavenly priests? Where are the structures of the heavenly temple? Are they simply in the imaginations of the human worshippers? Or are they manifest in concrete physical structures, buildings or tents erected by the Qumran community and those who took their last stand at Masada?

Apart from the obvious presence of the *maskil* who recites each song the only universally accepted reference to the human community as participants in the liturgy is a brief passage which probably belongs to the IInd Song where, in familiar Qumran fashion, the human worshippers lament their unworthiness before the divine beings: "how shall we be considered [among] them? And how shall our priesthood (be considered) in their dwellings? . . . [What] is the offering of our tongues of dust (compared) with the knowledge of the g[ods]?" (4Q400 2 5–7). Otherwise, Newsom—and all have followed her in this—thinks that every other worshipper and active participant in the liturgy referred to by the *maskil* is an otherworldly

⁴ See Newsom 1990.

being. At no other point are the human community mentioned. Besides the *angels, elim, elohim, cherubim, ophanim*, spirits and *living elohim*, all the chiefs, priests, princes, ministers, holy ones and dignitaries are suprahuman beings. Although the belief that the Qumran community is itself an *Ersatz* Temple offering prayers, praise and obedience as a substitute for the sacrifices of the Temple is well attested, Newsom thinks that the structures, the physical space which the heavenly community occupies is above and beyond that of the human community. There is no genuinely egalitarian *Engelgemeinschaft* here, despite the popularity of that theme in Qumran spirituality: the human community members are an "audience", mystical voyeurs, of a cult which only *corresponds* to the earthly institutions.⁵

So Newsom's interpretative framework is essentially *dualistic*. She assumes that the heavenly cult inhabited by heavenly beings is qualitatively and spatially above (in a quasi-platonic sense) the real world of the Qumran community and its worshippers. "It is virtually certain that the seven chief princes [of the VIth song] are to be identified with the seven archangels".⁶ Newsom's confidence in this respect is not deterred by the fact that the *seven* archangels of later Jewish angelology are not a feature of Qumran theology.⁷ And, despite the lavish piling up of angelic epithets throughout the songs the names of the archangels (Michael, Gabriel, Sariel, Raphael *et al.*) never appear.⁸ The expression of mortal frailty and inadequacy in 4Q400 2 sums up the anthropology assumed for the whole liturgy: human beings have "tongues of dust" which are not worthy of actual participation in the praise of the heavenly realm. She does not consider, even to reject, the possibility that some of the heavenly beings

⁵ See esp. 1985, 64. At times, it is true, that Newsom speaks of the *Songs* effecting a sense of community with the angels, but it is not the fully participatory fellowship described in 1QSb and, most importantly, the language of the songs *refers* to suprahuman angels, not to human beings.

⁶ 1985, 34.

⁷ The *War Scroll* knows only four archangels (1QM 9:14–16). Outside of the more clearly sectarian corpus of texts there are seven archangels in *1 Enoch* 20 (Ethiopic), though without an extant Aramaic version at this point we can't be sure these seven were known to the Qumran community.

⁸ Newsom's restoration of the name Melchizedek at 4Q401 11 3 and 22 3 (1985, 37; *DJD* 205, 213) is possible, but by no means certain. Given our discussion of 11QMelchizedek in chapter 6, the presence of the personal name Melchizedek (rather than a Michael, Gabriel, Uriel or Raphael) would be entirely consistent with the presence of transformed, angelic human participants in the liturgy one or more of whom might fill the office he established according to Psalm 110.

to whom the *maskil* refers are actually the laity or the priesthood of the Qumran community in their transformed, heavenly, mode.

Not only is this dualism out of keeping with the Qumran community's integration of human and divine spheres in the liturgical context which we have examined in previous chapters, it also creates a number of interpretative difficulties for the *Songs*.

(1) First, there are words and expressions for which an angelic referent is unprecedented. The songs attest unsurprising references to angels as מלאכים, *cherubim, ophanim*. References to heavenly beings as אלים and אלהים are not entirely without precedent but are striking nonetheless.⁹ Besides these angelic titles the songs contain a bewildering array of terms which are either rarely or nowhere else in ancient Jewish angelological texts used of angels. They are terms drawn from Biblical cultic, political or military terminology and are otherwise always used of human beings.¹⁰

So, for example, the songs are preoccupied with heavenly *priests* (כהנים). Although Jewish angelology sometimes describes angels in priestly and cultic terms "the term כהן, or its equivalents in Greek, Ethiopic, etc., is not explicitly used of angels in other Qumran texts in apocryphal compositions, or in rabbinic literature" as Newsom admits.¹¹ We encounter numerous references to heavenly beings as "נשיאים", for which Newsom has been unable to find a parallel use for angels before the late magical text *Sefer Ha-Razim*.¹² The word is widely used in biblical texts and later rabbinic parlance as a political title. In the plural it is used of the leaders of the twelve tribes of the cultic community (Numbers 2, 7, 34); which has then inspired its use in the *War Scroll* (e.g. 1QM 3:3, 15, 16; 4:1; 5:1). Then, again, we encounter references to ראשים of which Newsom comments "[this] is a common term for human rank—political, military, and priestly—both in the OT and in QL, especially in 1QM. I do not know, however, of its being applied elsewhere to angels".¹³ Several times

⁹ Cf. the expression אלהי האלדים in, for example, Deut 10:17; Josh 22:22; Ps 84:7 and for angelic אלים at Qumran see e.g. 1QM 1:10–11; 14:16; 17:7; 1QH^a 18:8 [10:8]; 4Q511 10 11. Reference to divine humans in some of these passages cannot now be ruled out.

¹⁰ See the survey in Newsom 1985, 23–38.

¹¹ 1985, 26. Philo *Spec. Leg.* 1:66 is a possible parallel.

¹² 1985, 27. As Davila (2000, 102) notes the title is never used of angels in the Hekhalot Literature.

¹³ 1985, 27. She considers a possible parallel at *T. Mos.* 10:2, but this is a Latin

participants in the angelic liturgy are called "elect ones" (קרויא) a term once more drawn from the portrayal of Israel in the wilderness (Num 1:16; 16:2; 26:9).

In addition to these instances of language nowhere else used of angels, there is terminology which is ambivalent in the canonical and Qumran literary contexts. Holy ones, ministers (of "angels" in Psalm 104:4), princes (שרים, of angels in Josh 5:14–15; Dan 8:11) could either be humans or angels. Equally, there is language used for the organization of the heavenly community that is strictly speaking capable of either a human or an angelic referent. A "camp" (מחנה) or "council" (סוד) could be either human or angelic,¹⁴ although in QL these are, somewhat distinctively, used of human institutions.¹⁵

In other cases the language chosen to describe the corporate structures of the heavenly community is, again, nowhere else used of angels in the literature of the period. Although a *degal* "division, battalion" is somehow a reference to the signs or divisions of the seasons in the Aramaic Enoch material (4QEn^a 1 ii 2, 3, 6), *degalim* is not used of angels until the angelology of the Amoraic period.¹⁶ In Qumran literature *degalim* are otherwise always units of human organization either in a liturgical (11QTS 21:5) or a military context (11QT 57:3; 1QM 1:14; 3:6; 4:10 etc.).¹⁷ Here, again, the Qumran community model the heavenly community on the organization of Israel in the wilderness (see esp. Num 2 and 10). Similarly, a reference to the heavenly beings as "gathered troops" or "appointed ones (פקודיהם)" is derived from the biblical portrayal of Israel's political organization (Num 2:4; 31:14, 48; 2 Kgs 11:15; 2 Chr 23:14). It is not until the Hekhalot Literature that angels are clearly described in these terms.¹⁸ The one reference to "divisions" (מפלגות) is also

text and the Hebrew underlying the "nuntius" ("messenger") would probably have been מלאך. For the leaders of the Qumran movement referred to as שרים ושרים see 4Q171 (4QpPs 37) iii 5.

