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# Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls

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IF "APOCALYPTICISM" IS BROADLY DEFINED (AS IT IS IN this Encyclopedia) as "the belief that God has revealed the imminent conclusion of the ongoing struggle between good and evil throughout history," there can be no doubt that the Qumran community was an "apocalyptic" community. The writings that most probably can be considered a product of the Qumran community and which better represent its thought show clear indications that the authors believe that their own lives and the life of the community were part of the ongoing struggle between good and evil, that God had revealed to them the approaching end of the struggle, that they were preparing themselves for an active participation in the final climax, and even that they were already living somehow in the final phase.

Since some of the elements that show the apocalypticism of the Scrolls, such as the participation in the final struggle of several messianic figures have been dealt with in other articles in this volume (see especially chapter 6 below) I will present a summary of the other most relevant topics: the origin of evil; the periods of history and expectation of the end; the communion with the heavenly world; and the eschatological war.

At the outset, it seems necessary to offer a short *status quaestionis* with reference to the literature on the topic listed at the end of this article.





The hard questions posed by Klaus Koch (1972) definitively ended the optimism of the previous decade of research, which saw in the Dead Sea Scrolls the solution to all the problems that had vexed scholarship in the field of apocalypticism. The announcement that the most characteristic apocalypses, such as Enoch or Daniel, were abundantly represented in the new finds, the discovery that other compositions previously unknown had characteristics similar to these apocalypses and could therefore be legitimately considered new apocalypses, the awareness that the most typical sectarian writings had a remarkable eschatological dimension and showed a very radical dualistic thinking, and above all the fact that the group from which the manuscripts were supposed to have come was a secluded community, providing for the first time a model for the sociological background of the apocalypses all helped to create a *pan-Qumranism* in the investigation of apocalypticism. But after many years of intensive research, this optimism proved to be ill grounded, and the contribution of Hartmut Stegemann to the Uppsala Colloquium in 1979 concluded that the expected master key to unlock the secrets of apocalypticism had not been found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Qumran manuscripts had not provided the solutions hoped for; the apocalyptic elements to be found within the Scrolls were scanty, and they could be foreign bodies, to which it is impossible to assign any central position in the life or organization of the Qumran group (Stegemann 1983). At the same time, there was a growing awareness of the inadequacy of the traditional way of defining apocalypticism by a mélange of literary and thematic elements, or by a mixing of form and content. On the one hand, a large number of elements used to characterize apocalyptic were to be found in many compositions that no one would dream of defining as apocalypses, and, on the other hand, many compositions recognized as apocalypses were lacking elements that were thought to be characteristic of apocalypticism. The intensive efforts of the Society of Biblical Literature group on the genre apocalypse, which culminated with the publication of *Semeia* 14, brought the necessary refinement of the terminology used to chart the problem and provided a definition of apocalypse commonly accepted today (Collins 1979). The definition of *Semeia* 14 and its distinction of two basic types of apocalypses—the *historical* and the *heavenly ascent* types—proved very fruitful and paved the way for the developments of the next decade. In these years we saw the development of the *syntagmatic* or *text-linguistic* analysis of several apocalypses as well as the *sociological approach* to apocalypticism (in which the insights gained by the study of millenarian movements through history [medieval millenarianism, Puritan groups in England in the sixteenth century, etc.], or by means of anthropological study of contemporary sectarian apocalyptic movements or groups [fringe

groups in the United States, for example] were applied to the study of apocalypticism, but also the detailed study of single apocalypses [such as VanderKam 1984; Stone 1990]) and a systematic mapping of the developments of apocalypticism in a historical perspective, both in a synchronic (Collins 1984) and in a diachronic way (Sacchi 1996 [English 1997]). As a result, we can observe a decline in the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for understanding the phenomenon of apocalypticism, and a more differentiated way of understanding the individual apocalypses and the phenomenon of apocalypticism. Nonetheless, the contribution of the Scrolls to this field of study remains considerable.

As I formulated the issue in the introduction to my book *Qumran and Apocalyptic*:

> The study of the Qumran manuscripts has completely transformed the way in which we nowadays understand the most ancient apocalypses, those composed within the Enochic tradition, has had a profound effect on the study of the origins and the development of the apocalypse of Daniel and has indicated a number of new factors demonstrating the variety and the ideological richness of the apocalypses written within, or transmitted by, the Qumran community itself. (García Martínez 1992, xi)

I think this is still a fair, and rather nonpolemical, representation of the situation. Everybody agrees now on the characteristics of the literary genre apocalypse and its basic division of "cosmic" and "historical" apocalypses. Everybody agrees also that in the definition of the literary genre apocalypse the function of the genre (absent in the definition of *Semeia* 14) should be included in one way or another. And most tend to agree that this function could be defined as was done in *Semeia* 36: an apocalypse is "intended to interpret present earthly circumstances in the light of the supernatural world and of the future, and to influence both the understanding and the behavior of the audience by means of divine authority." This has resulted in a better understanding of the best representatives of both basic types: the books of Enoch and the book of Daniel. This would also, in my opinion, allow some of the compositions from Qumran lately published to be categorized as apocalypses despite their fragmentary condition.

Everybody also agrees that apocalypticism cannot be reduced to the literary genre apocalypse. The number, certainly limited, of apocalypses found at Qumran (or the even smaller number of apocalypses that can be attributed to the activity of the group) (Dimant 1994) do not need to limit us in the study of the apocalypticism of the Scrolls. The major sectarian scrolls, which are certainly not apocalypses, provide us in spite of their generic differences with a



worldview similar to the worldview we find in the apocalypses, a worldview that can be considered representative of the group's way of thinking. Since this worldview has been clearly influenced by ideas characteristic of well-known apocalypses, mainly Enoch and Daniel, it can be described as "apocalyptic." In the words of John J. Collins:

> A movement or community might also be apocalyptic if it were shaped to a significant degree by a specific apocalyptic tradition, or if its worldview could be shown to be similar to that of the apocalypses in a distinctive way. The Essene movement and Qumran Community would seem to qualify on both counts. (Collins 1997b, 37)

Everybody also agrees that the worldview we find in the Scrolls presents also obvious differences from the ideas of these apocalypses. But there are several ways to interpret these differences, and so scholars are divided.

The basic question seems to be: Are the different solutions given to the same problem in Qumran and in some apocalyptic writings disagreements within a common framework in the interpretation of the same original myth (as seems to be the case between the Book of Watchers and the Epistle of Enoch, for example, or between 4 Ezra and *2 Baruch*), or are they due to the use of different premises, referring to different myths? Should we see the relationship as one of continuity within a certain tradition or rather of discontinuity and derivation from different traditions?

For Paolo Sacchi, the differences remain within the same basic framework and we can speak thus of a continuity within the tradition (Sacchi 1996). For Collins, they indicate derivation from a different tradition. In the words of Collins: "I agree with Sacchi, against Carmignac and Stegemann, that apocalypticism can not be reduced to a literary genre. . . . I do not agree, however, that apocalypticism can be reduced to a single stream of tradition, or to a single socially continuous movement" (Collins 1997b, 298).

It is usually assumed that the circles responsible for the different Enochic compositions formed a single movement or belonged to a single tradition in spite of the differences, implying something more than a common worldview. After all, we usually speak of a "prophetic tradition" and of "a wisdom tradition," and we imply by this something more than a common worldview, in spite of our ignorance of the concrete sociological basis for these "prophetic" and "sapiential" traditions. In this way it does indeed seem appropriate to speak of an "Enochic tradition" even if the sociological basis remains rather vague. And because the Enoch books are apocalypses, it seems also appropriate to speak of an "(Enochic) apocalyptic tradition" (VanderKam 1984). By the same token it would be equally legitimate to speak of a "(Qumranic)

apocalyptic tradition," and it would be equally legitimate to investigate the relationships (genetic or other) between the several apocalyptic traditions.

In my opinion, the *status quaestionis* boils down to the following: Is apocalypticism simply a worldview (an umbrella term for different apocalyptic traditions), or it is something more? Can the cluster of ideas we find in the Qumran writings be attributed to an apocalyptic tradition? As we shall see in the following summaries, the cluster of ideas appearing in the sectarian scrolls is something more than an umbrella term; it represents a genuine apocalyptic tradition, connected with, but different from, other apocalyptic traditions.

