Line 40. Newsom plausibly suggests that the phrase "with the best portion of spirit" exhorts the audience to offer God a spiritual "portion" or "offering" (often a secondary sense of the word), as opposed to a material one (cf. Heb 13:15). A heavenly sacrificial cult figure in Songs XII and XIII (see the commentary to XII 4Q405 23i-6). For a similar use of the word "best," normally translated "head" or "chief," see Exod 30:23.

Line 41. This line has the only mention of pillars in the surviving text of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, and the immediate context seems to place these in the vicinity of the heavenly sanctuary. Two pillars stood in front of the vestibule of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 7:15-22; 2 Chron 3:15-17; cf. Ezek 40:49); presumably these are the cosmic equivalents, perhaps to be identified with the "pillars of heaven" of Job 26:11 (cf. 1 Enoch 18:3, 11). The pillars of smoke and fire that led the Israelites through the wilderness may also be behind the image (Exod 13:21-22; 4Q470 3:5; 4Q504 6:10). 3 Enoch 38:1 mentions "all the pillars of the firmaments and their capitals."

The word "abode" appears only here and in 4Q405 81:2 in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. Its root means "to be honored or princely" (cf. Gen 30:20). In the HB it is used of the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 8:13 // 2 Chron 6:2), God's abode in heaven (Isa 63:15; Hab 3:11), and perhaps the abode of the dead (Ps 49:15; the text is uncertain). In the QL it refers to God's abode in heaven (1QS xiii.1-2 // 4Q491 5:6-1; 1QH vi.34). In Jewish esoteric literature Abode is the name of one of the seven firmaments (e.g., Seder Rabba di Bereishit §§40-41 [SH-L §§720-22]).

Line 42. The phrase "firmaments of purity" appears in XII 4Q405 23i-6-7. Compare "heavens of purity" in 4Q262 8:5; the description of the celestial pavement in Exod 24:10; the "firmament of terrible ice" in Ezek 1:22; and the discussion of this pavement in the commentary to XI 4Q405 19:5.

Line 43. Compare the "chief firmament on high" with the "first firmament" of seven in the H.L. (e.g., 3 Enoch 17:3) and in Sepher HaRazim 1. In the H.L. the first firmament is the lowest, but in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice the chief firmament appears to be the topmost. The beams and walls of the earthly temple are mentioned in 2 Chron 3:6-7.

Line 45. The word pair "effulgence and adornment" reconstructed here is used in descriptions of the heavenly realm in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, the HB, 4Q286 11i-4, and often in the H.L.
of... His glory. And in all their turnings the gates of... the appearing of... the divinities of... between them divinities run like the appearance of glowing coals of... walking all around. Most holy spirits... holy spirits, spirits of God, an eternally holy... and spirits of God, shapes of flaming fire around... wondrous spirits and the tabernacle of the exalted chief, the glory of His kingdom, the inner chamber... and He sanctifies the seven exalted holy (places) and the voice of blessing is from the chief of His inner chamber... and the voice of the blessing is glorified in the hearing of the divinities and the councils [of...] the blessing. And all the crafted furnishings of the inner chamber hasten with psalms of wonder in the inner chamber... of wonder, inner chamber to inner chamber with the sound of holy tumults. And all their crafted furnishings... and the chariots of His inner chamber psalm together and their cherubim and their ophanim bless wondrously... of chiefs of the divine structure. And they praise Him in the holy inner chamber. BLANK... 17BLANK...
LITURGICAL WORKS

Line 7. Echoes Ezek 1:13; Line 9. Spirits and the divine realm are represented as fiery in nature in the Psalms (Ps 104:4); apocalyptic literature (1 Enoch 14:11; Dan 7:9-10; Rev 4:5; 2 Apoc. Bar. 22:6); the Phoenician tradition (Philo of Byblos, Phoenician History [Philo, Works and Letters, 1:10.9]), and Ugaritic literature (Smith, "Biblical and Canaanite Notes," 586-87). For more fiery spirits, see Song XII 4Q405 20ii-21-22:10.

Line 11. One could possibly read "and [they] sanctify". The seven exalted holy (places)" are presumably related to the "seven inner chambers of the priesthood[5]" (VII 4Q405 7:7); "the seven priesthoods of His interior" (VIII 4Q403 11i:20 [cf. 22]); "the seven wondrous borders" (VII 4Q403 1ii:21); the "seven holy councils" (VIII 4Q403 1ii:22); and the "seven most holy borders" (VIII 4Q403 1ii:27; 4Q405 44i:1). The precise details and inter-relationships in the cosmography are obscure.

Line 13. Compare the "crafted furnishings" to those in Exod 31:4 and the workmanship of the shields and weapons in IQM v6-11.

Line 15. Multiple celestial chariots are mentioned in the Jb in Isa 66:15; perhaps Jer 4:13; Hab 3:8; Zech 6:1-3; Ps 68:18. In the QL they figure repeatedly in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and also appear in 4Q286 1i:2. In the H a group of them is listed in 3 Enoch 24, and Ma’ath Merkavah §§554-55 describes vast numbers of chariots, more in each succeeding palace, which sing together like those in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. Something of this sort may be implied in line 14 of this passage by the broken phrase "inner chamber with the sound of holy tumults," although this seems to refer to the resounding praise of the divine crafted furnishings of line 13. Chariots are also mentioned in SH-L §490; Ma’ath Merkavah §585; Massohek Hekahal节约 512.2; 15.1; 17.1.

The cherubim are angelic beings whose God is enthroned (see 1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 22:11 // Ps 18:11; cf. 4Q204 1vii:1) and who guard the entrance to Eden (Gen 2:24). They are represented as architectural motifs in the construction of the tabernacle (e.g., Exod 25:18-22; 26:31-33) and are kings (e.g., 1 Kgs 6:24-29; 1 Chron 28:18; 2 Chron 3:7, 10-14; cf. 1IQ 9 vii:10-12). Cherubim are often associated with the heavenly throne room in Second Temple and paraphorical literature. In the QL cherubim also appear in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and in 4Q514 4i:2.

The "living creatures" of Ezekiel 1 are identified with the cherubim in Ezekiel 10 but are not mentioned in the surviving text of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. Nevertheless, the persistent association of cherubim in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice with motifs from Ezekiel 1 seems to imply that the author accepted this identification. Strange, Isa 6:1-3, a centrally inspirational passage for the HL, is never alluded to in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice either, which may imply that the author also took the cherubim and seraphim to be the same beings (cf. Second Ezekiel, 4Q385 4:6-7, which seems to describe the living creatures of Ezekiel 1 in terms reminiscent of the seraphim in Isa 6:2).

The HL mentions the cherubim frequently, often in association with the ophannim, and always distinguishes them from the living creatures.

The word "ophannim" means "wheel" and is used of the divine chariot in Ezek 1:15-21; 3:13; 10:5-19, and 4Q385 4:10-11; and of wheels on the bronze stands in the temple, "like chariot-wheel workmanship," in 1 Kgs 7:30-33 (cf. 4Q695 5i4). In the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice they are angelic beings (XI 4Q405 20i-21-22:3; XII 4Q405 201-222:9), as sometimes in Second Temple and paraphorical literature (e.g., 1 Enuch 71:7; 2 Enoch 20iv:1; 29:3) and always in the HL.

4Q405 7 (= 4Q403 1ii:9-16)

A fragment mentioning inner chambers of angelic priesthoods

1[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
2[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
3[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
4[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
5[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
6[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
7[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
8[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
9[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
10[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
11[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
12[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]
13[...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...][...]

Note

*Most of this fragment was found superimposed on 4Q405 6, so it is one column away from frag. 6 and should correspond approximately to 4Q403 1ii:9-16. Unfortunately the latter text is badly damaged, and there is no overlap between the two fragments. Still, the placing of frag. 7 in this vicinity is very probable.

Commentary

Song VIII

(4Q403 11ii:18-48 + 4Q405 8-13 + 11Q17 ii;
4Q405 64 + 67 + 11Q17 iii)

Exhorts a second order of angels, who comprise seven priestly councils in seven territories, to praise God. Seven angels offer successive praises, each tongue louder than the previous one. After another series of seven psalms by (the same), angels, the seven secondary princes each offer a blessing of seven words. This last section corresponds closely to the blessings of the seven chief princes in Song VI.

4Q403 11ii:18-48 + 4Q405 8-11 + 11Q17 ii (ital.)