¹⁴ For an angelic מועד see Gen 32:3; סוד see Psalm 89:8 (cf. Jer 23:18, 22).

¹⁵ None of the references to סוד in Kuhn 1960 refer to a purely angelic heavenly council, although there are some notable instances where human beings are placed in a transcendent סוד (1QS 2:25; 1QH^a 11:21 [3:21]; 12:25 [4:25]; 19:12 [11:12]). For the מחנה in QL see 1QM *passim* and CD 12–14.

¹⁶ *Num. Rab.* 2:2; 3 *Enoch* 19:6. On this innovative use of דגל for angels see Olyan 1993, 55–58.

¹⁷ See Swanson 1995, 78–80, 170. There is of course considerable overlap between the military and liturgical contexts given the sacramental understanding of the Holy War.

¹⁸ Davila (2000, 153) compares the "mustered armies of princes" in *Massekhet Hekhalot* §15.4.

without parallel in angelological texts and is normally used of human persons (1QS 4:15–16; 1QH^a 20:23 [12:23]; 2 Chr 35:12) or of territorial divisions (1QM 10:12).

Despite these linguistic difficulties Newsom is confident that all these terms refer to angels *not* humans. In the VIth Song there is a series of blessings by chief princes on others who are variously described as “those who have knowledge of eternal things”, “all who exalt the king”, “all who walk in uprightness”, “those who are eternally pure”, “all who are eager for His good favour”, “those who confess His majesty”, “those with powerful insight”, “all whose way is perfect”, “all who wait for Him”, “all the holy ones who establish knowledge”, “all who exalt His statutes” and “those appointed for righteousness” (4Q403 1 i 16–27). Newsom considers the possibility that here those blessed include human worshippers.¹⁹ But “in view of the overwhelming angelological focus of the Sabbath Shiroṭ” she prefers to see here one group of angels blessing another.²⁰

In isolation the descriptions of those blessed in the VIth Song, especially in view of their moral qualities, are most naturally taken to refer to humans not angels. Only with great difficulty can the epithet “all those whose way is perfect” be taken as a description of angels. The language is biblical and it is true that, on occasion, God’s way can be blameless (2 Sam 22:31 = Ps 18:31). But normally it is the righteous whose way is blameless, both in broadly sapiential (Prov 11:20) and also in narrowly covenantal (Psalm 119:1) senses. At Qumran “the perfect of way (תמימי דרך)” (4Q403 1 i 22) is technical terminology for the members of the community (1QS 2:2; 3:9–10; 4:22; 8:10, 18; 9:5, 9; 1QM 14:7; 1QH^a 9:36 [1:36]; CD 2:15–16) which relates their piety to that of David (11Q5 (11QPsalms^a) 27:2–3, cf. Noah in Gen 6:9), the true Israel (4Q510 1 9 = 4Q511 10 8; 4Q511 63–64 iii 3) and, implicitly, to the prelapsarian humanity (Ezek 28:15).²¹ Given their keen interest in the Urim and Thummim (אורים) their “perfection” will have been closely bound to their beliefs about their priesthood and the transformative power of the cult. The use of this language for the *Urmensch* in Ezekiel

¹⁹ 1985, 28, 196; *DJD* 11:262.

²⁰ 1985, 196; *DJD* 11:262.

²¹ Cf. 4Q525 5 11; 4Q528 line 4; Sirach 39:24.

28:15 suggests that it would fittingly describe humanity in its heavenly mode.²² But there is no warrant for its use of angels.

The difficulty which all these linguistic terms pose for a purely angelological reading of the *Songs* has recently been recognized by James R. Davila.²³ And, in the light of an earlier version of this and the next three chapters,²⁴ Davila concedes “the human community is sometimes alluded to in the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, perhaps more often than has been recognized in the past.”²⁵ Yet, Davila has remained cautious about this possibility for several reasons. On the problem of language otherwise not commonly used for angels he remains sympathetic to the Newsom paradigm because he attaches some significance to the fact that although not attested in QL or texts from the late Second Temple period much of this peculiar language is used unambiguously of angels in the Hekhalot Literature. Although the two are widely separated in time and provenance Davila thinks that there is an essential continuity of literary tradition and mystical experience.

However, whilst we should expect there to be literary and conceptual connections between the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* and the Hekhalot Literature, assumed similarities cannot be allowed to prejudice our exegesis of the Qumran text which should, rather, be interpreted in its immediate linguistic and historical context.²⁶ In that context it is hard to see how *all* the terms we have just discussed can possibly refer to (suprahuman) angels. This is the first weakness of Newsom’s dualistic paradigm.

(2) The second weakness of Newsom’s paradigm is the fact that it creates a generic oddity that is hard to place in the life setting that she imagines. Patently the *Songs* are both liturgical and mystical. Alas we know far too little about the nature of both these aspects of Jewish spirituality in the late Second Temple period. And the relationship between their literary deposit—whether in the biblical Psalms or the ascent texts of the apocalypses—and their putative cultic and experiential *Sitze im Leben* is notoriously difficult to judge.

²² Note the use of the language in poorly preserved contexts in 4QInstruction (4Q415 1 ii + 2 i 3; 4Q417 2 ii 5; 4Q418 172 4).

²³ 2001, 102.

²⁴ Fletcher-Louis 1998.

²⁵ 2001, 102.

²⁶ For Davila’s attempts to make strong connections between Qumran texts and later Jewish mysticism see Davila 1996; Davila 1999a; Davila 2000, 92.

Whilst Newsom is, therefore, suitably cautious in her reconstruction of the *Songs*' life setting several points are a necessary corollary of her dualistic paradigm.

The *Songs* describe the praise of the heavenly beings, but their words are never cited. If it is the human community who are in fact the heavenly beings called upon to praise, they could then recite from memory relevant psalms or use other written texts which would supply what is now missing. But if Newsom is right that the praise is actually offered by (suprahuman) angels then this presents a problem.²⁷ As Dale C. Allison has commented "[i]n other ancient Jewish and Christian documents the angelic songs of praise are at the center of depictions of heaven and its activities . . . The well-attested tendency, continued in the Jewish *Hekhalot* hymns, of recording angelic songs or words of praise, makes the lack of such in 4QShirot 'Olat Ha-Shabbat a real puzzle'.²⁸

Newsom's interpretation requires that the actual praise of the angels be simply *imagined*.²⁹ The use of such "imagination" in experiencing the praise of the angels is not, of course, without precedent; this is a fundamental feature of the mystical experiences described by the seers of the apocalyptic tradition and one that is claimed for the *yorede merkabah* in the Hekhalot texts. Such an experience is as old as Isaiah's vision of the praise of the Seraphim (Isaiah 6) and we are reminded of the apostle Paul's claim to have heard "unspeakable words" when raptured to paradise (1 Cor 12:4). But Newsom's *Sabbath Songs* are unique in that they envisage (a) the corporate

²⁷ The quite plausible suggestion that the angelic song is unrecorded lest it fall into the hands of outsiders (Maier 1989/90, 573-4, cf. Falk 1998, 140-44) does not solve the deeper problem: how would such angelic praise—that is not uttered by the Qumran community—work in liturgical practice?