## THE ORIGIN OF EVIL AND THE DUALISTIC THOUGHT OF THE SECT

The core of the oldest part (the Book of the Watchers) of the oldest apocalypse (*1 Enoch*) is dedicated to giving an explanation of the origin of evil in the world. And the explanation given to this topic, using the old myth of the "rebellion in heaven," is that evil was not introduced into the world by men, but is the result of the sin of the Watchers, the fallen angels lead by Asael and Shemiḥaza, who consorted with women and taught them heavenly secrets. The fallen angels introduce a disruption in the harmonic order of nature: "The whole earth has been devastated by the works of the teaching of Asael; record against him all sins" (*1 Enoch* 10:7). Sin originates in heaven not in earth, and it is introduced on earth by the action of angelic beings. Within the Enoch tradition itself, we will find a direct refutation of the conclusion of the Book of the Watchers about the heavenly origin of evil. In the last composition incorporated into the Enochic collection, the Epistle of Enoch, we can read (in Ethiopic, the Greek version is somewhat different): "I swear to you, sinners, that as a mountain has not, and will not, become a slave, nor a hill a woman's maid, so sin was not sent to the earth, but man of himself created it" (98:4). It is impossible not to conclude that the author of the Epistle is completely turning around the conclusion of the Book of the Watchers in order to arrive at the opposite conclusion. In spite of this direct rebuttal, both compositions, the Book of the Watchers and the Epistle of Enoch, seem to have originated within the same ideological tradition (which some people call the Enoch school, much in the same way others talk about a Johannine school); they were in any case considered compatible enough not only to fraternize in the same shelves of a library but to be included as part of the same book, our *1 Enoch*.

I thus conclude that it was perfectly possible within one and the same tradition to hold divergent (and even opposite) views on some central theological problem; and that we cannot expect dependence to be expressed only as agreement.



We do not know precise antecedents for the idea put forth by the author of the Book of the Watchers. In the short form in which we find the myth in Genesis 6 it is not put to use to explain the origin of evil. Nor is it used in this way by the book of *Jubilees*, which is dependent on the Book of the Watchers in many respects, but does not accept the idea that evil comes into the earth through angelic mediation and gives a different explanation of the origin of evil. For *Jubilees*, sin begins in the earth with the fall of Adam, long before the fall of the angels. *Jubilees*, on the other hand, presents the fallen angels as an army, led by Mastema, who is described as a prince, and who obtains from God that a tenth of the fallen spirits will not be directly destroyed but will be left under his command in order to harass, mislead, and destroy humanity. The idea that evil originates in heaven is also dismissed in the wisdom tradition as represented by Sir. 15:11: "Do not say, 'It was the Lord's doing that I fell away.'" But Sirach does not attribute evil either to the sin of Adam, which he never mentions (some manuscripts even change the famous reference to the sin of Eve in Sir. 25:24, attributing it to the "enemy"). Sirach introduces the idea of the "inclination" (the *yēṣer*): "God created man in the beginning and placed him in the hand of his inclination" (15:14). But he also insists that everything is in the hands of God: "In the fullness of his knowledge the Lord distinguished them and appointed their different ways. Some he blessed and exalted, and some he made holy and brought near to himself; but some he cursed and brought low, and turned out of their places" (33:11–12). Most of the interpreters rightly insist that the *yēṣer* in Sirach is very different from the *yēṣer* as it will be understood in 4 Ezra (the *cor malignum*) and especially in the rabbinic tradition, where it is even identified with Satan. Sirach does not exploit the potentiality of the *yēṣer*, and at the end, he is unable to resolve the tension created by his adherence to the traditional biblical conception, which preserves free will and the equally biblical conception that underlines God's omnipotence. As Collins says: "Sirach's over-all position remains ambiguous" (Collins 1997b, 370), and he limited himself to observing the duality of evil and good: "As evil contrasts with good, and death with life, so are sinners in contrast with the just" (33:14).

It is my contention that all these strands of thought are interwoven in the thought on the origin of evil that we find in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and that all of them contribute in some way to shape the new solution they gave to the problem. It is clear that the Scrolls know the myth as it is presented in the Book of the Watchers. Not only have several copies of the composition

appeared in Cave 4, but the story itself is used in some other Qumran compositions such as 4Q180, a *pesher* on the periods, in which Asael plays a leading roll. Even more significantly, the *Damascus Document* (CD) uses the story of the Watchers as the first example in a review of human unfaithfulness to the will of God (CD 2:15–16). Similarly, *Jubilees* has had a deep influence in the thought of the community, which sees the angelic forces as organized armies under an angelic leader, and which even knows Mastema as one of the names used for this leader. Copies of *Jubilees*, of course, are among the compositions best represented in their library, as are (to a lesser extent) copies of Ben Sira. No wonder then that the *yēṣer* of the wisdom tradition has also left its traces within the Dead Sea Scrolls. As expected, its presence is more notorious in the wisdom texts, such as *4QSapiential A*, where we find expressions such as: "Do not be deluded with the thought of an evil inclination" (4Q417 2 ii 12), but it is also used in more clearly sectarian compositions such as CD 2:15–16: "so that you can walk perfectly on all his paths and not follow after the thoughts of a guilty inclination."

However, the most characteristic explanation of the origin of evil, the one we find in the Treatise of the Two Spirits, does not limit itself to incorporating and blending together these influences but offers us an original solution to the problem. This treatise, embodied in the *Community Rule* (1QS 3:13–4:26; all translations from the Dead Sea Scrolls are taken from García Martínez 1996), is at the same time the most systematic exposition of the dualistic thinking of the community.

The treatise begins with a solemn introduction (3:13–15), followed by the basic principle: "From the God of knowledge stems all there is and all there shall be. Before they existed he made all their plans, and when they come into being they will execute all their works in compliance with his instructions, according to his glorious design without altering anything" (3:15–16).

From this deterministic formulation the author deduces the basic dualistic structure of humankind, expressed with the traditional symbols of light and darkness: "He created man to rule the world and placed within him two spirits so that he would walk with them until the moment of his visitation: they are the spirits of truth and of deceit" (3:17–19). The author develops in detail his dualistic conception, applying it not only to each individual but to all humanity, which he describes as divided into two camps (two dominions), led respectively by the Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness: "And in the hand of the Prince of Light is dominion over all the sons of justice; they walk in the paths of light. And in the hand of the Angel of Darkness is total dominion over the sons of deceit; they walk in the path of darkness" (3:20–21). He



even extends this dualistic division explicitly to the angelic world, which is divided, as are humanity and each individual, in two camps: "He created the spirits of light and of darkness and on them established all his deeds, and on their paths all his labors. God loved one of them for all eternal ages and in all his deeds he takes pleasure for ever; of the other one he detests his advice and hates all his paths forever" (3:25–4:1). The treatise goes further, describing the characteristic deeds that result from the dominion of each one of the two angelic hosts, the conflicting human conduct that results from the influence of the opposing spirits, and the contrasting retribution of each person according to their share of light and darkness.