Title and opening call to praise

And exalt Him, O chiefs of princes with the portion of His wonders. Psalm of the God of gods. O seven priestly ordinances of His interior. . . . 21exaltation, seven wondrous borders by the laws of His sanctuaries <<chefs of princes of a wondrous priesthood>:: of Melchizedek <<sanctuaries of>> 22seven priests of the King in the wondrous dwellings and the knowledge of their understanding for seven . . . 23chief . . . from the priest of the interior and the chiefs of the congregation of the King in the assembly of . . . 24and exalted praises to the King of glory and greatness of God . . . 25God of gods, the pure King and the contribution of their tongues . . . 27seven mysteries of knowledge in the wondrous mystery of the seven holy ones of . . .

Invocation of angelic princes and priesthoods

The ascending praises of the seven secondary princes

[And the tongue of the first will become mighty sevenfold by means of the tongue of the one second to him; and the tongue of his second will become mighty sevenfold; and the tongue of the third to him; and the tongue of the third will become mighty sevenfold by means of the tongues of the one fourth to him; and the tongue of the fourth will become mighty sevenfold by means of the tongues of the one fifth to him; and the tongue of the fifth will become mighty sevenfold by means of the tongues of the one sixth to him; and the tongue of the sixth will become mighty sevenfold by means of the tongues of the seventh to him and by means of the tongues of the seventh will become mighty sevenfold by holiness of the sanctuary of . . . 31and according to the sevenfold word of . . . 32with wondrous psalms, with wondrous words . . . 32wonder. BLANK.

A summary of the psalms of the seven secondary princes

[Psalm of] blessing by [the tongue of the first . . . 33wonder and psalming to the Lord of all god[s of . . . 33the chief of His wonders for great psalming, . . . 33for the ones who enlighten knowledge among all gods of light, . . . 33proclam[es] by the tongue of the four[th] . . . 33wonder. P[salm of thanksgiving by the tongue of the fifth . . . 33thanks[ings][givings] . . . 33Psalms of . . . 33chief[s] . . . 33wonder . . . 33[. . . 33dwelling[s] . . . 33wonder, with se[ven] . . . 33[. . . 33[. . . 33[. . .

Notes

The reading is יִבְנָה. In wondrous dwellings," in 4Q405 6-9:3 and probably in 11Q17 ii5.

The surviving words are marked for deletion with superscript dots in 4Q403 1i:21 but not in 4Q405 6-9:5. It cannot be determined how many if any words in the lacunae in 4Q403 were marked for deletion.

The surviving text is from 11Q17 ii7. It is tempting to restore the name Melchizedek (cf. Ps 110:4; 4Q401 22:4-5), but other restorations are possible, for example, מֵלְכִּי־זֶדֶק, "of the King [of glory]," or מֵלְכִּי־זָדֵק, "of the king (dom of . . ."

The corresponding text of 4Q405 8-9:7 reads something different from "seven," but the word is badly damaged and cannot be deciphered.

This passage is very difficult. I have taken it, "to him," to indicate the order of the appearance of the various tongues with reference to the first (duale of respect); the preposition, "by means of," to indicate means or instrument (this word cannot denote accompaniment); and the preposition, "than," to indicate comparison. The
LITURGICAL WORKS

result is not entirely consistent or satisfactory, but it appears at least to make sense grammatically.

From the context one would expect "the second" or "myth".

Commentary

Line 19. This line hints that Song VIII relates the various praises and blessings of the seven secondary princes, although the identity of the praising angels does not become explicit in the surviving fragments until we reach the blessings of the "seven wondrous secondary princes" in 4Q405 13.

Line 21. Presumably the "seven wondrous borders" are the same as the "seven [most holy] borders" (line 27) and have some relationship with the "seven priestly orders of his interior" (line 20) and the "seven holy courts" (line 22), the "seven exalted holy [places]" (VII 4Q403 iii:11), and are to be taken as a feature of the celestial cosmography. An angelic border is also mentioned in I 4Q406 ii:13, although any connection with this passage is less certain.

This line includes one of the three possible occurrences of the name Melchizedek in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (the other two are in 4Q401 II:3; 22:3). Unfortunately, all three are badly damaged and the readings are uncertain, but, nevertheless, a good case can be made that the celestial warrior-priest had a place in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. See the "Exeunus on the Melchizedek Tradition" at the end of this chapter.

Line 24. The phrase "from the priest of the interior" is found only here (although "priests of the interior" appears elsewhere in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, e.g., I 4Q400 i:8), and it seems to single out a particular angelic priest. Given the context, it may be that we should tie the phrase to the possible reference to Melchizedek in line 21.

Line 27. The "mysteries of knowledge" are also mentioned in I QS ix:6; various permutations of the "wondrous mystery" (all in the plural, occur in II 4Q401 i:1; 4Q401 14i:2; I QS ix:1; 1QH vi:9; 1Q16 xi:21; xv:13; xi:27-28; xv:27; and xii:10.

Lines 27-29. Although the grammar is somewhat obscure, this passage appears to state that the praise of each successive secondary prince resounds seven times louder than that of his predecessor. The idea is similar to the description of the praise offered by the many myriad chariots in the seven heavenly palaces in Ma‘aseh Merkabah 99-54-55 (see the commentary to VII 4Q403 iii:5).

Line 32. The blank space in this line appears to block off a new, and unfortunately poorly preserved, section of the song (approximately lines 32b-48 + 4Q405 12, 64-67 + 11Q17 iii), which mentions a series of praises recited by seven beings, again presumably the seven secondary chief princes.

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Lines 37-38. The word translated "thanksgiving(s)" could also be translated "confession(s)."

4Q405 12 (= 4Q403 1ii:32-34a)

1[with the tongue]... the... of... of the... and he makes great... of... 2Psalm of... 3[...][...][...] 4[...][...] 5[...][...]

11Q17 iii + 4Q405 64 + 67 (= 4Q403 1ii:40-44a)

[... of His would[er]s melody of power to... His would[ers] to bless... with seven melodies of would[ers]... seven psalms of blessing... seven psalms of exaltation... seven... His would[ers]... seven by seven... seven by seven... seven by seven... ord of all] g[ods... He... the interior in a dw[ell]ing... He would[er] to bless... would[er]... would[er] to bless... would[er]... would[er]... would[er]...]

Note: One could also read "would[ers of:"

4Q405 66

1[...], with seven[...][...], and they glorify[...][...][...] [seven eternal[...]

4Q405 13a

A fragment of the sevenfold blessings of the seven secondary princes

[...][...] [wondrous] 2[words and he blesses] all the god[s] who draw near to His faithful knowledge with seven would[ers of goodness for His glorious mercies.

BLANK

[The]... among the wondrous [secondary] prin[cipal] shall bless in the name of His would[ers all who know the mysteries of... purity with seven words of exalted purity, and]... He blesses all who rush after His faithful favor]
with seven [wondrous] words, and he blesses all [who give thanks] to Him with seven words of His glorious effulgence.

The sixth among the wondrous secondary princes shall bless in the name of mighty acts of gods all mighty ones of insight with eternal knowledge, with seven words of His wondrous mighty acts. [And he blesses all whose way is sound with seven words of . . . wonder as a continuous sacrifice with all coming ages, and he blesses all [who wait for Him] with seven words of . . . wondrous] [words] for a restoration of [His] merciful acts of kindness . . . [And the seventh among the] wondrous secondary princes . . .

Note

This passage corresponds to VI 4Q403 1:18-23, the blessings of the chief princes, which helps us restore the text of this fragment. See the commentary to the former passage for additional discussion of the readings and meaning of the passage.

Commentary

Lines 2-3, 4-5, 7. The “wondrous secondary princes” may be compared to the “secondary priests” mentioned alongside the high priest in the HB (2 Kgs 23:4; 25:18 // Jer 52:24: cf. 1QM ii:1; 11Q19 xxxi:4-5) and to the chief priests and their seconds in the tribe of Gad (1 Chron 5:12) and among the Levitical singers (1 Chron 15:18; 16:5) and the Levites (2 Chron 31:12).

Line 4. The restored phrase “who give thanks” could also be translated “who confess.”

4Q404 11

1[. . .] with seven[. . .] 2[. . .], with sevenfold[. . .] 3[. . .], for glory [. . .]

4[. . .] knowledge [. . .]

Note

This fragment has a few words that may have come from the praises and blessings in Song VIII.

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Song IX

(11Q17 iv + 4Q405 14-15i; 4Q405 17?)

Describes the brickwork, vestibules, and entryways leading into the heavenly temple, which are carved with living divinities who offer praises.