²⁸ 1988, 189-90. Allison cites Isa 6:1-4; Rev 4:8, 11; *Apoc. Abr.* 17:8-21; 1 *Enoch* 17:8-21; 39:9-14; 2 *Enoch* 21 J; 3 *Enoch* 22B:7; 39:2; 40:1-4 and *T. Adam* 1:4; 4:8. Allison's suggestion that the belief that angelic prayer is a barbarous language which need not then be recorded is suggestive (*ibid.* 190), but does not fully resolve the puzzle. The Hekhalot texts show that a barbarous angelic tongue *can* be recorded. And a barbarous praise does not entirely accord with the highly formulaic and ordered nature of the angelic praise described in the VIth-VIIIth *Songs*.

²⁹ One wonders whether Newsom's interpretation would ever have been considered plausible were it not for the lingering Freudian suspicion, which dominates twentieth century discussion, that mysticism is essentially a matter of fantasy without a self-consciously concrete setting. Cf. Maier 1992, 433: Newsom's "proposal that the *songs* served for something like 'mystical' meditation and a kind of collective 'religious experience' seems to correspond rather to later, medieval or modern concepts".

imagination of a whole community of worshippers—not just an individual—who are (b) passively standing by, without their own active participation in the experience,³⁰ and (c) in some cases the worship of the angels is not merely *described* but *enjoined* by the human leader of the liturgy. Whereas an Isaiah or a Paul describes the angels' worship, the *maskil* who conducts the *Sabbath Songs* commands the imagined heavenly beings to worship. Where is there a parallel in the history of Jewish mysticism or liturgy for this?

It is true that in the Psalms "all the earth", God's "angels . . . mighty ones", "all his works", "the sun and moon (and) shining stars", "the highest heavens" and "everything that breathes" are called upon—or "commanded"—to praise the LORD (Ps 66:1-3; 96:1-2, 7-9; 103:19-22; 148; 150:6). This form reaches its zenith in the Septuagint's addition to Daniel, the Prayer of Azariah, where over thirty verses (vv. 35-68) are devoted to a call for the whole of creation in all its parts to bless the Lord. But there are a number of important differences between these psalms and the *Sabbath Songs* and to assert that they provide a precedent for a liturgy in which heavenly beings are imagined responding to a summons to praise with actual songs simply begs the interpretative question.

In the *Sabbath Songs* the *maskil* describes the blessing and praise of the heavenly beings quite specifically: they are to praise "with seven wondrous exaltations", "seven wondrous thanksgivings", "seven psalms of exaltation" etc . . . (Songs VI and VIII). This is quite different from the rhetoric of the biblical form, where nothing suggests that real psalms and blessings (of the human variety) are imagined coming from the sun, moon, stars, angels and the other parts of creation. Just what the biblical Psalms and those who used them thought their call for creation's praise entailed is not clear. In every instance of the biblical form the call for the cosmos and its parts to praise is *coupled with*, and *set in the larger context of*, the explicit praise of the psalmist or the human community.³¹ This contrasts sharply with

³⁰ Contrast the active participation in, and inducement of, the experience of heaven in Hekhalot Mysticism. Whereas there is a modern (and Protestant) tendency to assume *genuinely* revelatory experiences are passively received, Jewish mysticism in antiquity assumes that *active* techniques of ecstasy are necessary. The passivity of the human worshippers of Newsom's *Songs* is anomalous in this respect.

³¹ Note the way in which in the midst of the call for the cosmos to bless in the Prayer of Azariah "human beings" (v. 60), "Israel" (v. 61), the "Priests" and "Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael" are also invited to praise.

Newsom's view that the direct praise of human worshippers in the *Sabbath Songs* is absent. Given the cosmological role of the Israelite Temple it is probable that, at least in part, the praise of creation and its heavenly personnel, was represented and voiced by the structures, the drama of the liturgy and the human cultic community. That this is how such psalms would have been understood at Qumran is further suggested by the way in which, as we have seen in earlier chapters, in the priestly tradition the movement of the priesthood is in synch with, and represents that of the heavenly bodies (esp. Sirach 50, 4Q392; Q408, 4Q468b, 4Q541, cf. 2 Sam 23:4). Although we might envisage a *development* from this biblical material to the *Sabbath Songs* as construed by Newsom, the former cannot be used to explain the puzzling form of the latter without further ado.

The question of the *Songs*' genre and *Sitz im Leben* is also problematic when one considers the text's own generic indicators. These are, principally, three in number. First, the *Songs* are assigned "למשכיל" which could mean they are "by the *maskil*" or "for the *maskil*". Whilst a number of biblical Psalms are entitled a *maskil* (Pss 32; 42; 44, 45, 52–55 etc. . . .), the phrase למשכיל refers the Psalm to a particular individual (cf. Dan 1:4; 11:33, 35; 12:3, 10). Following the use of the word of Levitical singers in 2 Chronicles 30:22, the Qumran community envisages a specific office and designates a number of its texts "for the *maskil*" for use in a public setting. The whole and parts of the 1QS-1QSa-1Qsb scroll are "for the *maskil*" (1QS 3:13; 9:12; 1Qsb 1:1; 3:22; 5:20; 4Q256 (4Qsb) 4 1 = 4Q258 (4Qsd) 1 i 1) as are parts of the Damascus Document (CD 12:21; 13:22; 4Q266 9 iii 5), the *Songs of the Sage* (4Q510 1 4; 4Q511 2 i 1), the *Hodayot* (1QH^a 20:11 [12:11]),³² a text in which a community member instructs the novitiate (*Sons of Dawn* 4Q298 1–2 i) and, probably, the *War Scroll* (1QM 1:1). In several of these texts the *maskil* clearly has a teaching role vis-à-vis the rest of the community (1QS-1QSa-1Qsb, CD, 4Q298, 1QM). In others he has a liturgical responsibility: in the *Songs of the Sage* either he himself proclaims (4Q510 1 4, cf. 1QH^a 20:11) or he summons the community to praise (4Q511 2 i 1). In none of these texts does the *maskil* teach or lead the angels, though in several the community who are his audience are now a transcendent, divine, humanity (1Qsb, the *Hodayot*, *Songs of the Sage*,

³² Though the reading is uncertain (see Holm-Nielsen 1960, 204).

War Scroll (see below)). The generic expectations of this aspect of the title of the *Sabbath Songs* do not, therefore, point in the dualistic direction assumed by Newsom and, if anything, they point in a rather different direction.

Secondly, the allocation of each individual song "for the Sabbath Sacrifice" of successive weeks of a quarter of the year would most naturally suggest that the liturgy is to be used by the human community itself. According to 2 Chronicles 29:27–28 songs were sung for the duration of the offering of the Sabbath sacrifice in the Jerusalem Temple. According to 11QPs^a 27:5–9 David composed fifty-two songs for the Sabbath offerings and we know that at least two biblical Psalms were at one time specifically set apart for the Sabbath (Psalm 92 and LXX Psalm 37). A fragmentary portion of the *Words of the Heavenly Lights* is entitled a Song for the Sabbath Day (4Q504 1–2 col. vii recto 4-verso).³³ So J. Maier quite reasonably suggests that the unrecorded praise is that of the traditional Sabbath liturgy.³⁴ Certainly, the title of the *Songs* inclines the reader to expect to hear the contents of, or instruction for, the songs to be sung by the human community during the offering of the Sabbath sacrifice (or during the time when that would otherwise take place).