Not only the origin of sin is explained by the treatise in this way. The sin of each individual also finds an explanation in this dualistic context. Human life is seen as a battle between the forces of light and darkness, a violent conflict in which there is little left to human initiative:

> Until now the spirits of truth and of injustice feud in the heart of man and they walk in wisdom or in folly. In agreement with man's birthright in justice and in truth, so he abhors injustice; and according to his share in the lot of injustice he acts irreverently in it and so abhors the truth. For God has sorted them into equal parts until the appointed end and the new creation. (4:24–25)

A person can, of course, sin; even the righteous do. But these sins are explained as caused by the influence of spirits of darkness:

> Due to the Angel of Darkness all the sons of justice stray, and all their sins, their iniquities, their failings and their mutinous deeds are under his dominion in compliance with the mysteries of God, until his moment, and all their punishments and their period of grief are caused by the dominion of his enmity; and all the spirits of their lot cause the sons of light to fall. (3:21–24)

At the end, at the time of God's visitation, however, sin will disappear and justice will triumph:

> God, in the mysteries of his knowledge and in the wisdom of his glory, has determined an end to the existence of deceit and on the occasion of his visitation he will obliterate it for ever. Then truth shall rise up forever in the world which has been defiled in paths of wickedness during the dominion of deceit until the time appointed for judgment. Then God will refine, with his truth, all man's deeds, and will purify for himself the configuration of man, ripping out all spirit of deceit from the innermost part of his flesh, and cleansing him with the spirit of holiness from every irreverent deed. He will sprinkle over him the spirit of truth like lustral water (in order to cleanse him) from all the abhorrences of deceit and from the defilement of the unclean spirit. In this way the upright will understand knowledge of the Most High, and the wisdom of the

> sons of heaven will teach those of perfect behavior. For these are those selected by God for an everlasting covenant and to them shall belong the glory of Adam. (4:18–23)

This eschatological perspective is an essential part of the treatise and puts in perspective the solution to the problem of evil given by its author.

For him, as for the Book of the Watchers, evil clearly has its origins not on earth but in heaven. But the author the Treatise of the Two Spirits is apparently not satisfied with the solution given in the Book of the Watchers; after all, if the Watchers are the origin of evil on earth, their own capability of doing evil also needs to be explained. The solution given to the problem by the author of the Treatise is much more radical than the one given in the Book of the Watchers. For him there is no rebellion in heaven. The Watchers are part and stock of the evil spirits, the army of the Prince of Darkness; they are created as evil spirits directly by God. Evil comes thus from heaven, and directly from God. The author also has used the conception of the angelical army as represented in *Jubilees*, and has fully developed the deterministic and dualistic implications of the *yēṣer* of the wisdom tradition. But its thought has a radicality that cannot be explained only by these influences. It was recognized almost as soon as the scroll was published that the thought of the Treatise of the Two Spirits is most akin to the myth of Persian dualism with its twin spirits, the twin sons of the supreme God, one identified as good and the other as evil from the beginning, and one associated with light and the other with darkness. This myth is already present in the oldest part of the Avesta, the *Gāthās*, generally considered to be the work of Zoroaster. The dualism of the Treatise of the Two Spirits does not imply the initial option of humans for one or the other spirit in the manner of the Persian myth, and, even more importantly, the Treatise emphatically views the two spirits as created by God and completely subordinate to him. It is thus far removed from the later Persian thought that considers evil to be primordial. Yet it seems clear that the thought of the author of the Qumran text is deeply indebted to some form of Zoroastrian thought and has used it in order to radicalize the ideas he has received from the apocalyptic and sapiential traditions.

It is true that the Avesta is known to us in a collection from the Sassanian period, but the centrality of dualism in Zoroastrian thought is already attested by Plutarch (*On Isis and Osiris*), and, although we do not know the exact channels of transmission, the possibility of its influence in a Jewish context poses no special problem during the Hellenistic period.

Although the explanation of the origin of evil and the expression of dualistic thought in the Treatise of the Two Spirits is perhaps not the most widespread idea in the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find it attested in enough different writings that we may consider it one of the trademarks of the thought of the Qumran community. I have already quoted a sentence of the *Damascus Document* in which the human *yēṣer* is qualified as "guilty." One of the parenetic sections of the same document, CD 2:2–13, shows not only a very close verbal parallel to the Treatise of the Two Spirits, but the same emphatic deterministic outlook. Another section, CD 4:11–18, describes Israel under the dominion of Belial and the people falling in his three nets, and CD 5:18–19 offers a perfect example of dualistic thinking presenting Moses and Aaron raised up by the Prince of Light and Jannes and his brother Jambres by the hand of Belial. The end of the original composition (as shown by 4QD$^{b}$ 18 v) contains a ceremony of expulsion from the assembly which exactly parallels the ceremony of entry into the covenant of 1QS 1–2 and has the same general dualistic overtone.



Another composition closely related to the worldview of the Treatise is 4QAmram, an Aramaic composition recovered in five copies, all very poorly preserved. In it, Amram tells his sons about a vision he has had in which two angelic figures who "control all the sons of Adam" quarrel over him. One of them "rules over darkness"; the other "rules over all what is bright." Each figure has apparently three names, although the only name preserved is Melchireša$^{c}$. The assumed counterpart, Melchizedek, is the central figure of another composition from Cave 11, where he is the agent of the eschatological judgment and saves "the men of his lot," freeing them from the hand of Belial and the spirits of his lot. Although visions and revelations are involved, the literary genre of the composition is more that of testament than apocalypse. The Qumranic origins of 4QAmram have been disputed because it is in Aramaic, but the fact that the same cluster of ideas and expressions is to be found in a series of liturgical texts (4Q280–4Q287) which explicitly mention the Council of the *yaḥad* and abound in curses against Melchireša$^{c}$, Belial, and other angelic figures seems to me to place the composition within the corpus of sectarian writings.

The deterministic view of the Treatise appears also in a good part of the *Hodayot*, especially in the so-called Hymns of the Teacher, to the point that some people have speculated that both compositions were penned by the same author, the Teacher of Righteousness. The dualistic understanding of the world is equally obvious in the *War Scroll*. There it is not related to a description of human nature but concerns the development of human history and its final denouement in the eschatological war.

Summarizing the evidence on this point, I think we can conclude that the Dead Sea sect inherited from the Enochic tradition a view of the origin of

evil that it further developed using elements coming from other traditions (like the Sapiential tradition and Zoroastrianism) so as to arrive at a full dualistic and deterministic view of the world.

## THE PERIODS OF HISTORY AND THE EXPECTATION OF THE END

One of the most characteristic features of the "historical" apocalypses is the division of history into periods and the expectation that God will intervene in the last of these periods in order to bring an end to evil in the world. Introducing these periods into history allows the apocalypses the possibility to integrate the past and the present reality with the future that the author intends to "reveal" and with the expected intervention of God, which will bring the end of history. The systems used to divide history into periods, bringing in this way some order into the chaos, are based on the numbers 4, 7, 10, 49 (7 x 7), 70, and even 490 (70 x 7 or 10 x 49). We find different ways of indicating this division of history into periods in different apocalypses, or even within the same composition. Daniel, for example, uses the schema of four successive kingdoms but also, and most characteristically, the schema of seventy weeks (of years), transforming the seventy years of Jeremiah into 490 years, which equals ten jubilees and can be correlated with the use of the number 10 in other apocalyptic compositions.

Within the different components of *1 Enoch*, we find different ways to express the division of history into periods. In the Book of the Watchers there is an allusion to a division of seventy periods before the end: "Bind them (the Watchers) for seventy generations under the hills of the earth until the day of their judgment and of their consummation, until the judgment which is for all eternity is accomplished" (10:12). The so-called Animal Apocalypse, which presents the protagonists in the history of Israel as various animals, also introduces periods into history; seventy shepherds pasture the sheep, each at his own time (89:59), and these seventy shepherds are divided into four unequal groups which pasture the sheep during four periods of different length (corresponding to the four kingdoms of Daniel). At the end of these periods the judgment takes place, the Messiah comes, and all the sheep become white bulls. But the most interesting view of the division of history is the one found in the so-called Apocalypse of Weeks, embedded in the Epistle of Enoch and now restored to its original order (disturbed in the Ethiopic translation) with the help of the Aramaic fragments from Qumran. As in Daniel, history is here divided into "weeks," presumably weeks of years, but



the schema is based on the number 10, or, better said, on a combination of 7 and 10. The author compresses history from the birth of Enoch to his own days in seven weeks, and places himself obviously at the end of the seventh week, a week in which an apostate generation has arisen and at the end of which "the chosen righteous from the eternal plant of righteousness will be chosen [or "rewarded" according to other Ethiopic manuscripts], to whom will be given sevenfold teaching concerning his whole creation" (93:10). He obviously belonged to the chosen group to which he addresses his composition. Similarly, the author of Daniel belonged to the *maśkîlîm*, and the author of the Animal Apocalypse to the *ḥāsîdîm*. The great originality of the Apocalypse of Weeks lies in the fact that history does not end with this week. The Apocalypse goes on to reveal what will happen in the following weeks, introducing the organizing principle also in the future, and unfolding the progressive development of meta-history: in the eighth week a sword will be given to the righteous, who execute judgment on the sinners, and at its end "a house will be built for the great king in glory forever" (91:12–13); in the ninth week "the judgment of the righteous will be revealed to the whole world, all the deeds from the impious will vanish from the whole earth, and the world will be written down for destruction" (91:14); in the tenth week (in its seventh part) there will be apparently the judgment of the Watchers (the Ethiopic text is rather confused) and "the first heaven will vanish and pass away, and a new heaven will appear" (91:15–16) Then: "And after this there will be many weeks without number forever in goodness and in righteousness, and from then on sin will never again be mentioned" (91:17). The author of the Apocalypse of Weeks periodizes not only history but meta-history; the "end" is for him not one event, but rather the unfolding of a process in which several moments can be discerned.