11Q17 iv

The animate celestial architecture

1[. . .] . . . G[e]d of gods [. . .] 4[. . .] brick[work] [. . .] vestibules of the ent[rances] of . . . 3[to] their glorious [bricks [. . .], bricks of [. . .] firmament of wondrous [appears] . . . of purity . . . mis[sions] with the effulgence of prais[es . . .] in the likeness of . . . praises. 4Divinities [. . .] praises (4Q405 14-15i + 11Q17 iv) 3[. . .] spirit of glory [. . .] wondrous likeness of most holy spirit . . . to . . . of blessing and from the likeness of . . . [a voice] of blessing to the King of exalters, and their wondrous psalm is to the God of gods . . . their colorful . . . and they chant . . . the vestibules of their entrances, spirits of the interior of the holy of holies in . . . eternal . . . and the likeness of living divinities is carved on the vestibules of the entrances of the King, shapes of spirit of lights . . . [K]ing, shapes of glorious light, spirits of . . . in the midst of adorned spirits are wondrous colorful works, shapes of living divinities . . . in the inner chambers of glory, the construction of the most holy [sanctuary] in the inner chambers of the King, shapes of divinities and from the likeness of . . . most holy . . . living divinities . . .

Notes

* The beginning of Song IX is lost, but it may be reconstructed with a high degree of confidence as follows:

[For the Sage. The song of the holocaust offering of the ninth Sabbath on the thirtieth of the second month. Psalm the God of . . .]

* The translation interprets the form as a Piel participle. One could also take it as a Piel participle and translate “exalted ones.”
Commentary to 4Q405 14-15 + 11Q17 iv

Line 4. The "vestibule" was the entryway of the earthly temple (1 Kgs 6:3; 1 Chron 28:11; cf. Ezek 40:48). Perhaps the referent here is the multiple sanctuaries or temples mentioned elsewhere in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. Newsom notes the similarity to "the vestibule of the gate" in Ezekiel's imagined earthly temple (Ezek 40:7, 8, 9, 15; 44:43; 46:28), pointing out that the "prince" is associated with this gate (Ezek 44:5; 46:8) (DJD 11: 332). A vestibule of the temple is also mentioned in the Temple Scroll (11Q19 iv8).

The vestibule of the celestial temple is mentioned in Sar Torah §§297-98 in a vision of the "forms" of the temple granted to the men of the restoration before the Second Temple was built. In the Hekhalot Zuta R. Akiva reports that, on his ascent to the heavenly temple, "I put more markings on the entrance of the firmament than on the entrances of my house" (§346); later he hears a heavenly voice proclaim in Aramaic, "Before YHWH made heaven and earth, He established an entrance (?) to the firmament by which to enter and to go out" (§348).

Line 5. Carvings (including of cherubim) were also part of the decoration of Solomon's earthly temple (1 Kgs 6:29; 35; 7:36; Ps 74:6; 2 Chron 3:7) and of Ezekiel's imagined temple (Ezek 41:17-20, 25). Newsom notes that Ps 24:7 inspired the notion of the animate temple praising God.

According to 3 Enoch, names of God and the letters of creation are incised with a pen of flame on the throne of glory (39:1; 41:1-3). In the Hekhalot Rabba, the visage of Jacob is incised on the throne of glory, and God knells over his throne and embraces and kisses this image three times a day at the time of prayer (§164). God also has inscribed the likenesses of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle (cf. Ezek 1:10) on his throne (Hekhalot Rabba §73).

4Q405 17

Celestial spirits and angels

1(1), 2(1) wonders [ ], [ ], [ ], [ ][ ], [ ][ ]; their [ ], [ ][ ]; spirits of knowledge and understanding, truth [ ]; purity, angels of glory with might of [ ]; wondrous acts, angels of ornamentation and spirits of [ ]; in inner chambers of holiness, dwellings of [ ]; works of [ ] glory [ ];

Note

Newsom (Critical Edition, 261-64) suggests that a column might have been lost.

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

between 4Q405 15i-16 and 19, but in DJD 11 she notes that overlaps with the new reconstruction of 11Q17 v-vi in DJD 23 show that there is no room for the postulated missing column, so frag. 19 must come from the column immediately following frags. 15-16. The placement of frag. 17 is not certain, but it may well belong to the same column as frags. 15-16, in which case it belongs at the end of Song X or, just possibly, at the beginning of Song X. (Note that most of the first paragraph after the transcription of frag. 17 in DJD 11: 337 has inadvertently been taken from Critical Edition, p. 290, unavowed and should be corrected in light of the new reconstruction.)

Commentary

Line 4. Compare "angels of glory" with "angel of His glory" (4Q511 20c2) and "angels of His glory" (4Q511 354; cf. T. Levi 183). "Angels of glory" are also mentioned in Ma'asheh Merkavot §§564, 582.

Song X

(4Q405 15ii-16 + 11Q17 v)

Brings us to the rivers of fire, from which the curtain of the inner chamber of the King is visible. Other curtains and inner chambers are mentioned (perhaps belonging with the chariots and thrones referred to later?). The curtains seem to be embroidered with animate shapes who praise God.

4Q405 15ii-16 + 11Q17 v-1-6


1apparances of flames of fire[, . . .] [ . . . ] 2incision on the curtain of the inner chamber of the King[ . . . ] 3and in the inner chamber of His Presence the colorful [. . . ] all incised [. . .] shapes of divin[iies, their] works are glorious from their two sides [. . .] curtains of the wondrous inner chambers and they bless [the God of all . . .] 4their sides, they shall proclaim [. . .] of wonder inside the scorching heat, 5the inner chamber at the exit of the vestibules [. . .] 6forms of wonder [. . .] they [give thanks to the King of glory with a voice of chanting [. . .] [. . .] 7God[. . .] [. . .] [. . .] all [. . .] (11Q17 v-6:10) [. . .] and forms [. . .] [. . .] [. . .] [. . .] [. . .] [. . .] they shall proclaim [. . .] God of god[s . . .] [. . .] [eternal thrones [. . .] [. . .] their [sh]apes, cherub[ies, . . .] [. . .] biases, foundations [. . .]
Notes

*The beginning of Song X is lost, but it may be reconstructed with a high degree of confidence as follows:

[For the Sage. The song of the holocaust offering of the tenth Sabbath on the seventh day of the third month. Praise the God of . . . ]

†The translation "and rivers of light" is also possible (vocalizing as יָנָא rather than יָנָא).

‡I take this word to be the same as יָנָא in R.H. (Jastrow, 591b), which fits the context in lines 2-3 better than "worthy place" (יָנָא). The phrase "searching fire" (יָנָא) is common in the H.L. (e.g., 3 Enoch 15:1; 22:4; 26:12; 42:1, 6; 47:4).

Commentary

Line 1. The meaning of the phrase "fringe of an edge" is unclear, but it is also found in 1QM v:8, 8, referring to ornamentation on a shield and a spear. The plural "fringes" appears in the HB in Deut 22:12 and 1 Kgs 7:17.

Line 2. The phrase "rivers of fire" is part of a long stream of tradition regarding such celestial rivers (Dan 7:10, 1 Enoch 14:19; 17:5; 71:6, etc.). In XII 4Q405 20ii-21:22-10 "streams of fire" are mentioned (cf. 4Q204 1v:1-2). A cosmic river of fire and rivers of fire appear frequently in the H.L.

Line 3. The "curtain" (הֵמֶרָה) seems to be the heavenly counterpart of the curtain concealing the holy of holies in the tabernacle (e.g., Exod 26:31-33; 36:35; Lev 16:2, 12, 15; 4Q266 5ii:7; 4Q375 1ii:7; 11Q19 v:13-14) and in Solomon's temple (2 Chron 3:14). According to b. Yoma 72b, this curtain was woven to produce a different figure on each side. This idea may be reflected in the rest of this line and the first part of line 5 (Baugman, "The Quirnam Sabbath Shirah," 202). The curtain of the heavenly sanctuary is mentioned (and identified with the flesh of Jesus) in Heb 10:12. In Gnostic myth there is a veil separating the material world and the seven heavens from the higher heavens of the world above (Hyp. Arch. NHC II, 4 94:9-10; 95:21-22). That veil may be an echo of the celestial curtain in Jewish tradition.

According to SH-L §372, there is a curtain of fire in the heavenly sanctuary. In 3 Enoch 45 (cf. G11 2b:2-4), Metatron shows R. Ishmael the curtain (הֵמֶרָה) of the celestial holy of holies, on which are incised the acts of all generations, past, present, and future, until the eschaton. In his ascent to the heavenly temple, R. Akiva reached "the curtain" (הֵמֶרָה) after passing the "entrances of the firmament" (Hekhalot Zutaar §346 // §673).

Line 4. The door to the nave of the earthly temple was incised with drawings (1 Kgs 6:35).

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Line 5. Perhaps the phrase "from their two sides" refers to the two sides of the curtain. Compare Exod 32:15; 1QM v:12; 11Q19 xxxviii:7 (reconstructed).

Line 7. The word translated "they [give] the [ins] to" could also be translated "they [con]fess."

Line 8. Given the broken context, the word translated "God" (restored from 11Q17 v:6) could also be translated "divinities."