Thirdly, Qumran texts which describe the angelic world from a human perspective usually envisage and overtly describe a shared angelic-human community. Newsom thinks that in the *Sabbath Songs* the community's aspirations for communion with the angelic world are fulfilled by merely being allowed to *descriptively* approach the splendours of the angelic realm. The human community *do* appear at one point in the *Songs* where their mortality and earthly identity is contrasted with that of the heavenly beings. This too is a regular feature of texts describing the heavenly world at Qumran (as we have seen in previous chapters). Some might assume that such an *Elendsbetrachtung* explains why there is no real *Engelsgemeinschaft* in the *Shirot*. However, wherever else this form appears there is always a concomitant affirmation of the fact that, by the grace and power of God, the human community *have* been given access to the heavenly world and the same status, if not identity, as that of the angels.

So, on several counts, generic conventions arouse the expectation

³³ It speaks of "all the angels of the holy firmament (recto 6)".

³⁴ 1992, 553.

that the human community should appear alongside the angels in the *Sabbath Songs* and that, where sufficient portions of the text are preserved, we might hope to discern a clear delineation between the angelic human and the suprahuman angelic members of the heavenly world. If Newsom is right that there is just one reference to the human community, in the second *Sabbath Song*, then this creates an imbalance in the larger thematic structure of the liturgy and hardly satisfies the expectation that the human community would appear elsewhere in communion with the angelic one. Newsom does actually see the songs as a *vehicle* for the experience of communion with the angels.³⁵ If it is such a “vehicle” it is all the more strange that after one brief passage which *denies* such a possibility there is never any explicit indication in the *Songs* that that is what is happening.

Clearly, then, there are a number of interpretative decisions which are part and parcel of Newsom’s dualistic reading of the liturgy which create oddities and interpretative difficulties. None of these in isolation presents an insuperable barrier to accepting Newsom’s paradigm. But cumulatively, and before actually examining the texts, they raise doubts.

(b) *A Liturgical Chiasm and Heavenly Tour, Not a Heavenly Ascent.*

The second feature of Newsom’s interpretation of the *Songs* cycle which causes trouble is her assessment of their liturgical structure and thematic development. Newsom thinks that the thirteen songs form a chiasmic structure with the central focus on the VIIth Song, with correspondences between the VIth and VIIIth pointing to the centrality of the VIIth, which appropriately enough expresses the mystical significance of the perfect number.³⁶ She has also noticed the sense of movement to a climax from beginning to the end of the songs, with a more numinous, transcendent mood and content marking the later songs over against the first two.³⁷ Yet whilst she has acknowledged in the last four songs a movement from the outer features of the heavenly temple to the holy of holies and the *merkabah*,³⁸ she does not think that the *Songs* offer a genuine experience of heavenly ascent as do some of the apocalypses. There are a

³⁵ 1985, 17–18.

³⁶ 1985, 13–17.

³⁷ 1985, 14–15.

³⁸ *DJD* 11:340.

number of reasons why she rejects this interpretation which students of ancient Jewish mysticism might, quite reasonably, expect of such an angelic liturgy.

First, for Newsom the centrality of the seventh song is clear and paramount. Secondly, what progression there is in the IXth through XIIIth songs is not as clear by comparison with the emphasis on VIIth. Thirdly, the heavenly ascent form as it is described in the texts of *Merkabah Mysticism* would normally climax with a vision of the chariot and, in some cases, its occupant; God himself. In the *Sabbath Songs* the vision of God’s chariot which is based, as we would expect, on Ezekiel 1 comes not in the XIIIth Song, where the focus is on the angelic high priesthood, their garments and sacrifices, but in the XIIth. This, Newsom thinks is at odds with the ascent form, detracting from any genuine progression into the sanctuary and/or upwards towards the highest heaven. Fourthly, of course, although she doesn’t say as much, since Newsom holds apart heavenly and earthly realms and because she allows the human community only an attenuated participation in the angelic world and its liturgy, a genuine experience of ascent hardly suits her larger interpretative framework. Ascent to heaven entails the kind of penetration of heaven by earth and a community of angels and men which Newsom denies the songs. And seers who ascend to the highest heaven invariably experience transformation to an angelic or divine identity; a possibility which Newsom does not consider and which her interpretative grid would not allow.

Instead of a heavenly ascent Newsom thinks that the IXth to XIIIth songs are instead modelled on the temple tour of Ezekiel 40–48.³⁹ whilst the latter section of the *Songs*’ cycle is preoccupied with the details of the true, heavenly, temple there is no progressive ascent experience and so the less systematic model of Ezekiel’s temple tour better explains the *Songs*’ inspiration. In particular she points to the influence of Ezekiel 43:1–5, the description of the entry of the king into the future sanctuary for the weekly Sabbath offering, on the phrase the “vestibule(s) where the King enters” in the IXth Song. Here she also discerns the influence of the descriptions of the vestibules and gates in Ezekiel 40–41.⁴⁰

To be sure, although there are some intriguing connections between

³⁹ 1985, 16, 52–57.

⁴⁰ See generally 1985, 53–55.

the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* and the Hekhalot corpus, unlike some of the latter, the former are not obviously written as a vehicle for the incubation of visions or of mystical ascent by individuals. The mysticism of the *Songs* is best described—to use Newsom’s phrase—as a “communal mysticism” in which all the community share the experience. Although the repetitious language and the wonder with which the heavenly world is described assume a numinous power of the liturgy and would, in all likelihood, have created some kind of “altered state of consciousness”, the liturgical structure of a thirteen week period hardly makes possible the kind of out of body heavenly rapture that a good Jewish mystic such as Paul the Apostle could claim for himself (2 Cor 12:2–4). But then Newsom’s reluctance to see *any* form of ascent, even over a prolonged period of the many weeks of the liturgy must be questioned.

The tour of the heavenly temple was well-known at Qumran as the New Jerusalem text attests (1Q32, 4Q232, 4Q554, 4Q555 etc . . .). But how suitable are Ezekiel’s chs. 40–48 as a model for a *liturgy*? In their own context they are a revelation to the prophet of a future, eschatological, temple and this is the way the genre is taken up in the New Jerusalem and other apocalyptic texts (e.g. 2 *Baruch* 59:4; Rev 21:1–2, 10–22:5). Are not form and content of the *liturgy* of the regular Sabbath offerings and an *eschatological vision* of the future temple rather different? Newsom offers no explanation why the former might have adopted the genre of the latter. As for her insistence that the VIIth Song stands at the apex of the liturgy her confidence must be tempered by the fact that so much of the liturgy is lost.⁴¹ Barely anything of the second through fifth songs is known and so a chiasmic structure in which the first six songs match those of the last six, with the attention directed to the seventh, cannot be securely established.

And, in any case, Newsom has been criticised by some for failing to give due weight to the genuine progression towards a climax in the IXth to XIIIth Songs.⁴² In chapters 10 and 11 we shall discover

⁴¹ Hamacher 1996, 121.

⁴² See esp. Baumgarten 1988, 206–7, and compare Morray-Jones 1998. Baumgarten argues that in the XIth Song the focus is on the brick pedestal of Exod 24:10, not as Newsom thought, the paneling of 1 Kgs 6; 2 Chr 3 and Ezek 40. Getting this detail right, he notes, allows a clear logic in the progression from the outer to the inner sanctuary and the chariot (p. 207).

that, in fact, the latter half of the cycle *does* present a clear movement *into* the inner reaches of the heavenly sanctuary in a way which presumes a heavenly ascent not entirely dissimilar to that found in the apocalypses and *Merkabah Mysticism*.