In the Dead Sea Scrolls we find attested almost all the models used in the apocalyptic writings to periodize history, and also a conception of the "end" of history as an unfolding process in which several moments can be discerned.

A composition in Aramaic, preserved in two copies, 4Q552 and 4Q553, contained apparently a division of history following the model of the four kingdoms of Daniel; but the text is so badly preserved that we can say almost nothing. There is at least one vision and there is question of an interpretation. There is a king and there are trees that are able to talk and answer questions; one of the trees gives his own name as Babel, and of him it is said that he rules over Persia. This is almost all that can be gathered from the surviving fragments, but because it is also said that these trees are four, we can assume the author was following the well-known model of the four kingdoms.

Another very fragmentary text contained a commentary expressly dedi-

cated to the division of history into periods that comprise the diverse phases of human history, which have been preordained by God and engraved in the heavenly tablets (4Q180–181). It begins: "Interpretation concerning the ages which God has made." This composition, certainly authored within the Qumran community and marked by the strongly deterministic outlook of the Treatise of the Two Spirits, could have provided us with a complete view of the problem within the community, but unfortunately it has also been badly preserved. Even combining the material of the two manuscripts (which are not necessarily part of the same composition) only part of the assertions concerning the first period (the ten generations from Noah to Abraham) can be recovered: the first is characterized by the sin of the fallen angels; the last by the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is not clear how many periods were reckoned, but one of the fragments used the expression "in the seventieth week," apparently implying that a system of subdivisions was worked out inside the main divisions.

Another composition (4Q390) uses a system of jubilees to offer a review of the history of Israel, similar to the historical reviews of the apocalypses and of the beginning of the *Damascus Document,* but put into the mouth of God: "And when this generation passes, in the seventh jubilee of the devastation of the land, they will forget the law, the festival, the sabbath and the covenant, and they will disobey everything and do what is evil in my eyes" (4Q390 1:6–9). The author also uses other units to mark the divisions: a week of years ("and there will come the dominion of Belial upon them to deliver them up to the sword for a week of years" (4Q390 2:3–4), and a period of seventy years: "and they will begin to argue with one another for seventy years, from the day on which they break this vow and the covenant. And I shall deliver them to the hands of the angels of destruction and they will rule over them" (4Q390 2:6–7). Curiously enough, all the periods preserved in this document are characterized by a negative connotation: infidelity to the covenant and all sorts of transgressions, and especially the dominion of Belial and the "angels of destruction," a clear allusion to the Mastema of the book of *Jubilees.*

More clear, although also fragmentary, is the system we find in 11QMelchizedek, a thematic *pesher* that interprets Leviticus 25 (the jubilee year), Deuteronomy 15 (the year of release), and Isaiah 52 and 61 (which proclaim the liberation of the prisoners), applying these (and other biblical texts) to the eschatological period, the "last days." In this text, which knows Daniel and refers explicitly to it, history is divided into ten jubilees. The preserved part of the composition concentrates on the last of these ten jubilees: "This will happen in the first week of the jubilee which follows the nine jubilees. And the day of atonement is the end of the tenth jubilee in which atonement will be



made for all the sons of God and for the men of the lot of Melchizedek" (11Q13 2:6–8). The protagonist of the text is Melchizedek, who is presented as a heavenly figure. The remission of debts of the biblical text is interpreted as referring to the final liberation, which will occur during the Day of the Expiation. Melchizedek, the agent of this liberation, is presented as the eschatological judge mentioned in Ps. 7:8–9 and Ps. 82:1–2. He is also presented as the chief of the heavenly armies, the leader of the "sons of God," who will destroy the armies of Belial, identifying his figure in terms of practical functions with the "Prince of Light" (a figure we find in 1QS 3:20, CD 5:8, and 1QM 13:10) and with the angel Michael (a figure appearing in 1QM 17:6–7). The victory of Melchizedek against Belial and the spirits of his lot, will usher in an era of salvation, which is described in the words of Isaiah.

In this text we have encountered the most usual expression within the Dead Sea Scrolls to indicate the period of the end, the phrase *ʾaḥărît hayyāmîm.* The expression is well attested (in Hebrew and once in Aramaic) within the Hebrew Bible. The phrase occurs more than thirty times in the nonbiblical scrolls and is especially frequent in exegetical compositions. The phrase originally meant "in the course of time, in future days," and this (non-eschatological) meaning seems to be best suited to many of the biblical occurrences of the expression, although its use in Isaiah 2, Micah 4, Ezekiel 38, and Daniel 2 and 10 may have a more specifically eschatological meaning.

In Qumran this is certainly the case, as the expression seems to be used to designate the final period of history. Nowhere are the precise limits of this period defined, but it is the last of the divinely preordained periods and the period in which the community exists. According to the latest study published on *ʾaḥărît hayyāmîm* in the Scrolls (Steudel 1993), the phrase may refer, depending of the context, to the past, to the present, or to the future from the point of view of the writer. The last days are thus a period already started but not yet completed, somehow coextensive with the present of the community. As CD 4:4 put it: "the sons of Zadok are the chosen of Israel, 'those called by name' who stood up at the end of days."

The text most often quoted as asserting that the last days have already begun is 4QMMT, where the complete expression occurs twice in the hortatory section. But in the first occurrence (C 13–15) the expression may have a meaning more akin to the biblical usage, and the second—"And this is the end of days" (C 21)—can be linked both to the preceding sentence in the past tense ("We know that some of the blessings and the curses as written in the book of Moses have come, and this is the end of days," and to the following sentence in the future tense: "And this is the end of days, when in Israel they will return to the Law." In neither case will the phrase have the fully devel-

oped eschatological connotation characteristic of other Qumran usages; it will rather represent a first stage in the development of Qumranic thought.

The most characteristic usage is the one we find in the exegetical compositions, where the meaning of the biblical text, "for the last days," is directly applied to the life of the community, which is seen as fulfillment of the prophetic text. The phrase has two different aspects in the Scrolls. The last days are a period of testing and refining, a period of trial, but the expression also designates the time beyond the trial, the period in which salvation will start.

The first element is explicit in 4Q174, which interprets Ps. 2:1 as referring to the elect of Israel in the last days and continues: "That is the time of refining which comes . . . ." The participle used can be translated with a past or with a future meaning, but there is no doubt that the time involved is a time of trial: Belial is mentioned, and also a remnant, and the text explicitly refers to Dan. 12:10, where the just "shall be whitened and refined." Other texts use the same expression, "time of refining," referring to the persecution of the Teacher of Righteousness or of the men of the community (4QpPs[a] 2:17–19) or to locate during the last days the hostile actions of the "violators of the covenant," as well as the suffering and tribulations of its members and its leaders (1QpHab, 4QpNah, etc.).