Commentary to 11Q17 v:6-10

Line 8. An "eternal throne" of God is mentioned in Massekhet Hekhalot §4.11.

Song XI

(4Q405 18 + 20i; 4Q405 19 + 11Q17 vi; 4Q405 20ii-21:2-15 + 11Q17 viii:1-7)

Describes the living spirits engraved in the floor of the inner chambers, which may be part of the nave of the heavenly temple. The throne room is visible: the throne is mentioned, along with the priests of the interior, a seat like God's throne, multiple chariots with seats, and cherubim and ephodim.

4Q405 18 + 20i

Angelic actions and praise in the (or an) inner chamber*.

..[...]spirits[...]righteousness[...]to support holy ones. The inner chamber of [...] their [wonders][...] holy ones with a spirit of quiet of divinity[...]their glory[...]their glory[...]their glory[...]their glory[...].[...] wondrous [ps]alms with a quiet voice[...] [...] [...].[...].

Note

*The beginning of Song XI is lost, but it may be reconstructed with a high degree of confidence as follows:
LITURGICAL WORKS

[For the Sages. The song of the holocaust offering of the eleventh Sabbath on the fourteenth day of the third month. Psalms of the God of...]

According to the sectarian solar calendar, the Festival of Weeks was on the fifteenth day of the third month, the day after the eleventh Sabbath. Since the sect carried out a ceremony of covenant renewals on this day, the eleventh Sabbath would have been the prelude to the central holy day of the sectarian year. As Newson notes, there is some evidence that Songs XI and XII draw on exegetical themes tied to Weeks in rabbinic tradition ("Merkabah Exegesis," 29).

Commentary

Line 4. Presumably it is the angels who "hurry at the sound of the glory." According to 3 Enoch 22:16, the angel KRWBYIT, one in charge of the cherubim, "makes them hurry with glory and power to do the will of their Creator." For "the glory," see the commentary to XII 4Q405 20ii:21-22:7.

4Q405 19 + 11Q17 vi

The animate celestial architecture

[...i...i...] and shapes of divinities, [lost holy] spirits, praise Him [... char-iot...i...] [...], [shapes of glory, floor] of wondrous inner chambers, spirits of eternal gods, all [i...i...] sha[pes of the inner chamber of the King, works of spi[rits of a firmament of wonder, purely salted, spi[rits of faithful knowledge and righteousness] in the holy of holies, [forms of living divinities, forms of spirits of luminiaries, all[...][...][...][...][...][...], their workmanship] is of n[oly, wondrous plates, colorful spirits], [shapes of the forms of divinities incised around their [glorious bricks, glorious forms of b[ri]c]work] [of effulgence and adornment], living divinities are all their workmanship and the forms of their shapes are angels of holiness. From beneath the wondrous inner chamber a quiet voice of stillness; divinities are blessing [...]. [...]. [...]. [...]. [...]. [...]. [...]. [...]. [...]. [...]. [...] in the second [...]. [...]. [...]. wonders of effulgence and adornment [...].

Notes

This word is not attested in RH but appears in RH with the meanings "reading place" and "imputing acquired by treading on" (Jastrow, 753b). The same word (דמח) is probably to be reconstructed in 4Q286 1iii:1, in a context that also refers to the floor of the heavenly temple.
LITURGICAL WORKS

on their heads the living creatures wear crowns made of luminaries (SH-L, §184); and at the gate of the sixth palace the angel DWMY' sits "on a bench of pure stone in which is the splendor of the luminaries of the firmament in the (passage on) the creation of the world" (Hekhalot Rabbati §33). According to Masechet Hekhalot §10.4, countless luminaries are set in the gates of the palace of the seventh firmament.

According to Hekhalot Zutarti §408, when the mystic arrives at the entry to the sixth celestial palace he finds that

The sixth palace appears as though a hundred thousand of thousands and thousands and myriads and myriads of waves of the sea splash onto him. But there is not really even one drop of water; rather it is the splendid atmosphere of the pure alabaster stones that are paved in the palace, which is a splendid more fearsome than water. And do not the attendants stand opposite him? And if he says, "What is the nature of these waters?" at once they run after him and say to him, "Foool! From now on you shall not see a vision with your eyes!"

The angels then batter the hapless mystic with iron axes. David Halperin has pointed out that there is a persistent tradition of the floor of the heavenly palace being paved with ice (1 Enoch 14:10; Rev 4:6; 15:2; Life of Adam and Eve 29:2; Ps.-Philo 2688), evidently based on a combined exegesis of Exod 15:8 and Ezek 1:22. He suggests that this ice is the waters of chaos that oppressed God at creation and that lapped up to the throne of God until he froze them solid. Thus the angels in the Hekhalot Zutarti are alarmed by the mystic's mention of water because it seems to imply, so to speak, that the cosmic refrigeration system has broken down, and they punish him for his blasphemous misstatement (Halperin, Faces of the Chariot, 93-100, 231-38, 247-49). It may be that the "h[oly] wondrous plants" are related to this tradition. Compare the "most pure firmament" of the sanctuary in VII 4Q405 11:42 and the "firmament(s) of wonder" in XI 4Q405 19:3 and XII 11Q17 viii:5-6. According to Masechet Hekhalot §9.1, the surface of the Araloth (seventh) firmament is made of precious stones and glowing coals.

Line 6. Bricks and brickwork are also mentioned in a fragmentary context in IX 11Q17 v4-5. The inspiration for the brickwork seems to be Exodus 24:10 (cf. Ezek 1:22; 10:1), the only place in the HB that mentions bricks in the heavenly realm. The brickwork in Exodus 24:10 is under God's feet, which supports the other evidence that the floor of the nave of the temple is being described. A much more ancient antecedent to the tradition of brickwork in the celestial temple is found in the Ugaritic Baal cycle (thirteenth century B.C.E.), which mentions "bricks" (bmt)

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

among the construction materials for Baal's celestial temple (Smith, "Biblical and Canaanite Notes," 587).

Line 7. Angels of holiness are also mentioned elsewhere in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and often in the QL. The paradoxical idea of the quiet stillness of the heavenly liturgy alluded to in this line appears repeatedly in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q404 iii:11; XI 4Q405 18: 20:3, 5; XII 4Q405 20:1-21:22:7, 8, 12, 13; 4Q401 16:2) as well as in Rev 8:1. The phrase echoes the "light, quiet voice" of 1 Kgs 19:12, but other biblical references to the silence of the temple are probably also behind the idea (Hab 2:20; Zech 2:17). According to Aristeas 92, 95, the priests in the earthly temple ministered in silence. Allusions to 1 Kgs 19:12 in the context of the silence of the heavenly sanctuary also occur in the Lk (e.g., SS-L, §§187, 369; Ma'aseh Merkavah §§552-53). See also the commentary to XII 4Q405 20:1-22:26-14.

11Q17 vii:1-2

The celestial charioty and its entourage

1. . . . , . . . 2. . . . , His Presence, . . . above the head of the throne [ . . . ] (4Q405 20:1-21:22:5 + 11Q17 vii:3-8) 3. [They do not delay when they stand . . . ] 4. [in] chambers of all priests of the interior [ . . . ] 5. [by] law they are [ . . . ] 6. [attend to . . . ] 7. [a seat like the throne of His kingdom in [His inner chambers of glory. They do not sit . . . ] 8. [the chariots of His glory . . . holy cherubim, ophanim of light in the inner chamber . . . spirits of divinities . . . purity . . . holiness, workmanship of [its corners . . . ] 9. [dominions of seats of glory of chariot[s . . . wings of knowledge . . . wondrous might, . . . truth and eternal . . . righteousness . . . ] 10. [the chariots of His glory when they go to . . . they do not turn to any . . . they go straight to . . . ]

Commentary to 4Q405 20:1-21:22:5 + 11Q17 vii:3-8

Line 1. The word "when they stand" also appears in Ezek 1:21.

Line 2. The phrase "the throne of His kingdom" is found in Esther 1:2; 5:1 (cf. 1 Chron 28:5; 2 Chron 7:18; 2 Aprc. Bar. 73:1) and in Masechet Hekhalot §6.1, and "a throne of an eternal kingdom" is mentioned in 4Q251 2ii:4. A single throne is also mentioned in XI 11Q17 vii:2 and XII 4Q405 20:1-21:22:8 (for multiple thrones, see under XII 4Q405 23:3).

God's throne is seen in visions in the HB in 1 Kgs 22:19; Isa 6:1; Ezek 1:26;
10:1 and is mentioned frequently in other contexts (e.g., Isa 66:1; Dan 7:9). Elsewhere in the QL, mention of the divine throne survives in Enoch's visions in 4Q202 1ii:15 (1 Enoch 9:4) and 4Q204 1viii:27 (1 Enoch 18:8).