(c) *The Songs’ Temple Cosmology*

The *Songs* are full of the language and imagery derived from the biblical descriptions of Israel’s Tabernacle and Temple(s) (Exodus, 1 Kings and 1–2 Chronicles): the angelic liturgy takes place in a sanctuary—or sanctuaries—whose structures are suffused with the glory and numinous power of the heavenly world.⁴³

Newsom calls this a “heavenly temple” by which she means a temple that is in heaven above; a temple that *corresponds to* the cult on earth below, but is clearly separate from it.⁴⁴ This analogical relationship between temple in heaven above and the cultic life of the worshipping community below is a clear instance of the dualistic paradigm which informs her reading of the *Songs*.⁴⁵ It allows her to maintain both a spatial and an ontological distinction between humans and angels. But on numerous counts this cannot be the way that the relationship between sacred space and cosmology is envisaged in the *Songs*.

(i) *The Absence of an “As in Heaven So on Earth” Liturgical Cosmology at Qumran*

Newsom recognizes that in the pre-Hellenistic period there is little or no evidence for the belief that there is a temple above with worship which corresponds to that below. Although this is the way in which some (e.g. Heb 8:5) *may* have taken the “pattern, structure (תבנית)” of the Tabernacle revealed to Moses at Sinai (Exodus 25:9, 40, cf. 1 Chr 28:19), the biblical text at that point merely envisages the architects *plans* for the actual Tabernacle to be erected by Moses.⁴⁶

⁴³ This cultic terminology is surveyed in Newsom 1985, 39–58.

⁴⁴ See esp. 1985, 59–72.

⁴⁵ Again, in this she is followed by others. See e.g. Davila 2000, 83.

⁴⁶ The misleading claim that Exodus 25:9, 40 itself envisages a heavenly sanctuary above that on earth is sometimes made (e.g. Charles 1908a, 33 n. 5; Jonge 1953, 48; Collins 1996, 33; Davila 2000, 82). If there is any cosmological significance in the language of Exod 25:9, 40 it will be the belief that the “pattern” revealed to Moses as the structure of the Tabernacle is that of the whole cosmos itself.

But Newsom thinks that in the Hellenistic period there emerges a widespread belief in a temple and liturgy above corresponding to that below and that it is this belief that provides the conceptual context of the *Sabbath Songs*.⁴⁷ She appeals specifically to *1 Enoch* 14, *Jubilees*, the *Apocryphon of Levi* and *Testament of Levi*, Psalm 150:1 and the Song of the Three Young Men in the Greek Additions to Daniel.⁴⁸ Whilst several of these texts were certainly known to the Qumran community, none, in fact, clearly witness to the kind of heavenly temple which Newsom thinks is present in the *Sabbath Songs*.

1 Enoch 14 does depict God's dwelling as a sanctuary and the angels of the *Book of Watchers* probably reflect the author's view of some priests in the 4th or 3rd centuries B.C. But the setting and role of the angels is quite different from that Newsom imagines for the *Sabbath Songs*. In the first place Enoch's entry into God's throne room happens long before there is any earthly cult established in Jerusalem.

⁴⁷ In assuming that there is such a belief in the late Second Temple period Newsom is in good company (see, e.g., Attridge 1989, 222–224 (with older literature) and cf. Mach 1992, 217; Harlow 1996, 71–75). The unquestioning enthusiasm for this idea is exemplified by Darrell Hannah's claim that "in the Second Temple period there was a great deal of speculation about a heavenly temple and cult which served as a pattern for the temple and cult in Jerusalem" (Hannah 1999, 32). Hannah then supports this assertion with the citation of only two texts, *2 Bar.* 4:1–6 and *Jub.* 31:14, neither of which, on close inspection, say what Hannah claims they say.

⁴⁸ 1985, 60–71. She further claims (1985, 61) "[i]n literature from the Roman period the notion is attested in very diverse sources, both Jewish and Christian, e.g., in Philo and Josephus, in *3 Baruch* and the *Apocalypse of Paul*, in Hebrews and *Revelation*, etc." As we have seen in chapter 3 both Philo and Josephus are primarily interested in a rather different cultic cosmology. Whilst there are places where Philo views the cosmos as a whole as a temple (*Spec. Leg.* 1:66–67; *Somn.* 1:215), I know of no texts in which he or Josephus reflect the kind of cosmology Newsom has in mind. Neither is it at all clear that in Hebrews or *Revelation* there is a cult in heaven which corresponds to the one on earth in the way Newsom imagines. In both these texts the primary idea is that the true Temple and priesthood is now manifest in the historical Jesus and, in particular, his sacrificial death, the reality of which is lived out in the life of the church, his followers. If there was, in the past a heavenly temple which was a model for the earthly one of the old covenant the relationship between the two is primarily salvation-historical and the true temple in heaven which was reserved for the end of history has now been made manifest in history. In *3 Baruch* there is no temple in heaven or a "heavenly temple" as such. Chapters 11–15 appear to view the whole of the seven-tiered cosmos as a temple with Michael playing the role of the priest *not in one of these heavens*, but in his communication up and down the heavenly hierarchy as though he were a priest mediating between God in his inner shrine and the people outside. The *Apocalypse of Paul* is a Christian 4th or 5th century A.D. work and hardly counts as direct evidence for the 2nd century B.C. whence the *Sabbath Songs*.

Whilst in the *primeval* time Enoch encounters God enthroned in his sanctuary above, *1 Enoch* 25–26 looks forward to a time when God will be enthroned in Jerusalem and the true cultic community will be established. The author of the *Book of Watchers* might well have believed that there is a worship above simultaneous to that below (in Jerusalem, at Mount Hermon, or wherever) but this is never described nor assumed in his book. And, in any case, for the time scale which the *Book of Watchers* envisages there is rather an *eschatological* correspondence between the location of God's throne in Jerusalem and the primeval sanctuary Enoch enters. Secondly, the sanctuary which Enoch enters does not belong to a heavenly world which is without a concrete, earthly reference-point as later Christian and rabbinic ouranologies imagine for the sanctuary above. Enoch is taken up into God's sanctuary at *Mount Hermon*, perhaps the most important cosmic mountain of that part of the Levant.⁴⁹ Enoch is the archetypal high priest whose journey from the foot of the mountain, where he is praying beside the waters which emerge from the abyss below, to God's sanctuary on the top of the mountain is *not the movement of a heavenly priest from one part of a heavenly sanctuary to another* mirroring the movement of the human priest from the outer to the inner regions of the earthly sanctuary. Enoch's movement from nadir to zenith at the cosmic mountain is cosmologically parallel to the movement of Aaron and his sons from the outer to the inner reaches of the Tabernacle and Temple which are each, in turn, a model of the cosmic mountain and of sea, earth and heaven.⁵⁰

In this context the three-tiered house which Enoch enters is quite specifically equivalent to the *shrine* with its *ulam*, outer house (the *hekhal*) and its inner room (the *debir*). And, of course, this shrine corresponds to *only a part of the whole temple which is in Jerusalem*. The Jerusalem Temple has several other zones and partitions which correspond in turn to the lower reaches of the cosmic mountain from which Enoch comes. In all this, although the watchers who fall are meant to remind us of the priests who leave their privileged posi-

⁴⁹ See the discussion of this feature of the *Book of Watchers* in Fletcher-Louis 2001a.

⁵⁰ Besides the material laid out in chapter 3 note in particular the *identification* of Jerusalem and its Temple with Lebanon in Sirach 50:8–12 and the echoes in Sirach 50:3 of Mesopotamian cultic theology according to which the urban cult is a model of the cosmic mountain (see Fletcher-Louis 2001b *ad loc.*). See more generally especially Stager 1999.

tion in the Jerusalem cult, there is no suggestion that their worship was ever a pattern above *for that below*; on the contrary the worship of the angels above is a model for human priests *when they also are above*.