The second element is equally explicit. The last days comprise the beginning of the messianic age. The same 4Q174 locates in the last days the rising up of the "shoot of David" and the construction of the new temple. A *pesher* on Isaiah (4Q161), commenting on Isa. 11:1–5, presents the same "shoot of David" (also called the Prince of the Congregation in the same document, and the Messiah of Israel in other writings) waging the eschatological war against the Kittim in the last days, destroying its enemies and judging and ruling over all the peoples. CD 6:11 extends the duration of age of wickedness "until there arises he who teaches justice at the end of days." 11QMelchizedek announces the ushering in of the age of salvation in the last days. The *Rule of the Congregation of Israel in the Last Days* (1QSa), which legislates for the eschatological community, assumes as a matter of fact that the Messiahs are present in these last days and take an active part in the life of the community. One of the most famous and disputed passages of the Scrolls announces God's begetting the Messiah "with them." For the rest, as L. Schiffman (1989) put it: the document describes the eschatological future as a mirror of the present. 1QSa reflects the everyday life of the community as we know it from the *Community Rule*—its purity concerns, its hierarchical structure, and its meals—but addresses at the same time particular concerns of the communities of the *Damascus Document*, as if indicating that in the last days the *yaḥad* community and the communities of the camps will be reunited in a single eschatological congregation.



The precise limits of the end of days are nowhere clearly stated, but it is said that this period of time will be closed by God's "visitation." In the Treatise of the Two Spirits we read: "God, in the mysteries of his knowledge and in the wisdom of his glory, has determined an end to the existence of deceit and on the occasion of his visitation he will obliterate it forever" (1QS 4:18–19). It is thus a period of time of limited duration, and it would be surprising if the members of the community had not attempted to calculate exactly the moment when the evil would be obliterated forever. Indeed, in some texts indirect traces of these calculations can be found. I do not think (as Steudel does) that the Day of Atonement of the tenth jubilee of 11QMelchizedek could gives us this date, nor that it can be provided by the 390 years of the beginning of the *Damascus Document* (the year 72 B.C.E.). But I do think that other texts, the *pesher* Habakkuk and the *Damascus Document* preserve traces of these calculations.

This last text tells us that the traitors to the covenant "shall not be counted in the assembly of the people and shall not be inscribed in their list, from the day of the gathering in of the unique Teacher until there arises the Messiah of Aaron and Israel" (19:35–20:1). A little further on it adds: "And from the day of the gathering in of the unique teacher, until the destruction of the men of war who turned back with the man of lies, there shall be about forty years" (20:13–15). If we identify the "men of war who turned back with the man of lies" with the traitors "who turned and betrayed and departed from the well of living waters," and if we understand both the coming of the Messiahs and the destruction of the men of war as an indication of the beginning of the divine visitation, we can see here a trace of these calculations: the end will come *about* forty years after the death of the Teacher. I do not think we can calculate an exact date on the basis of this "about forty years," but its presence in the *Damascus Document* is a sure indication that such calculations were made.

The other text, 1QpHab 7:1–14 does not offer any more precision, but it is a precious witness to the way the community coped when the calculations proved to be wrong and the expected end did not materialize. The text concerns Hab. 2:1–3, which is quoted, section by section, and interpreted:

> And God told Habakkuk to write what was going to happen to the last generation, but he did not let him know the end of the age. And as for what he says: "So that the one who reads it may run": Its interpretation concerns the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom God has disclosed all the mysteries of the words of

his servants, the prophets. "For the vision has an appointed time, it will have an end and will not fail." Its interpretation: the final age will be extended and go beyond all that the prophets say, because the mysteries of God are wonderful. "Though it might delay, wait for it; it definitely has to come and will not delay." Its interpretation concerns the men of truth, those who observe the Law, whose hands will not desert the service of truth when the final age is extended beyond them, because all the ages of God will come at the right time, as he established for them in the mysteries of his prudence.

In its extreme conciseness, this text teaches us many things: that the true meaning of the word of the prophet concerns the last period of history, the last days in which the community lives, although this meaning is not known by the prophet; that this deep meaning is known to the community thanks to the revelation the Teacher of Righteousness has received; that the core of this revelation is that the community lives in the last days, but this revelation does not include the exact time of arrival of the final salvation; that this arrival is part of the divine mystery, which includes prolongation as part of the divine plan; that the moment of salvation will come anyway, at the precise moment God has decreed; and that what really matters for the members of the community is not to abandon the service of truth during this prolongation.

The text clearly implies that the community has calculated the arrival of the end but that their prediction has not been fulfilled at the moment of the writing of the *pesher:* "the final age has extended beyond them." The text also shows that the community has already found a way to explain this delay without losing either the certainty of living already in the last days or the hope of the approaching final salvation.

This calculation of the end is nothing new. Daniel had already attempted to make even more specific calculations of the same end, and the biblical text shows traces of new calculations when the end did not come (Daniel 12).

### *Summary*

The historical apocalypses were characterized by the division of history into periods and the expectation that God would intervene in order to bring an end to the evil in the world. These ideas are abundantly represented in compositions we can attribute to the Qumran community that are of very different literary genres. They also seem to have profoundly shaped the worldview of the sect, which considered itself to be living in the last period of history.



## COMMUNION WITH THE HEAVENLY WORLD

One of the elements that distinguishes apocalyptic literature from the traditional biblical worldview is an increased interest in the heavenly world. This is shown by the number, and the concrete names, of the heavenly beings, be they angels or demons, that we encounter in this literature (Mach 1992). These heavenly beings appear named for the first time in such books as *1 Enoch* and Daniel, where their numbers "cannot be counted," but they are no fewer than "a thousand thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand." The angelology of *1 Enoch* is particularly developed, where a multitude of angelic beings exercise multiple functions. They are servants of the deity who stand before the throne of glory or outside the heavenly residence; they are intercessors before God, ministers of the heavenly liturgy but also executioners of the divine will. They are intimately related to the seer; they interpret dreams for him and disclose to him heavenly secrets. They guide the visionary in his heavenly tours and communicate to him divine decisions. They are also deeply involved in the affairs of this world. They rule over the stars, the winds, the rains, the seasons, and over all celestial elements which form part of their own names. They record the deeds of human beings and execute the punishment of the Watchers and of the sinners, but also they help the righteous and watch over Israel.

Already in the classical description of the Essenes it is said that they cherished "the knowledge of the names of the angels." So it comes as no surprise that the angelology of the scrolls is rather developed, more in line with the angelology of *1 Enoch* than with the sober angelology of the biblical texts. We have already mentioned the dualistic division of the angelic world with the Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness at the head of two angelic hosts, and we have also alluded to Belial, the most common name for the demonic leader in the Scrolls, to the "angels of destruction" (a designation that echoes the proper name of Mastema, their angelic leader in the book of *Jubilees*), and to Michael, the opponent of Belial in the eschatological war. But in the Scrolls we find also explicitly stated that another of the names of this angelic prince is Melkireša$^{c}$; (4Q544), in parallel to Melchizedek (11Q13), who in the Scrolls is apparently identified with Michael and with the Prince of Light.

In the Scrolls we find also a strongly hierarchical structure of the heavenly world, similar to the one that appears in the apocalypses, with different roles and different degrees of proximity to the deity. The Scrolls also attribute to angels many of the functions assigned to angelic beings in *1 Enoch* and other apocalyptic writings: angels interpret dreams and visions to the seer (such as

to Amram); they guide the visionary on a tour to the future city and the future temple (as in the New Jerusalem), or read for him from a heavenly book or inscription in the temple (as in 11Q18, 19 5–6). A fragmentary Aramaic composition (4Q529) even records "The Words of the book which Michael spoke to the angels of God."