The phrasing here is suggestive: "a seat like the throne of His kingdom" implies the enthronement of another figure (perhaps Melchizedek? cf. Ps 110:1) or figures (such as the chief princes of Song VI; note the multiple seats associated with chariots in line 4). This seated being is contrasted with the other angels who do not sit, in accordance with the rabbinitic tradition that angels are unable to sit down (e.g., b. Hag. 15a; Gen. Rab. 61.21). Inasmuch as multiple thrones and chariots are mentioned in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifices, perhaps the gist of the phrase "they do not sit" is that lesser angels do not sit down, with the implication that greater ones do.

Line 3. Given the rabbinitic association of Ezekiel 1 and Ps 68:18 with the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai at the Festival of Weeks, it is interesting that Song XI, recited on the day before this festival, has a number of allusions to Ezekiel 1 and mentions heavenly chariots at least three times. "Holy cherubim" are mentioned in Ma'asieh Merkahav 5593, 594. Compare the "ophannim of light" here to the "ophannim of light" (the Hebrew is slightly different) in Hekhalot Zutarti 541.

Line 4. The HB mentions angelic wings in Isa 6:2 (of the seraphim); Ezek 1:5, 8, 9, 11, 14-25; 3:13 (of the four living creatures); 10:5, 8, 12, 16, 19, 21; 11:22 (of the cherubim, identified in Ezekiel 10 with the living creatures); and Zech 5:9 (of two women in a vision), as well as the wings of the cherubim in the earthly sanctuary (Exod 25:20; 37:9; 1 Kgs 6:24, 27; 8:6-7; 2 Chron 3:11-13; 5:7-8). Winged angels also appear, for example, in Rev 4:8; 2 Enoch 3:1; 16:7; 19:6-21:1; Apoc. Elijah 5:2; T. Adam 1:4, 10. The phrase "they go [st]raight" (11Q17 viii:7) echoes Ezek 1:7, 23.

Line 5. The Hebrew infinitive form translated "when they go" also appears in Ezek 1:9, 12, 17, 21, 24; 10:11. Note also the various other uses of the verbal root "to go" in Ezek 1:9-21 and 10:11-16.

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Song XII

(4Q405 20ii-21-22-6:14 + 11Q17 viii:7-14; 11Q17 viii; 4Q405 23i)

After the call to praise, this song describes Sabbath worship in the heavenly tabernacle, drawing heavily on Ezekiel’s merkahav vision. Various kinds of angels bless and move around the throne-chariot above the firmament of the cherubim and streams of fire. Other chariots and thrones are mentioned. Angelic troops array themselves and elements of the architecture of the temple are described, including the animate entrances and exits that bless and psalm all the angels who are sent out through them on missions.

4Q405 20ii-21-22-6:14 + 11Q17 viii:7-14

Title and opening call to praise

6For the S'age. The song of the holocaust offering of [the twelfth Sabbath] on the twenty-first of the third month. Psalm the God of [ ][w]ondrous [years] and exalt[e] Him [as]c[or][ding] to the glory in the tabernacle of . . . p knowledge.

Angelic prayer in the celestial throne room

The [cheru]bin fall before Him20 and they b[lay]ss when they raise themselves. A voice of quiet of God [is heard] and tumult of chanting; at the rising of their wings, a voice of [qui]et of God.2 They are blessing a structure of a throne-chariot above the firmament of the cherubim [and] they chant [the ef-fu]lge[n]ce of the firmament of light <<from>> beneath His glorious seat, and when the ophannim go, the angels of holiness return. They go out from ([h]) between21 His [w]heels of glory. Like the appearance of fire are most holy spir-its all around, an appearance of streams of fire in a likeness of hadhmal, and workmanship of [br]rightness with colorful glory, wondrously dyed, purely(!)22 salted. Spirits of living [di]vinities go about constantly with the glory of [the] chariots of wonder, and a quiet voice of blessing is with the tumult of their going, and they psalm (with) holiness23 in the returning of their ways; when they raise themselves they exalt wondrously. And when they settle24 they [sta]nd. A voice of joyful chanting grows silent and the qui[et] of a blessing of God is in all the camps of the divinities [and] a voice of praise[es] [it . . .]25. From be-
tween all their divisions on [their] side[s] ... and] all their mustered (troops) chant, eat[en] in [his] stat[ion].

BOTTOM MARGIN!

Notes

- [Hebrew] Perhaps restore ["the God of"] (יהוה), cf. II 4Q40 2:8 and Rev 13:6 with Newcomb, or ["all gods of"] (יהוהים), cf. VII 4Q40 3:10:31, or ["those who draw near to"] (יהוהים), cf. I 4Q40 1:6b.

- Taking לֹא as a shortened spelling of לֹעַ ("before Him"), one could also read the word as לֹעַ, "before," in which case the phrase should be translated "they fall before the cherubim." But see the commentary to line 7 below.

- Newcomb ("Merhabah Ezekeil") has shown that lines 7-8 rest on an exegesis of Ezek 3:12-13, with the help of 1 Kgs 19:12, using the argument from analogy (גראות החובות) known from rabbinic exegesis. On the basis of the widely accepted postulate that Ezek 3:12 originally read "when the glory of YHWH rose from its place" (להיות בְּכָבוֹד יְהוָה מִכְלָבוֹד), instead of the benediction "blessed be the glory of YHWH from His place" (הָעֵדֶת בְּכָבוֹד יְהוָה מִכְלָבוֹד), in the ME, she proposes that these lines interpret both variants: the wings of the cherubim raise themselves (גראות החובות; cf. Ezek 10:17), but they also produce a "voice" (לעֵד) of blessing, the same sound as the "voice of a great earthquake" generated by the cherubic wings according to Ezek 3:12-13, but reinterpreted in the light of 1 Kgs 19:12, which replaces the theophanic earthquake with a "light, quiet voice."

- One paragraph in the HL (SHL §370) meditates on Ezek 3:1-2 in light of 1 Kgs 19:11, tying the earthquake in the former to the earthquake, wind, and fire in the latter and identifying the earthquake and wind with the sound of many waters mentioned in Ezek 1:24 (cf. Ezek 15:10). It deduces that the living creatures fly because they are made of fire, which is lighter than wind. The fire is also associated with the fiery throne and river of fire in Dan 7:9-10. The conclusions differ from those of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, but the method of interpretation is similar.

- "Emending הָעֵדֶת ("and from between") to לֹעַ, even though the former reading is found in both 4Q40 20b-21:22-9 and 1Q17 viii:12. The word echoes the word הָעֵדֶת, which in Ezek 10:2, 6 has the same meaning.

- "Emending הָעֵדֶת to לֹעַ with Newcomb. For the phrase "purely sacred," see the commentary to XI 4Q40 19:4.

- "An abstract noun used here adverbially, not "the Holy One," which would be the adjective הָעֵדֶת.

- Probably a Qal infinitive construct from a root meaning "to settle" or "to abide, dwell" (לֹעַ), related to the word "tabernacle" (תָּבִנָּה). For the form compare HODS 206:24, 311.15. This verb often has the technical meaning of God settling or dwelling in his sanctuary on earth (e.g., Exod 25:8; Deut 12:15). As Newcomb notes, this word is clearly derived from Ps 68:19 (לֹעַ, cf. v. 17). Verses 17-20 also mention divine charity and the blessing of God, important themes in Song XII. The echo of Psalm 68 is further evidence of its early exegetical use in association with the Festival of Weeks.
frequently to the wings of Ezekiel's living creatures (e.g., 3 Enoch 21:1-3; Hekhalot Rabbati §97; SH-L §§189, 368, 370; Ma'aseh Merkavah §596) or the cherubim (note especially 3 Enoch 22:13, which may also echo the variant in Ezek 3:13).

The phrase "a structure of a throne-chariot" does not occur in the HB. Ezekiel mentions the throne of God but does not use the word "chariot," although Ben Sira (Sir 49:8) ties Ezekiel's vision to the chariot, and Second Ezekiel (4Q385 4:6) refers to the chariot in the context of the vision in Ezekiel 1. The phrase "the structure of the chariot" is associated with the golden cherub located in the holy of holies according to 1 Chron 28:18. Compare also the reference to the "chariotry of God" in Ps 68:18 and to God making "the clouds His chariot" in Ps 104:3. The throne in 1 Enoch 14:18 and Dan 7:9 is equipped with wheels, a feature that seems to presuppose the identification of the throne with the chariot. The throne-chariot is also mentioned in 3 Enoch 46:2 and in the Gnostic treatises Hyp. Arch. NHC II, 4 §9:19-30; Orig. World NHC II, 5 §104:3 §108:12.