The distinction which we must make in reading *1 Enoch* 14 between the three-tiered *sanctuary* and the more complex structure of a *Temple*, which as a whole, maps the entire cosmos (or cosmic mountain) is of immediate relevance also for the passage from the Song of Three Young Men to which Newsom appeals. This reads as follows:

Blessed are you in the sanctuary (ἐν τῷ ναῷ) of your holy Glory,
and to be extolled and highly glorified for ever.
Blessed are you who look into the depths from your throne on the cherubim.
And to be praised and highly exalted forever.
Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom,
and to be extolled and highly exalted forever.

Here God is praised as he sits in his sanctuary. Since the song purports to voice the praise of a Jewish community in exile when the Jerusalem Temple is destroyed (esp. 3:5, 15) this praise directed to God in his sanctuary might appear to be warrant for the view that there is a heavenly temple above which can be accessed when the earthly temple is destroyed. But again we should pay careful attention to the language. God is set in his *sanctuary* (ναός); not his Temple (ἱερόν) but only the equivalent of its inner part.⁵¹ And in any case, there is hardly here warrant for the claim that there is an angelic worship (let alone “liturgy”) in God’s sanctuary that is a mirror image or pattern for that on earth. The rest of the Song is telling: seventeen verses are devoted to the blessings to be offered by *creation* in all its parts (vv. 35–51) and this is followed by seven verses in which righteous humanity is called upon to bless the Lord (vv. 52–66). If

⁵¹ The need to distinguish clearly between a ναός, the inner shrine of the god, and the ἱερόν, the temple enclosure has been noted by May 1950–51. The former is normally the house of the god’s image whilst outside that there is an area, sometimes built up, sometimes a rudimentary enclosure, which comprises the Temple as a whole. The distinction is assumed throughout the Greek of antiquity. Josephus says, for example, that outside the shrine (ναός) Solomon built a temple (ἱερόν) (*Ant* 8:95–96). The view of O. Michel in *TDNT* 4:882–890 that the distinction between ναός and ἱερόν is eroded in the NT period is unconvincing. The cases where he thinks ναός refers to the precincts of the Temple (Josephus *C.Ap.* 2:119; *B.J.* 6:293; *Matt* 27:5) are very well, if not better, explained as a reference to the inner shrine itself.

there is any symmetry here it is between humanity and creation, not between a cultic community on earth below and a cultic community in heaven above.

Those familiar with *Jubilees* might assume that here matters are more straightforward since the notion that the human priesthood are to serve in God’s sanctuary as angels of the presence is so clear in *Jubilees* 31:14. But, again, what Newsom needs to support her reading of the *Sabbath Songs* is nowhere explicitly stated in *Jubilees*.⁵² Whilst the priesthood are called to an angelomorphic service in chapter 31, it is not said that the sanctuary in which they serve corresponds to another one in heaven.⁵³ There is a correspondence between the *lifestyle* of the angels in heaven and the righteous on earth but this correspondence is manifest *in the life of the righteous outside of the Temple*. The angels in heaven are circumcised as are the children of Abraham on earth (16:25–27) and both keep the Sabbath (2:17–19, 21). Neither of these require or involve the Temple and in fact it is in the Temple that the Israelites *do not* rest from work on the Sabbath (50:11).⁵⁴ In the absence of a Temple above as model for Temple below, *Jubilees* is more likely to have in mind the idea that we discover in 1QSb where the human priesthood are taken up into the heavenly realm by virtue of their participation in the true (cosmic) cult.

It is true that in 6:18 it is said that the Feast of Weeks was celebrated “in heaven from the day of creation until the days of Noah”. Since the Feast of Weeks requires various sacrifices (Lev 23:15–22) something similar must have taken place “in heaven”. But *Jubilees* is frustratingly silent about what precisely this means. This is perhaps the closest we ever come in the sources from the Second Temple period to the notion of a heavenly cult. But then it might be no more than a pious affirmation borne of the author’s conviction that the Torah and its festivals are woven into the very fabric of the cosmos. It is not clear whether the author himself had a clear vision as to what that entails or whether it requires a “temple in heaven”.

Following Newsom’s discussion, the next item of evidence is the

⁵² Despite her discussion 1985, 67–69.

⁵³ Neither is that idea present in 30:18: “And the seed of Levi was chosen for the priesthood and Levitical (orders) to minister before the LORD always just as we do.”

⁵⁴ The point is admitted by Newsom 1985, 69 when she comments on the features we have noted: “they do not tell one whether such conceptions were also embodied in liturgy or in special devotional practices”.

Aramaic and Testamentary Levi material.⁵⁵ In fact only the Greek *Testament of Levi* is relevant here because whilst the *Aramaic Levi Document* attests earlier, pre-Christian material behind the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* the verses in question are not extant in the former. In *Testament of Levi* 2:5–5:3 Levi is taken up in a dream to the third heaven where he is promised the priesthood. He describes his vision of the highest heaven as follows:

⁴ In the uppermost heaven of all dwells the Great Glory in the Holy of Holies superior to all holiness. ⁵ There with him are the archangels, who serve [and offer propitiatory sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of all sins of ignorance of the righteous ones (οἱ λειτουργοῦντες καὶ ἐξιλασκόμενοι πρὸς κύριον ἐπὶ πάσαις ἀγνοίαις τῶν δικαίων)]. ⁶ They present to the Lord a pleasing odour, a rational and bloodless oblation (προσφέρουσι δὲ κυρίῳ ὄσμην εὐωδίας λογικὴν καὶ ἀναίμακτον προσφοράν).]

This would be a perfect parallel to support Newsom's view that the *Sabbath Songs* describe the liturgy of the angels in a heavenly temple above the earth, particularly given that in the XIIIth Sabbath Song real sacrifices appear to be offered, were it not for the fact that it is highly likely that the text is Christian not Jewish at this point. There is no direct parallel to this account of the service of the angels in the extant portions of the Aramaic version of the *Testament of Levi*.⁵⁶ De Jonge has pointed out that because the expression "bloodless oblation" is a Christian *terminus technicus* at least verse 6, if not also the whole of verse 5–6, is a Christian composition.⁵⁷ This source critical judgement is confirmed by the fact that all of verses 5–6 are missing from the shorter recension of the Greek text.⁵⁸

Whilst this part of the *Testament of Levi*, like so much else in the Greek text, is Christian in origin, Levi's ascent to heaven in the context of his ordination to the priesthood (cf. ch. 8) was probably part of the Jewish Levi material taken over by the Christian redactor.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ 1985, 69–71.

⁵⁶ The Aramaic, Jewish, version of the *Testament of Levi* shows no signs of an interest in a spiritual or metaphorical sacrifice, but plenty of enthusiasm for the earthly priesthood's responsibility for sacrificial matters (CTLevi ar Bodleian cols. a, b, c, d; 4Q213b; 4Q214 2; 4Q214b 2–6 i).

⁵⁷ 1953, 48–49. He compares the use of similar language in Athenagoras *Supplicatio* 13:1; *Acta s. Apollonii* §8; Origen *Contra Celsum* 8:21 besides a collection of later Patristic sources where the language refers specifically to the Eucharist.

⁵⁸ See Charles 1908b, 34.

⁵⁹ Cf. the attestation of a similar tradition in *Jubilees* 32:1 and CTLevi ar Bodleian col. a lines 9–10.