But the most characteristic view of the heavenly world we find in the sectarian scrolls is the idea, expressed several times, that the angels are present in middle of the community, and consequently that its members somehow share already the life of the angels. This communion with the heavenly world and fellowship with the angels is explicitly stated as the reason for the high degree of purity required of those who take part in the eschatological battle: "And every man who has not cleansed himself of his 'spring' on the day of battle will not go down with them, for the holy angels are together with their armies" (1QM 7:5–6). But it is also invoked as an absolute reason to refuse entry into the eschatological community to anyone with an imperfection:

> No man defiled by any of the impurities of a man shall enter the assembly of these; and everyone who is defiled by them should not be established in his office amongst the congregation. And everyone who is defiled in his flesh, paralyzed in his feet or in his hands, lame, blind, deaf, dumb or defiled in his flesh with a blemish visible to the eyes, or the tottering old man who cannot keep upright in the midst of the assembly, these shall not enter to take their place among the congregation of famous men, for the angels of holiness are among their congre[gation.] (1QSa 2:3–9)

That this fellowship with the angels is not something reserved for the eschatological time, for the "last days" to which these two documents are addressed, is proved by one of the copies of the *Damascus Document* from Cave 4, which legislates who can become members of the present community:

> And no-one stupid or deranged should enter; and anyone feeble-minded and insane, those with sightless eyes, and the lame or one who stumbles, or a deaf person, or an under-age boy, none of these shall enter the congregation, for the holy angels are in its midst. (4Q267 17 i 6–9)

It is also shown by the repeated use of this idea both in *Rule of the Community* and in the *Hymns*, perhaps the most characteristic documents of the Qumran community, as indicated by the following two samples:

> To those whom God has selected he has given them as everlasting possession; until they inherit them in the lot of the holy ones. He unites their assembly to the sons of the heavens in order (to form) the council of the Community and a foundation of the building of holiness to be an everlasting plantation throughout all future ages. (1QS 11:7–9)



> And I know that there is hope for someone you fashioned out of clay to be an everlasting community. The corrupt spirit you have purified from the great sin so that he can take his place with the host of the holy ones, and can enter into communion with the congregation of the sons of heaven. (1QH 11:20–22)

The idea of communion with the heavenly world gives us the key to understanding the document in which the angelology of the Qumran group is most explicitly stated: the *Songs for the Sabbath Sacrifice*. This composition, the title of which has been taken from the sentence that begins each one of its thirteen songs, has been found in ten fragmentary copies: eight from Cave 4, one from Cave 1, and another one found in the excavations of Masada. All of them were made between the second half of the first century B.C.E. and the first half of the first century C.E. (Newsom 1985, 19). The peculiarities of the language, dominated by nominal and participial sentences with elaborate construct chains, the omnipresence of constructions with the preposition *l-*, many lexical novelties, and peculiar syntax, indicate that the original composition should not be dated very much earlier than the oldest copy.

The composition comprises thirteen songs intended for consecutive sabbaths, apparently designed to be repeated in each quarter of the year. Each song starts with a fixed formula but has no fixed end, and each one consists of a call to different sorts of angelic beings to praise the deity. Although the angels are insistently exhorted to praise, nowhere in the composition is their praise recorded, except as "the serene sound of silence" (4Q405 19 7), or "the voice of a divine silence" (4Q405 20–22 7) of the blessing.

The first four songs deal with the establishment of the angelic priesthood, its responsibilities and functions in the heavenly sanctuary ("[Because he has established] the holy of holies among the eternal holy ones, so that for him they can be priests [who approach the temple of his kingship,] the servants of the Presence in the sanctuary of his glory" [4Q400 1 i 3–4]), as well as with the relationship of the angelic priesthood to the human priesthood: "And how will our priesthood (be regarded) in their residences? What is the offering of our tongue of dust (compared) with the knowledge of the divinities?" (4Q400 2 6–7). The fifth song deals with the eschatological battle: "the war of the gods in the per[iod . . .] for to the God of the divinities belong the weapons of war [. . .] the gods run to their positions, and a powerful noise [. . .] the gods in the war of the heavens" (4Q402 4 7–10), placing this eschatological battle in the same deterministic perspective we have seen in the Trea-

tise of the Two Spirits: "Because from the God of knowledge comes all that existed for ever. And through his knowledge and through his decision all that is predestined exists for ever. He does the first things in their ages and the final (things) in their appointed periods" (4Q402 4, completed with the copy from Masada). The sixth and eighth songs detail respectively the seven praises uttered by the seven sovereign angelic princes who are the seven high priests of the seven heavenly sanctuaries, and the praises by their seven deputies, "those second among the priests who approach him, the second council in the wonderful dwelling among the seven . . . among all those having knowledge of eternal things." The seventh song, the center of the whole cycle, contains a very elaborate exhortation to praise, followed by the praise uttered by the different elements of the heavenly temple: "the foundations of the holy of holies, the supporting columns of the highest vault, and all the corners of his building," but also "all its beams and walls, all its shape, the work of his construction." This praise is continued in more detail in songs 9–11, which proceed with the description of the praise of the elements of the heavenly temple, described as animate beings, from the outside in the ninth song ("the lobbies of their entrances, spirits who approach the holy of holies"), to the inside in the tenth song, as far as the veil of the sanctuary with all that is engraved there, to reach finally in the eleventh song the inside of the *dĕbîr,* which describes the praise uttered by all its elements "living gods are all their works and holy angels the images of their forms." The twelfth song describes the appearance of the chariot-throne, the movement of the heavenly beings which surround it and the praises they utter:

> They bless the image of the throne-chariot (which is) above the vault of the cherubim, and they sing the splendor of the shining vault (which is) beneath the seat of his glory. And when the *ofanim* move forward, the holy angels go back; they emerge among the glorious wheels with the likeness of fire, the spirits of the holy of holies. Around them, the likeness of a stream of fire like electrum, and a luminous substance with glorious colors, wonderfully intermingled, brightly combined. The spirits of the living gods move constantly with the glory of the wonderful chariots. And (there is) a silent voice of blessing in the uproar of their motion, and they praise the holy one on returning to their paths. (4Q405 20–22 8–13)

The climax of the whole composition is reached in the thirteenth song, in which the sacrifices that appear on the heading of each song are finally mentioned: "agreeable offerings," "the sacrifices of the holy ones," "the odor of their offerings," "the odor of their libations." The angels are described as officiating priests wearing the ephod and the breastplate, and the praise of the whole heavenly temple is summarized (11Q17 cols. 10–11).



Although the *Songs* do not preserve personal names of the angels (except perhaps the name of Melchizedek in two broken instances) and it is difficult, not to say impossible, from the generic names used (gods, holy ones, glorious ones, spirits, angels, princes, priests, deputies, angels of the face, angels who approach, angels who serve, and so on) to extract the assigned or intended functions of the different classes of angels, there is no doubt that the number of beings and the differentiation of the heavenly world in the *Songs* is as great and variegated as it is in other apocalypses. In the *Songs* even all the material elements of the heavenly abode—the structures of the heavenly temple and the components of the chariot-throne—are presented as animated heavenly beings of angelic nature who utter praise and participate in the heavenly liturgy. And, though the hierarchical structure of the angelic realm is somewhat blurred in the *Songs,* at least there is explicit mention of the seven princes and their seven deputies in the sixth and eighth songs. These are clearly two categories of angelic beings superior to the others, the first corresponding perhaps to the seven archangels of the Greek text of *1 Enoch* or to the four archangels of the Ethiopic text, who are also named in other Qumran scrolls.

In spite of the nonpolemical and neutral character of the *Songs* and of the absence of clearly sectarian terminology in the composition, the abundant parallels with other clearly sectarian scrolls, such as the 1QH or 1QS, suggest that the *Songs* are a product of the Qumran community. Other considerations supporting this view include the use of *lĕmaśkîl* in the headings (which is common to many sectarian compositions); the close parallels between the description of the angelic praise and the heavenly temple in the *Songs* and in compositions such as 4QBerakot (4Q286–290) and the *Songs of the Maskil* (4Q510–511), whose sectarian character cannot be doubted; the great number of copies found; the late date of all of them and the equally late date assumed for the original. The idea of communion with the angels, which we find to be characteristic of the Qumran community, provides the most illuminating setting for the composition.