Lines 8-9. The cosmography of this passage is difficult. It is unclear whether the "firmament of the cherubim" (cf. Ezek 10:1) is the same as the "firmament of light" (cf. Exod 24:10 and Ezek 1:22). The throne-chariot appears to be situated on the firmament of the cherubim (cf. 2 Apoc. Bar. 59:3). Perhaps the name of this firmament implies that the cherubim dwell beneath the throne and on top of the firmament. The firmament of light may be the ceiling of the celestial throne room. The Hekhalot Rabbati places another firmament above the cherubim, ophanim, and living creatures ($100), and 1 Enoch 14:17 associates the ceiling of the heavenly temple with stars and lightning.

Line 9. Apparently the cherubim sing praises from beneath the throne of God. In Rev 16:17-18; 19:5; 21:3 a voice from the throne is heard; in Rev 9:13-14 a voice speaks from the four horns of the golden altar; and in Rev 19:5 and 21:3 the throne of God itself appears to speak. These voices could also be those of the four living creatures (the equivalents of the cherubim in Revelation), who, according to Rev 4:6, are found both "in the midst of" and "surrounding the throne" (cf. Hekhalot Rabbati §§98, 173; SH-L §§189; 2 Apoc. Bar. 51:11; Apoc. Abr. 18, according to which they dwell under the throne). Compare also "His glorious seat" with "Your worthy seat" in 4Q286 1ii.1. The phrase "and when the ophanim go" echoes Ezek 1:17, 19.

Line 10. The word "wheels" (galgalim) is a different Hebrew word from "ophanim," but is identified with the latter in Ezek 10:2, 6, 13. It is not clear whether in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice galgalim are the same as ophanim. The former are mentioned frequently in the HL in association with the throne of glory (e.g., Hekhalot Rabbati §§94, 154; G16 1b:3; Massechet
LITURGICAL WORKS

Hekhalot §17.1) or the chariot (e.g., 3 Enoch 15:1; 19:2-7; 41:2; Hekhalot Rabbati §146; SH-L §182; Masseket Hekhalot §23.2). Sometimes they are identified with the ophannim (e.g., SH-L §373), but sometimes the two types of wheels are distinguished (e.g., 3 Enoch 19:7; SH-L §182).

The phrase "like the appearance of fire" echoes Ezek 1:13, 27; 8:2. For "streams of fire," see the commentary to X 4Q405 15i-16.2.

The word hashmal appears in the HB only in the phrase "like hashmal" (which could be interpreted to mean "like the eye of hashmal") and only in Ezek 1:4, 27, and 8:2. The phrasing here substitutes "in a likeness of" (cf. Ezek 8:2) for "like." The hashmal is mentioned frequently in the IL, usually in the singular but sometimes in the plural. It seems to be regarded as a type of angelic being or material in the heavenly temple (e.g., 3 Enoch 36:2; Hekhalot Rabbati §258; Hekhalot Zaddari §407, 411; Masseket Hekhalot §7.2-3). The phrase "a likeness of hashmal" occurs in SH-L §371 (see the commentary to line 11 below).


Line 11. In the HB the noun "dyed material" occurs only in Judg 5:30 (x2), where its plural form refers to clothing. In RH the root means "to dip, to dye" (cloths), and the noun means "dye, color, dyed material." Jastrow, 1259a).

This word also appears in XIII 11Q17 x5 and XIII 4Q405 23i16b, 9; 4Q405 49:2. Except for the last passage, whose context is broken, the word always appears within a line or two of the phrase "purely salted." In a description of the heavenly throne room in the HL with many similarities to the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, we read "Like the likeness of both of them, sapphire and chrysolite, is the likeness of the hashmal, like the appearance of the fire, yet not fire but rather like the likeness of flames of fire, something like mixed dyed materials" (SH-L §371). The Hebrew word "they" (they) go about echoes the phrase "it (anteceated uncertain) was going about" in Ezek 1:13.

Line 12. The phrase "with the tumult of their going" echoes the use of the Hebrew infinitive of the verb "to go" in Ezek 1:9, 12, 17, 19, 20, 21, 24; 10:11, 16.

Line 13. Note the reference to a camp in Ezek 1:24, interpreted by the Ty. Ezek. as "the hosts of the angels on high."

Line 14. The word "division" is used in Numbers 1-2, 10 to mean the banners or standards of the tribal camps, each tribe being led by a "prince." In the War Scroll the word means something like "military unit," perhaps because each unit would have had its own flag or standard (IQM iii:6; vii:1, 4, 5; viii:14; xiv:4; cf. 4Q252 v.3). The Temple Scroll mentions "the princes of the divisions" (111Q19 xxi:5), evidently referring to the leaders of the Israelites in contrast to the priests and Levites, and divisions are mentioned in ivi as groupings in a census. The word is used of divisions of angels in 3 Enoch 19:6; Seder Rabb ba Bereitati §40 (SH-L §773); §43 (SH-L §776); Masseket Hekhalot §15.4. The word "their mustered (troops)." from Num 2:4, is the same word used of angelic troops in the phrase "mustered armies of princes" in Masseket Hekhalot §15.4.

11Q17 viii

Wondrous firmaments and foundations

[... wonder, knowledge, and understanding... ] [firmaments of wonder] [... with light of lights, effulgence... ] [every structure of spirits of wonder] [... divinities fearsome of strength, all... ] [their [w]onders with the strength of the divinities of [eter]nity and exalting the mighty acts of God... ] from the four foundations of the foundation of wonder, they pro[claim some of the voice of the oracle of God... ] [wall, blessing and psalming the God of [gods, a tumult... ] [heights... ] the King of glory... ] [... ] [foundations of wonder] for an oracle... ] [divinities... ] [and all their supports... ] [joy of holie... ] [with the oracle... ] [their [w]ings... ] [head... ] [and they call... ] [statations... ]

Note: רפפ One could also reconstruct "[valuable]" (רפפ). Compare Jer 31:20 for this form rather than the much more common form רפפ.

This word is not found in RH (although cf. נביא, "bustress," RDB, 78b), but it appears in RH (Jastrow, 35b) and QH (e.g., 1QH xi:13; xv:4) with the meaning "foundation."

Commentary

Line 2. Multiple firmaments are mentioned in XII 4Q405 23ii:6 ("firmaments of purity"); 7 ("firmaments of His glory"); XIII 11Q17 x5, 8—damaged ("firmaments of... "); 4Q287 2:6 ("firmaments of holiness"); and 4Q169 1-2:2; VII 4Q405 6:6 // 4Q403 11:45—damaged ("firmaments of wonder"). Multiple heavens also figure in 2 Cor 12:2; 2 Enoch, 3 Apocalypse Baruch; Ascension of Isaiah; Testament of Levi: Ep. Apo. 13; Apoc. Paul 21; Hyp. Arch. NHC II, 4 9520; Orig. World NHC II, 5 102:1-2; 10615-20, 30. The HL speaks
frequently of seven firmaments, but never with any of the modifiers found in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice.

Single firmaments are mentioned in VII 4Q403 i:112 ("the most pure firmament"), 43 ("the chief firmament on high"); VII 4Q404 5:3 // 4Q403 i:45; IX 11Q17 IV:4 XI 4Q405 19:3; XII 11Q17 VIII:5-6 ("firmament of wonder"); XII 4Q405 20:1-21:22:8 ("the firmament of the cherubim"); 9 ("the firmament of light"). The relationship between the various firmaments is far from clear. See the introduction and the commentary to the passages cited above.

Line 5. Newson's suggestion is plausible that the four firmaments are to be associated with the four cherubim beneath the throne (Critical Edition, 368).

Compare Apoc. Abr. 18:3-11. Heavenly foundations are mentioned in 3 Enoch 22:2 and the "foundations of heaven and earth" in Sar Panim 5629 (cf. 2 Sam 22:8).

Line 6. The word translated "oracle" also appears in VII 4Q403 i:41 but there with the meaning "that which lifts up" or the like. Here the alternative meaning "oracle, utterance," seems more appropriate (see DBB, 672b). The word may be used in this sense in lines 8-9 and in XII 4Q405 23:1; 5; 11Q17 x:6; 4Q405 8:1:3; 1Q27 1:8; 4Q286 2:1, although the contexts are frequently broken.