And the fact that in the context of his priestly vocation, like Enoch in *1 Enoch* 14, Levi is given access to the heavenly world is of far more relevance to the *Sabbath Songs*: the priest's entry into the heavenly world as a result of his freedom of movement in the cult-as-microcosm is what we would expect for all these texts (cf. Zechariah 3).⁶⁰

Lastly, we should briefly tackle Psalm 150:1:

Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary (שִׁירָה);
praise him in his mighty firmament (עֲרֹכָה)!

Newsom thinks that the parallelism between God's sanctuary and his mighty firmament means that this psalm envisages a supernal heavenly sanctuary besides the one on earth in Jerusalem.⁶¹ As we have seen for this there is no other evidence contemporary with Psalm 150. But there is evidence, for example in Sirach 50, that the courts of praise in the Jerusalem Temple were viewed as the firmament; as one part of the temple-as-microcosm.⁶²

In conclusion then, the texts to which Newsom appeals do not actually corroborate her understanding of the cosmology of the *Sabbath Songs*. Even if one were able to find evidence for the Temple-above and Temple-below idea in pre-Qumran tradition (such as *Jubilees* or the *Aramaic Levi* tradition), or from the other streams of late Second Temple Judaism, the presence of such an idea at Qumran is conspicuous by its absence. Newsom cites no specifically sectarian texts which represent this notion and I know of none.⁶³ The overriding concern in the DSS is to put humanity in the same space as the angels, to give the community members the "freedom of the cosmos" which they have, in particular, by virtue of their worship. There is no discernable interest in a *purely* analogical, or functional, relationship between angels and men. The one context in which there is a heaven-earth polarity akin to that in later Christian and Jewish liturgical practice is the *Elendsbetrachtung* form where humanity's

⁶⁰ Newsom's assertion (1985, 70) that "[t]here is no suggestion that Levi's presence in the heavens is repeated or re-experienced through his cultic service or that of his descendents" is a clear example of her failure to set the *Sabbath Songs* in the context of its proper—biblical—cultic cosmology.

⁶¹ 1985, 61.

⁶² See Fletcher-Louis 2001b on Sirach 50:1–2.

⁶³ Davila 2000, 102 thinks that in 4Q511 35 3 there is a "celestial temple". But clearly, in context, this is an instance of the *miqdash Adam*, the human cultic community invested with heavenly significance.

inadequacy is set *over against* the identities of the heavenly community: whilst humanity is confined to the world below it remains in a state of decay, impurity and unforgiveness (esp. the *Hodayot*). For there to be a *positive* (functional) equivalence between the angelic and the human realms, the latter must be transformed and *transferred* from the world below to the world above where they *share* the same liturgical space as the angels. Everything suggests that the liturgical cosmology which Newsom envisages for the *Sabbath Songs* would be utterly at odds with the way in which the community at Qumran understood temple worship, the relationship between heaven and earth and the anthropology associated with these.

It is of course *possible* that the *Sabbath Songs* are *sui generis* and that as such they articulate a cosmology not clearly represented elsewhere in QL and in contemporary Jewish tradition. It may be that that conclusion will be forced upon us by a close examination of the texts. But at this stage there is the suspicion that Newsom's notion of a heavenly temple has forced the liturgy to lie across a dualistic procrustean bed.

(ii) *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and Temple Cosmology*

If there is so little evidence for the availability of Newsom's dualistic cosmology to what kind of cosmology should we expect the heavenly temple of the *Songs* to belong? If the sanctuaries (the *debirim*, the *hekhalot*, the gates, portals and vestibules *et al.*), populated as they are by angels, spirits, and heavenly priests, are not in some heavenly region above and beyond the earthly community, where are they?

There are straightforward and ready to hand answers to these questions: the cosmology which can describe the cultic space in terms of the heavenly world is one which believes that the true temple is a microcosm of the universe. And the place where all this liturgy and a communion between angels and men takes place will then be the human community's own, concrete, earthly cultic space.

We have already in earlier chapters laid out some of the voluminous evidence from the biblical period through to the rabbis that Israel believed its temple was a microcosm of the universe. And at various points in our discussion of the texts adduced by Newsom for a dualistic cosmology (*1 Enoch* 14, Psalm 150:1) we have seen that that evidence is more likely to reflect the view that Israel's temple is a map of the cosmos (and/or the cosmic mountain, itself a cosmos in miniature). Newsom never considers the possibility that the temple-

as-microcosm might explain the *Songs*.⁶⁴ She assumes that it is *the heavenly world's portrayal in cultic terms* which must be explained. She does not consider the possibility that it is *the cultic world viewed in heavenly terms* which is the heart of the *Songs'* cosmology.⁶⁵

It is true that we do not find in the scrolls from the Qumran caves anything like as explicit a statement of the temple-as-microcosm ideal as that provided by the likes of Sirach, Josephus, Philo and some of the rabbis. But clearly the Qumran community were well acquainted with Sirach which probably also meant a familiarity with the cosmology of P. Where there is ever any sense of a synchronization between the cult and the cosmos in QL the cultic microcosm appears to be assumed. So, for example, we saw in our discussion of the *Songs of the Sage* in chapter 6 how the angelomorphic priesthood belongs to an Israel whose tribal configuration and liturgical cycle mirrors that of the heavenly bodies (4Q511 2 i). In the Temple Scroll the building of the new Temple marks the day of creation (11QTS 29:9). In chapter 7 we have seen how various texts connect the movement of the priesthood around the sanctuary with the movement of the heavenly bodies in the cosmos. Without evidence to the contrary it is reasonable to assume that the Qumran community read the Bible's cultic material carefully, knew very well the priestly tradition and simply took the matter for granted.

The synchronization of cult and cosmos is particularly relevant to the interpretation of the *Sabbath Songs* because it is supremely on the Sabbath that the coming together of heaven and earth entails the inclusion of the cultic community in the divine life. In ancient

⁶⁴ She does say (1985, 61) "In a thorough investigation of the context of the Sabbath Shirot one would also need to consider the tradition of the idealized description of the temple and cult" noting in this regard the cultic material in the Deuteronomist, P and the Chronicler. She even entertains the possibility that "there is perhaps a relationship between the religiosity which produces Ben Sira's exalted description of Simon the Just and that which produces the account of the heavenly high priests in the thirteenth Sabbath Song." In what follows this "thorough investigation" for which Newsom foresaw the need, will demonstrate that the tradition present in Sirach 50 is more than a "possible" influence on the *Sabbath Songs*; it is its *certain* source.

⁶⁵ She discusses J. Maier's thesis (1964, 133) that the *Sabbath Shirot* are indebted to the older view that the temple is the meeting place of heaven and earth and therefore the natural setting for a communion between angels and men (1985, 65-71). But Maier's own work does not itself work with the cultic microcosm idea in a thoroughgoing form.

Mesopotamia the gods create humanity to be their slaves so that they themselves might have rest. According to P (Genesis 1 and Exodus 25–40) God calls Israel, his true humanity, which as his *image* shares in his own sabbatical rest. The later priestly tradition, fully cognizant of the theological anthropology which the Sabbath law entails, reflects on its significance in various ways. Whilst in P's Mesopotamian context Israel's Sabbath rest means she shares the life of the gods, this is transposed in *Jubilees* to Israel's sharing the life of the angels on the Sabbath (2:17–19, 21); at least, that is, for lay Israelites and non-serving priests outside the Temple. Matters in the Temple are different: in the Temple the priests *do* work on the Sabbath, for without this the sacrificial service would cease (*Jub.* 50:10–11; Matt 12:5). In Sirach 24:19–22 and 50:14–21 work in the sanctuary is deemed legitimate because it is the labour of those who are free from the curse on Adam and Eve (Gen 3:17–19), of those who work in *Wisdom*, those who have received her offer of immortality and, supremely, those who are caught up into the life of the creator God himself. God's work on the Sabbath is "a working with absolute ease, without toil and without suffering" (Philo *On the Cherubim* 87) and so is that of his priests.