The function of the *Songs* within the community has been diversely explained. For those who value most the detailed descriptions of the components of the heavenly temple, the text would function as revelation of the heavenly realities. For those who underline the numinous character of the language used and the importance of the description of the chariot-throne, the *Songs* would function as an instrument of mystical meditation or even mystical ascent to the divine throne, similar to the mystics of the *Merkavah.* For those who emphasize the priestly character of the *Songs,* its function would be to validate and justify the priestly character of a community that has no con-

trol over the earthly temple by its association with the heavenly cult. In my view the most likely function of the *Songs* within the Qumran community was to substitute for the participation in the sacrifices of the earthly Temple the association with the heavenly liturgy and the sabbath offerings. We know that the community, in the expectation of the new situation "at the end of the days" had developed an interim theology of the community as spiritual temple, in which praise substituted for the sacrifices (see 1QS 8:4–10; 9:3–6). We have also seen (in the texts from 1QSa and 1QM quoted above) that the community had developed the idea of fellowship with the angels, and other texts show that the priests of the community considered themselves to be associated with the angelic priesthood. The blessing over the priests, the sons of Zadok, says: "May the Lord bless you from his holy residence. May he set you as a glorious ornament in the midst of the holy ones. For you may he renew the covenant of eternal priesthood. May he grant you a place in the holy residence" (1QSb 3:25–26), and even more clearly in the next column: "You shall be around, serving in the temple of the kingdom, sharing the lot with the angels of the face and the council of the community . . . for eternal time and for all the perpetual periods" (1QSb 4:25–26). The recitation of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* on the successive sabbaths of the four quarters of the year gave the members of the community the possibility of participating in the sabbath sacrifice of the heavenly temple, compensating for their absence from the sabbath sacrifice of the Jerusalem Temple and giving a concrete expression to the life shared with the angels already in the present.

### *Summary*

The complexity and structured organization of the heavenly world that we find in the apocalypses are represented also in the Scrolls, which add a most notable element: the idea that the angels are already living among the members of the community. This fellowship with the angels is not restricted to the future but is a reality also of the present and allows participation in the liturgy of the heavenly temple.

## THE ESCHATOLOGICAL WAR

One of the basic themes of the prophets is the announcement of the final triumph of God and of the people of Israel against the evil forces and against the enemies who oppress the people in the present. Very often this triumph takes the form of a future military victory in which the Israelites will destroy the



hostile powers who actually oppress them. This expectation is rooted in the realities of the political history of the people of Israel with its repeated experience of invasions and defeats by foreign powers and in the confidence that the God of Israel, who has overpowered the forces of chaos, will deliver his people from oppression. Although in some cases this liberation takes the form of a victory against a very concrete enemy (such as in the various oracles of Jeremiah against different nations), very often it is generalized in the form of a victory against all the nations (Psalm 2) or against a mythical enemy, such as Gog, king of Magog, who represents all the hostile powers (Ezekiel 38–39); a famous oracle of the prophet Joel links this victory with the day of the Lord, when the nations will be judged (Joel 3:9–16)

The apocalypses develop further this idea of the victory over all the nations, placing it in a clear eschatological perspective (as in the Animal Apocalypse, which ends with the destruction of all the hostile nations [*1 Enoch* 90]), and introduce in this eschatological war, as participants or as protagonists, the angelic forces with a celestial leader (as in Daniel, where Michael is the leader who overpowers the angels of the nations).

In the Scrolls the biblical elements of the final victory against all the nations are clearly present, and they are placed in an eschatological perspective. *4QFlorilegium* (4Q174) interprets Psalm 2 in the context of the "end of days" and "the time of the trial"; 4QpIsa$^{a}$ (4Q161) refers to Magog and "the war of the Kittim" together with the Branch of David, the Davidic Messiah who participates in the eschatological victory; the same figure, called there "the Prince of the Congregation," appears in the *Damascus Document* as "the scepter" of the oracle of Balaam "who will smite the children of Sheth" (CD 7:20–21). The angelic participation in the final battle is also well attested in the Scrolls, which refer to "the war of the heavenly warriors" (1QH 11:35), and which (as we have already seen) anticipate the final victory of the forces of light against the forces of darkness "at the time of his visitation" in the Treatise of the Two Spirits (1QS 3–4).

But in the Scrolls the eschatological battle does not simply coincide with the biblical and apocalyptic vision of the final victory against the foreign nations, because it comprises the victory against all evil forces. The dividing line is not between Israel and the foreign nations but between the Sons of Light (which are the elected ones of Israel) and the Sons of Darkness (a term that covers not only pagans but also unfaithful Israelites). In the thought of the Qumran community, the eschatological battle will not be restricted to a battle against the foreign nations; it will also be a battle against all the evildoers, including the part of Israel that has not joined the community.

The document in which the thought of the group on the eschatological

battle and final victory is best reflected is the *Rule of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (1QM), which has been best preserved in a copy from Cave 1, but which is also attested in several fragmentary copies from Cave 4 (4Q492, 4Q494–496). Other manuscripts, such as 4Q491 and 4Q493, have preserved materials related to this composition or even different recensions of the same composition, while two other manuscripts (4Q285 and 11Q11) that also deal with the eschatological war may represent part of the lost end of 1QM or may come from another composition dealing with the same topic (Duhaime 1995).

The contents of 1QM may be summarized as follows:

Column 1 and part of column 2 contain a summary of the development of the war, which ends with the victory of the Sons of Light and the restoration of the cult in Jerusalem.

Columns 2–9 record the organization and the military tactics that should be employed in this war: rules of the trumpets to conduct each one of the phases of the war (2:15–3:11); rules of the banners with their inscriptions (3:13–5:2); rules of the formation of the battle arrays, the weapons, and the tactical movements (5:3–7:7); and the rules to conduct the war with the different trumpets (7:9 until the end of column 9).

Columns 10–14 contain the prayers that are to be said during the different phases of the war: in the camps (cols. 10–12), during the battle (col. 13), and after the victory (col. 14).

Column 15 to the end of the manuscript preserves another version of the war against the Kittim, with the exhortation of the high priest before the battle, the first engagement, the use of the reserve troops when the Belial army seems to have the upper hand, the final battle and the celebration after the victory.

The unity and coherence of the document in its present form have led some scholars to defend the unity of composition of 1QM. But, because of certain repetitions, inconsistencies, and especially because there are two basically different conceptions of the eschatological war, most scholars recognize that 1QM is the result of the fusion of at least two documents.

One of them, inspired by Daniel 11–12 and Ezekiel 38–39, developed the idea of an eschatological conflagration on seven lots in which each one of the sides has the upper part during three lots and which ends with the victory of God. As stated in col. 1: "In the war, the sons of light will be the strongest during three lots, in order to strike down wickedness; and in three (others), the army of Belial will gird themselves in order to force the lot of [. . .] to retreat. . . . And in the seventh lot, God's great hand will subdue [Belial, and a]ll the angels of his dominion and all the men of [his lot]" (1QM 1:13–15).



The same idea is found in cols. 14–19, in which, in spite of the bad state of preservation, we can discern that these seven lots alternate, a victory following a defeat, until the final victory of the Sons of Light in the seventh lot, when "the Kittim shall be crushed without a [remnant . . .] when the hand of the God of Israel is raised against the whole horde of Belial" (1QM 18:2–3). This war is envisaged in two levels, the human and the angelic: "On this (day), the assembly of the gods and the congregation of men shall confront each other for great destruction" (1QM 1:10), but the angelic hosts appear to have no leader apart from God himself, who at the end decides the victory. These two ideas characterize cols. 1 and 14–19.

These two elements allow us to distinguish this original document from the second one, reflected in cols. 2–13, in which the war of seven lots is transformed in a progressive battle of forty years against each one of the nations enumerated in Genesis 10, and in which the angelic army is guided by an angelic leader, the Prince of Light: "From of old you appointed the Prince of Light to assist us, and in [. . .] and all the spirits of truth are under his dominion" (1QM 13:10). This progressive battle, which evidently is based on the forty-year schema of Exodus, does not know any interruption other than the obliged rest of the sabbatical years, five in a forty-year period. This leaves thirty-five years for the conduct of the war. For the author of this document (or for the redactor who has united it with the previous one), the war of seven lots of the first document seems to be understood as the first seven of the forty years, of which the seventh year is not the final victory but the first sabbatical year, and the other six either a general preparation for the war or a general battle of the whole congregation against the main enemies, according to the interpretation one gives to the problematic expression of 2:9. The remaining twenty-nine years are dedicated to eradicating all the enemies of Israel: nine years of war against the sons of Shem, ten years against the sons of Ham, and the last ten years against the sons of Japheth:

> During the remaining thirty-three years of the war, the famous men called to the assembly, and all the chiefs of the fathers of the congregation shall choose for themselves men of war for all the countries of the nations; from all the tribes of Israel they shall equip for them intrepid men, in order to go out on campaign according to the directives of war, year after year. However, during the years of release they shall not equip themselves in order to go out on campaign, for it is a sabbath of rest for Israel. During the thirty-five years of service, the war will be prepared (or waged) during six years; and all the congregation together will prepare it (or wage it). And the war of the divisions (will take place) during the remaining twenty-nine years. (1QM 2:6–10)

If the idea of the forty-year war is clearly based on the biblical tradition and reminds us of the wandering in the wilderness, it is difficult to find a biblical precedent for the idea of the war of seven alternate lots, although there is an obvious similarity between the seven lots and the sabbatical structures that inform so much of Jewish thought. The closest parallel to this idea is provided by a passage in Plutarch that attributes a similar idea to the Persians: "Theopompus says that, according to the Magians, for three thousand years alternately the one god will dominate the other and be dominated, and that for another three thousand years they will fight and make war, until one smashes up the domain of the other. In the end Hades shall perish and men shall be happy "(*On Isis and Osiris* 47; see chapter 2 above).