4Q405 23i

Celestial thrones, offerings, and portals

[1... the]iri oracles [...?... when they stand [... Rest [...?...?...<Your> the thrones of the glory of His kingdom and the whole assembly of the attendants of [... wonder, the divinities of [... shall not be shaken forever [... to sustain them, oracles of the whole, for the divinities of His whole offering [...] His whole offering. Divinity is a psalm Him when they begin to stand, and all the spirits of the firmament of His glory, and a voice of blessing from all its districts is recounting the firmaments of His glory, and His gates are psalm with a voice of chanting. At the entrances of the gods of knowledge in portals of glory and at all exits of angels of holiness to their realm, the portals of His entrance and the gates of exit proclaim the glory of the King, blessing and praising all spirits of divinities in exiting and entering by gates of holiness. And there is none among them who oversteps a law, nor against the words of the King do they set themselves at all. They do not run from the way nor do they linger away from His border. They are not too exalted for His missions. They [are] not atoned, for He has mercy in the realm of the fury of the annihilate[ation of] His wrath. He does not judge those brought back by His glorious anger. The fear of the King of divinities is fearsome over all divinities [... for] all His missions in His true measure. And they go [...]...[...]...[...]...[...]...[...].

Notes

One could also readasm [as a participle of the root scr]. "to return, turn back" (Review Article, 364). A Hophal or Hiphil participle of the root scr, "to swell, abide," is also possible but difficult to make sense of in this context.

Commentary

Line 2. The word "when they stand" echoes Ezek 1:21. The word translated "rest" could also be translated "Sabbath."

Line 3. The phrase "the throne of glory" in Jer 17:21 (cf. Isa 22:23; Jer 14:21) is the closest biblical parallel to "the thrones of the glory of His kingdom" here and "the thrones of His glory" in XIII 11Q17 x:7. God's throne of glory is found in 1 Enoch 47:3; 60:2 and is mentioned frequently in the HL. For a throne of glory that seats someone other than God, see Matt 19:28; 25:31 (the Son of Man); 1 Enoch 55:4; 61:8, 62:5; 69:29 (the Son of Man/Enoch); T. Ab. 8:5, short recension (Adam); 4Q161 8:10-20 (the Davidic messiah).

The origin of the idea of multiple thrones in heaven seems to be Dan 7:9 ("thrones were placed") and Ps 110:1, which invites the king to sit at God's right hand. The throne of the divine king is also mentioned in Ps 45:7 (Evv 45:6). These passages were interpreted in the NT to describe the heavenly enthronement of Jesus (Matt 19:28 [with thrones for the twelve apostles]; 25:31; 26:64 // Mark 14:62 // Luke 22:26; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, 8; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; cf. Sir. Or. 2241-44; Apoc. Pet. 6). In Rev 3:21; 7:17; 22:23 Jesus shares the throne with God. Other figures were also thought to sit on heavenly thrones: the Son of Man/Enoch (1 Enoch 45:3; 51:3); Adam (T. Abr. 1:4-10, long recension); Abel (T. Abr. 12:4; 13:2-3, long recension); Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (T. Isaac 2:7; Job (T. Job 333:7-41:5); Moses (Exod. 3:8; Deut. 31:37); apostles [Philos. Evan. 12.13.5]); the twenty-four elders (Rev 4:4); unnamed (angels or glorified human?) judges at the eschaton (Rev 20:4); angels (Apoc. Zeph. A [Clement, Stromata, 5.11.77]; Asc. Isa. 7:14, 19, 24, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35); and exalted human beings (4Q521 4i + 4:7; 1 Enoch 108:12; Apoc. Elijah 1:8; 4:29; Apoc. Paul
LITURGICAL WORKS

29. In the Self-Glorification Hymn an unnamed human being is exalted to heaven and seated there on a "throne of power" in the assembly of the gods (4Q491 ii:15-6).

According to 3 Enoch 10 and 16, Enoch was enthroned in heaven at the time when he was transformed into the angel Metatron. After the heretic R. Elisha ben Ayyawah saw him and deduced that there must be two powers in heaven, Metatron lost his throne and was forced to stand like the other angels. However, Sopher HaRazim indicates that enthronement of angels was accepted in some Jewish circles in late antiquity: the seven overseers of angels of the first firmament (I 1-2), the angels who stand on the sixth step in the second firmament (II 93-94), the three officers of the third firmament (III 2-3), and the twelve "princes of glory" (V 4-5) all sit on their own thrones. Likewise, in Maasekhet Hekhalot §§19, 27 seven angels are seated on seven thrones, while §61 refers to "thrones of kingdom." The early rabbinic response to heretics who believed there to be "two powers in heaven" has been ably analyzed by Alan Segal in Two Powers in Heaven.

There is also a class of angels called "thrones" (Col 1:16; 2 Enoch 20:1 [short recension]; Apoc. Elijah 1:11; T. Abr. 13:10 ms E; T. Adam 4:8; Apoc. Const. 7:33.5; 8:12.8, 27), but Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice gives no indication that the thrones it mentions are animistic.

Lines 5-6. In the HB the term translated here as "whole offering" seems to be a synonym for "holocaust offering." A sacrifice in which the complete carcase of the animal was consumed in flames (e.g., Lev 6:15; 16; 1 Sam 7:9; Ps 51:21). This word could also be read as "His crown" (cf. 1QS 4v:7-8; 10Sh iv:2; 1QH* xviii:25). Angelic crowns appear in ancient apocalypses (Rev 4:4; Apoc. Zeph. A [Clement, Stromata, 5.11.77]; T. Abr. 13:13, short recension; Zot. NHC VIII, 1 56:13-24) and the HL (e.g., 3 Enoch 12:3; 18:3; Hekhalot Rabbati §190), but this interpretation does not make much sense in the present context.

It is striking that terms for material sacrifices are used as though these sacrifices were carried out in the heavenly sanctuary (cf. the commentary to XIII 11Q17 ii:3-4). Compare the sacrificial altar in Rev 6:9-10 (cf. 9:13, 14:16) and the incense in 5:8; 8:3-5; the bloodless propitiatory offerings mentioned in T. Levi 3:5-6; and the offering of Christ as a bloody sacrifice in the heavenly holy of holies in Heb 9:11-14. In Seder Rabba di Bereishit 639 we read, "And Michael the great prince stands in their midst at their head as high priest, clothed with high-priestly garments, and he offers a pure offering of fire on the altar, and he offers incense on the altar of incense, and he offers a continual sacrifice of flame on the altar." (I have translated the text of SH-L §772, but many variants are found in the various manuscripts and editions.) In the Baraita di Maasekhet Bereishit (B 321-24) Michael offers a holocaust offering on the altar of holocaust.

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Lines 6-10. Newsom has pointed out that these lines echo the language of Ezek 46:1-10, which describes the comings and goings of the prince and the people through the gates, entrances, and exits of Ezekiel's imagined temple and the offerings of the priest in this temple, including the Sabbath offerings. These echoes support the contention that Song XII describes the heavenly sacrificial cult ("He Has Established for Himself Priests," 112).

Lines 8-9. The word "portal" is used of the earthly temple in Ps 24:7, 9 and appears frequently in the HL for the gates to the seven celestial palaces, which are guarded by fearsome angels (e.g., 3 Enoch 18:3-4; Hekhalot Rabbati §620-29).

Lines 10-11. Newsom notes that in BH the word translated "oversteps" means simply "to leap, leap over," but in RH it can mean to skip over a passage when reading the biblical text (Jastrow, 308b). A passage in the HL reports that any angels in the heavenly choir who sing off-key or out of tempo fall into the river of fire and are burned up. But the holy living creatures always keep perfect time (SH-L §8186-87).

Line 11. The Hebrew word "angel" means "messenger," and angels are frequently sent on missions to earth in biblical and parabiblical literature (e.g., Dan 9:20-27; 10-12; Luke 1:11-21, 26-38; Tob 12:4 Ezra passim; Jos. Asen. 14-17; Life of Adam and Eve 252).

Line 12. Since the context deals with angels, it appears that the possibility of angelic repentance is entertained. Compare 1 Q4Q40 11:16 for a similar theme; see also the commentary to 4Q280 2:5-4.

Song XIII

(11Q17 ix; 4Q405 233i; 11Q17 x)

This badly damaged song refers to heavenly sacrifices, the culmination of the Sabbath worship. Chief angels dressed in high-priestly vestments take up their positions. The last preserved bits recapitulate structural elements of the celestial temple.
LITURGICAL WORKS

11Q17 ix

The celestial sacrificial cult and priesthood

[...]. favor [...] all the... works [...] for sacrifices of holy ones [...] the odor of their offering [...] and the o[do]r of their libations according to the num[ber of] the pure of hol[iness] external [...] with effulgence and... adornment [...] wonder and the structure of breastplates of c[ords of ornamentation], colorful [...] like [woven] wo[kmanship]... purely salted, dyed... of] ef[fulgence] and adornment [...] for forms [...] ephod [...] angel[...].

Note
*The beginning of Song XIII is lost, but it may be reconstructed with a high degree of confidence as follows:

[For the Song. The song of the holocaust offering of the thirteenth Sabbath on the twenty-eighth day of the third month. Psalm the God of...]*

Commentary

Line 3. The term "favor" is often associated with God's acceptance of a person, offering, or sacrifice (e.g., Exod 28:38; Lev 1:3; Isa 56:7). Compare also 1Q400 i:1:16, where it is associated with angelic or human repentance.