Whether the authors of *Jubilees* and Sirach would entirely have agreed with each other in the details of these matters is unclear. What is clear is that there is a general agreement in biblical and post-biblical tradition that (as biblical law itself implies) on the Sabbath Israel and her priesthood are taken up into the divine life. This understanding of creation and liturgy leads us to expect, not that heaven and earth be kept apart in a liturgy for the Sabbath sacrifices, but that they meet—God, his angels and humanity joined; the latter taken up into the life of the former.⁶⁶

In her discussion of the conceptual and history-of-religions context of the *Sabbath Songs* Newsom noted the theory of J. Maier that there was a well established tradition according to which the Temple was viewed as the point of intersection of heaven and earth leading to the possibility of a mythic communion with the angels in the cultic context.⁶⁷ Maier goes so far as to suggest that the *Sabbath Songs* are a sectarian reworking of an earlier "orthodox" Jerusalem Sabbath

⁶⁶ Cf. Chilton and Neusner 1995, 140; Hayward 1996, 10–11.

⁶⁷ 1985, 65–66 referring to Maier 1964.

liturgy.⁶⁸ But Newsom rejects Maier's hypothetical reconstruction of a tradition of priestly mysticism in post-exilic Judaism.⁶⁹ This is not the place for a detailed response to Newsom and her discussion of the primary sources on this point. In part, the whole of this study thus far serves as a response to her view. The Qumran community belongs to an ancient strand of Jewish piety that in Newsom's terms is thoroughly mystical. If there are not many biblical sources which envisage a communion of angels with men in the cult this is partly because *angelology* is a relatively late transposition of older henotheistic or polytheistic categories into a distinctively Jewish monotheistic idiom. Even so, texts such as Isaiah 6, Zechariah 3 and the characterization of Enoch in Genesis 5:22, 24 should all be taken as witnesses to the assumption that the worshipper, especially the true priest, is brought into a heavenly world populated by the angels. Why else is the chariot throne of the Tabernacle and Solomonic Temple, *to which the priests (and king) have peculiar access*, a construction of angelic or divine beings? That the human community should encounter the heavenly world and its population in the Temple is a logical corollary of the fact that the Temple is a microcosm of the universe which makes available in an accessible space and time realities otherwise out of human reach.

Qumran Theological Anthropology and the Sabbath Songs

With the problems posed by Newsom's interpretation in mind and fresh from a survey of everything else that can be learnt about liturgical anthropology at Qumran, we are bound to consider the possibility that in fact much of the language which Newsom thinks refers to angels actually refers to exalted humans. Obviously, this text shares other features with texts in the Qumran library where the true humanity and its priesthood are angelomorphic: the liturgy is pre-occupied with the experience of the heavenly world and its occupants, and as a liturgy it sets the experience of the heavenly world in the cultic context. If a Qumran priest is ordained to serve as an angel of the presence in the abode of holiness (1QSb) then a liturgy

⁶⁸ 1964, 133—and cf. Maier 1987; Maier 1992, 559.

⁶⁹ 1985, 66–71. She relies on the brief discussion by Klinzing 1971, 127–29.

which prescribes the order of priestly service will quite likely take for granted that understanding of priesthood.

Obviously, references to the celebrants as “priests”, “ministers”, “chiefs”, “princes”, “holy ones”, “gathered troops” and so forth could easily be taken in the Qumran context as exalted language for the community at worship. And in the light of the texts we have examined thus far, there is plenty reason to suppose that “a god” (whether *elohim* or *el*), an angel (a *malak*), or even a *cherub* (viz. Ezek 28:14, 16) could, especially in the cultic context, be a reference to an exalted human.

The *Sabbath Songs* were not only used at Qumran; they have also turned up at Masada, a fact which poses tricky questions for the identity of the “sicarii” who died there in their last stand against the Romans.⁷⁰ For our immediate purposes it is of some significance that beside some biblical material the other identifiable “post-biblical” text found at Masada is a portion of the Wisdom of Ben Sira. Presumably those under Roman siege were using both texts on their mountain top refuge. According to the Hebrew text of Sirach 45:2 Moses’ divinity is located “in the heights (בַּמְרוֹמִים)”.⁷¹ This is the language that is used again and again of the heavenly realm in the *Shirot*. If Moses can be כְּאֱלֹהִים in the heights we should not be surprised if human worshippers are in mind—especially those atop Masada—when the *Sabbath Songs* refer to אֱלֹהִים worshipping in the heights. Secondly, the identification of the high priest Simon with God’s Glory in Sirach 50:7 has a remarkable parallel, as we shall see, in the close association between the high priesthood of the *Sabbath Songs* with the anthropomorphic Glory of Ezekiel’s throne vision.

Newsom saw that the literary style of the VIth through VIIIth songs, characterized as it is by a highly structured repetition of themes organized around the number seven, is probably designed to produce an ecstatic experience.⁷² Given the way in which ecstasy in Jewish

⁷⁰ The presence of the *Sabbath Songs* at Masada caused Newsom to change her earlier view that the *Songs* are sectarian in nature (Newsom 1990). As will be clear in what follows I think her original judgement (reached on the basis of certain obvious sectarian features such as the use of the solar calendar and the לְמִשְׁכֵּל form) is the right one and that in this liturgy we come to the spiritual heart of Essenism, a movement which was evidently actively involved in resistance to Rome in the 66–74 war.

⁷¹ According to the Geniza text (ms B). This portion of the text is not preserved in the Masada copy.

⁷² 1985, 15.

antiquity might entail transformation (e.g. *Eth. Enoch* 71:11–16; *3 Enoch* 1–16; *T. Job* 48–49) there is every reason to suppose that here the ecstasy (albeit a communal and ritualised one) which the *Sabbath Songs* effects was part and parcel of an experience of transformation.

Now, of course, if some of the characters to whom the *maskil* refers in each of the songs are in fact the sectarians, whom we know from other QL arranged themselves in the military and cultic formations of the OT, then many of the problems we have laid out disappear. The peculiar absence from this liturgy of the actual words spoken by the angels is readily explicable if those words were well known to the Qumran sectarians. We know from a passage in Josephus (*Ant.* 20:216–18) that Levitical temple singers could recite by heart the Psalms for the daily liturgy and would rather do so than hand hold heavy scrolls.⁷³ We should not exclude the possibility that the songs were either all, or in part, in an angelic tongue.⁷⁴ But the main point here is that the difficulty of imagining how the *maskil* can call the angels to praise and direct the order of their liturgy is now overcome. The *Songs* are a conductor’s score. The score is no more the actual reality of the liturgy than the script of a play is that play. On this, alternative interpretative paradigm, we now have the hope of discovering features hitherto obscure, which we would expect from this genre. We can hope to find clear lines of social demarcation which will allow us to hear with clarity the different voices—human and suprahuman—of the angelic liturgy.

A convincing demonstration of an interpretation of the *Songs* along these lines requires a detailed examination of the texts themselves and it is to that task that the next three chapters are devoted.

⁷³ See Sanders 1992, 81.

⁷⁴ As suggested by Allison 1988, cf. 1 Cor 13:2; 2 Cor 13:4; *T. Job* 48:2–50:2; *Apoc. Zeph.* 8:1–5.