Although there are many uncertainties in this text, it provides some basic elements, like two supernatural forces that battle each other and alternately hold sway until the victory of the supreme God, which may have helped to give shape to the thought of the author of the *War Scroll*. This possible Persian influence comes at no surprise since we have already noted the most plausible Persian influence on the Treatise of the Two Spirits, and the first document of the *War Scroll* shares the characteristic dualistic framework of this tractate.

The redactor who has combined both documents to form the *War Scroll* that we have in 1QM has also used other elements. Most prominent is a collection of prayers for the time of the war, which could have had an autonomous existence. This is suggested by the text itself:

> The High Priest will take up position, and his brothers the priests and the levites and all the men of the rule shall be with him. And he will say in their hearing the prayer for the time of war, [as it is written in the "Bo]ok of the Rule for this time," with all the words of thanksgiving. (1QM 15:4–5)

This clearly echoes the biblical order: "before you engage in battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the troops" (Deut. 20:2), but the specific reference to a "book" seems to indicate that these prayers were already at the disposal of the redactor of the composition, an assumption that is corroborated by the use of the same prayers in other closely related but different compositions on the same topic such as 4Q491. These prayers are mostly grouped in cols. 9–14, but we can find them also in other places of the scroll. The prayers are very closely based on biblical material; many of them recall incidents from biblical history that show examples of divine intervention in favor of Israel, and their language is mostly a mosaic of biblical expressions. They are put in the mouths of levites, of priests, or of the high priest (who are also the ones who exhort the people by means of speeches and enforce the purity regulations), and they help to accentuate the priestly preeminence in guiding the people and the ritualistic character of the whole war.



The redactor has also sought inspiration from Greco-Roman tactical military manuals to specify the regulations for warfare that he applies to the development of the war in cols. 2–9. These regulations for warfare show some general similarity to Maccabean battles, but they are more akin to the Roman military tactics (such as the use of the "gates of war," the Roman *intervalla* [see Yadin 1962]). The knowledge of these tactics and the descriptions of the weaponry (such as the square shield, the Roman *scutum*) indicate a certain familiarity with the Roman army but do not imply that the redaction of 1QM is posterior to the intervention of Pompey, because this knowledge could be obtained well before the Roman conquest of Palestine. The author has been influenced by the biblical tradition more than by Greco-Roman military manuals or Maccabean warfare. The organization of the army in thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens is patterned after the Israelite army as described in Exodus 18; the overall use of the banners to distinguish each unit and their elaborate inscriptions are dependent on Numbers 2 and 17; and the use of the trumpets has its basis in Numbers 10, although in the *War Scroll* the use of trumpets is much more complex and elaborate than in the biblical tradition, and its function in conducting each phase of the war goes far beyond the biblical text. This use of trumpets and horns accentuates the ritualistic character of the whole composition and recalls the ritual character of the conquest of Jericho in Joshua 7.

Because we do not have the end of the 1QM manuscript, we do not know in detail what expectations its author had for the time after the eschatological war or how he imagined the life of the community after the final divine intervention. But if he accepted, as it seems, the summary of the first document of the war of seven lots, one of the first results of the final victory (col. 2) would be the reconstruction of the temple service according to the proper order and the right calendar of 364 days. This implies return to Jerusalem after the necessary purification of the earth from the corpses of those slain in battle, and the reorganization of the whole of life according to the regulations of the community, which would be no more in exile but would control the whole country. Because all the Sons of Darkness, the "army of Belial," would be completely destroyed, the Sons of Light would no longer be a remnant but would be the whole of Israel. Hence, the *War Scroll* shares the perspective of other sectarian documents, such as the *Rule of the Congregation* (1QSa), in which membership of the community seems to be coextensive

with the Israel "of the last days." Characteristically, the same people who are excluded from the community "of the end days" are also excluded from participating in the final battle (compare 1QM 7:4–5 with the already quoted text of 1QSa 2:5–8).

The function of the *War Scroll* has been defined in very different terms by various scholars: as the apocalyptic revelation of the several phases, enemies, and general development of the eschatological war; as a composition designed to instruct the perfect soldier, a manual to be used on the battlefield to oppose the enemy; as a propaganda pamphlet to oppose the way rival Jewish leaders were conducting the war indicating the right way to proceed; as a composition written more for liturgical than for practical purposes, more to celebrate the future victory than to prepare for or to conduct the war. But in fact these readings of the function of the text do not need to be mutually exclusive, and perhaps the best way to understand this complex document is by combining these apparently contradictory functions. The *War Scroll*, by representing the dramatic final conflict of the forces of good and evil as a liturgy in which the trumpets are as effective as the weapons, the priestly prayers as necessary as the movements of the troops, and the purity regulations as essential as the presence of the heavenly warriors, stimulates the hope for the future intervention of God, helps to organize the present as a preparation for this intervention, justifies the present opposition to other forces, and conveys the certitude that the actual dreams and hopes will be fulfilled in the final victory.

### *Summary*

The apocalypses developed the traditional idea of a final victory against the enemies of Israel and placed it in an eschatological context, with participation of angelic forces. In the Dead Sea Scrolls this idea is further developed and transformed into an eschatological war of seven lots or of forty years which will end with the final victory against all forces of evil.

## CONCLUSION

In the four topics examined we have seen that characteristic ideas of the apocalyptic tradition have not only contributed to the thought of the Qumran community but have undergone there equally characteristic developments. The idea of the origin of evil has been developed to a fully dualistic and deterministic view of the world; the apocalyptic division of history into periods and the expectation that God will intervene to bring an end to the evil in the



world have profoundly marked the worldview of the community, which considers itself living in the last of these periods; the Scrolls add to the complexity and structured organization of the heavenly world of the apocalypses the idea that the angels are already living among the community, allowing its members to participate in the liturgy of the heavenly temple; the Scrolls also develop the apocalyptic idea of an eschatological war in which the heavenly forces help Israel to defeat the nations in a final war in which all evil will be destroyed.

We can thus conclude that the apocalypticism indicated by this cluster of ideas in the sectarian scrolls is something more than an umbrella term. It represents genuine continuity with the worldview of Daniel and *1 Enoch* even while it adapted the tradition inherited from these earlier apocalypses in its own distinctive ways.

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# 6

# Messianism and Apocalypticism

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IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER JEWISH BELIEFS ABOUT A MESSIAH surface in a number of texts dating from the Greco-Roman period. The presence of the term *messiah* in a series of Jewish texts and especially the large role the title plays in the New Testament works have ensured the popularity of the topic to the present day. The purpose of this essay is to explore and document the varied messianic ideas present in the Jewish texts and to study their connections (or lack of them) with apocalypticism. The introductory section will be devoted to clarifying terms and to the biblical roots of messianism and apocalypticism. The next section will present the evidence for messianic expectations in early Jewish texts, and the final part will summarize the results for the variety of messianic expectations and their relations with apocalyptic concerns.

## INTRODUCTION

### *Messiah and Messianism*

The first term to be defined is *messiah,* a word reflecting the Greek transcription of the Hebrew *māšîaḥ,* which refers to a person who has been anointed

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