Lines 4-5. It is remarkable to find the word "sacrifice" associated with angelic sacrifice, since it is from a root meaning "to slaughter" (חָמֵך), and in the HB seems always to refer to animal sacrifices (cf. 1QM ii:5; 4QMMT B 7:11; 11Q19 iii:15, etc.). The word "odor" in the phrase "a soothing odor" (e.g., Gen 8:21; Leviticus 1; Numbers 15; 4Q5b iii:1; 4Q266 11:4; 11Q18 33:1; 11Q19 xvi:13) is also associated with the sacrificial cult, and the "libation" was usually offered with the holocaust offering (e.g., Numbers 28). The words "offering," "libation," and "soothing odor" occur together in 4Q220 i:9 (Jub 21:9) as part of the description of the "sacrifice of holiness," traditionally "peace offering." According to Hekhalot Rabbati §163, the prayers of Israel ascend before God as a soothing odor, and we are told that a "scent of splendor" rises in the heavenly throne room (Hekhalot Rabbati §198). For more on the heavenly sacrificial cult, see the commentary to XII 4Q405 23ii:5-6.

Line 6. The breastpiece was part of the high priest's uniform and was worn with the ephod (see line 8 and XII 4Q405 23ii:5). Both are described in detail in Exodus 28 and 39. They were made of the same multicolored material. The ephod seems to have been something like an apron with an onyx stone on each shoulder set in gold filigree, each stone engraved with six of the names of the tribes of Israel. The breastpiece had twelve precious stones set in front in a four-by-three array, each stone engraved with the name of one of the twelve tribes, and it also contained the Urim and Thummim (e.g., Exod 28:30; 11Q19 viii:18-21), evidently sacred lots used for divination. The breastpiece and ephod were held together by a blue cord (e.g., Exod 28:28). Compare the "[cords of ornamentation]" in line 7. The plural form of "breastpiece" here and "ephod" in XII 4Q405 23ii:5 seems to indicate that multiple angels wore the high-priestly uniform.

Line 8. In Hekhalot Rabbati §166, the divine name appears to be identified with stones and settings of the heavenly ephod (although the passage is difficult). A still more difficult passage describes the Youth or Metatron as being inscribed with letters of cosmological import that seem to be engraved on twelve stones in an inner chamber (SH-I, §389) — perhaps an allusion to the ephod in the heavenly holy of holies.

4Q405 23ii

The angelic priesthood

[...]. carving of...[they] approach the King when they attend before...[the King and He engraved His glory...[...]. holy ones, the sanctuary of all...[their] ephods...spread...[...]. holies, favor...[...] and...[...] their holy places.]* BLANK

In their station of wonders are spirits of colorful stuff like woven workmanship, carved with forms of adornment. In the midst of the glory of the appearance of scarlet, dyed garments of light of most holy spirit take up their holy station before [the King], spirits of [pure] dyed garments in the midst of an appearance of whiteness. And the likeness of the spirit of glory is like the workmanship of Ophir; giving light, all and their crafts are purely salted, craftsmanship like woven workmanship. These are the chiefs of the ones wondrously clothed to attend, their chiefs of dominions, dominions of holy ones belonging to the King of holiness in all the heights of the sanctuaries of the kingdom of His glory. BLANK

Among the chiefs of contributions are tongues of knowledge and they, among all the works of His glory, bless the God of knowledge. [...]. their...
with spirits of light in lines 8-10 ("Heavenly Ascension," 391). Evidently the fabric and the stones of the heavenly breastplates, like the temple architecture, are animate beings. According to Josephus (Ant. 11:24-18 and 4Q376 11:1-2, the earthly exemplars of these stones were known to shine with light.

Lines 8-10. Compare the description of the seven angels of the plagues in Rev 15:5-8, who come out of the heavenly "temple of the tent of testimony" (i.e., the tabernacle) wearing pure bright (white) linen and golden girdles. The Great Angel Eleleth has an appearance like fine gold and clothing like snow according to Hyp. Arch. NH II, 4 5:1-14-15.

Line 9. "And the likeness of the spirit of glory" echoes the language of Ezek 1:28; "it is the appearance of the likeness of the glory of YHWH." A similar expression, "in the likeness of [Your] glory," seems to be used of the creation of Adam in 4Q504 8 recto 4.

11Q17 x

Concluding praise of God and summary of the celestial architecture?

[heights of [His] glory in [ ] . . . His glory in [ ] . . . His [re]com[pe]nses with judgments[ . . . His mercies with the value of [. . . His [te]stimonies [and] all blessings of peace; [the] glory of [His] works and with light [. . . and with the adornment of [His] praises in all the firmaments of [ . . . light and darkness and shapes off; . . . the holiness of the King of glory for all [His] works of truth . . . for the angels of knowledge] with all [ . . . oracles of holiness] for the thrones of His glory and for the footstool of [His] feet . . . the chariots of His adornment and for the inner chambers of [His] holiness . . . and for the portals of the entrances of [ . . . with all the exits of [ . . . of its construction and for all [ . . . for the palaces of His glory, for the firmaments of [ . . . for all [ . . .]

Note: Compare the "angels of knowledge" (ה'ם קפ) in Sepher HasaRazim 1146.
LITURGICAL WORKS

Unplaced Fragments

4Q401 11 (Song V?)

The angelic priest Melchizedek?

Notes
- reconstruct [יַעֲבֹד]: Reconstructing with Newson on the basis of "priest" in this line (elsewhere only in VIII 4Q403 III:24).

Commentary

Lines 2-3. The idiom "to fill the hands" refers to a ceremony of priestly installment (e.g., Exod 28:41; Lev 8:33; Judg 17:5, 12). In T. Mese 10:2 the warrior angel is consecrated by the filling of hands at the enthronement. A similar scenario may be involved here for Melchizedek and the angelic priests, in which case this fragment may belong in Song V before 4Q402 4.

4Q401 16 = 4Q402 9 (Songs III-V?)

Angelic praise and human ignorance*

Note
* These fragments from 4Q401 and 4Q402 have overlapping texts, but there is nothing in either to indicate the exact placement of the passage. Most or all of the fragments of 4Q401 seem to come from Songs I-VI, and all of the fragments of 4Q402 seem to come from Songs III-V.

Commentary

Line 4. The confession of ignorance is probably a rare aside by the human composer (cf. II 4Q400 2:6-8). Similar sentiments are expressed in the HB (e.g., Ps 19:13; 90:11; 106:2) and the QL (e.g., 1QS xi:22; 4Q381 31:5).

4Q401 23 (Songs I-VI?)

An angelic prince*

Note
*The location of this fragment is unknown, but most or all other fragments from 4Q401 belong to Songs I-VI.
Commentary

Line 1. This is the only place in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice where the term "prince" appears in the singular. For this term, see the commentary to priest; see the "Excursus on the Melchizedek Tradition" at the end of the chapter.

4Q405 46 (location unknown)

Divinities of light

[1...glory][1...[...[...divinities of lights in every b[1...[...[...beneath His glory][1...[...]

Note

דבש Or possibly דבש[ה], "[ch]roots."

Commentary

Line 2. Compare the phrase "divinities of lights" to "gods of lights" in VIII 4Q403 ii:35, although, given the broken context, one could also translate the first phrase "God of lights" (cf. 4Q503 13:1). If the reading \"b[1...[\" (מ[2) is correct, this is the only place this sectarian technical term appears in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. For its meaning, see the commentary to 4Q286 7ii:3.


Excursus on the Melchizedek Tradition

Melchizedek (מְלֵךְ זֶדֶק, the non-Israelite priest-king, appears in two places in the Hebrew Bible: Gen 14:18 and Ps 110:4. His name means something like "king of righteousness," and later interpreters often refer to this meaning and develop it exegetically. In Genesis he is the king of Salem (Jerusalem) and the priest of God Most High. Psalm 110 seems to hint that there was a priesthood of Melchizedek active in the Jerusalem temple and tied to the Davidic king.

164
but these consist of single words or general ideas, not clear literary connections, and it seems more likely that Hebrews and NHC IX, 1 are drawing independently on Jewish traditions like those found at Qumran.

The Second Book of Enoch is another Coptic Gnostic text written roughly in late antiquity (but not part of the Nag Hammadi corpus). In chapters 45–46, Jesus prays to the Father for "Zerokothora Melchizedek" to "bring the water of the baptism of fire of the Virgin of Light" (presumably heavenly waters of baptism) to the disciples, and Melchizedek does so as a heavenly being with a priestly function.

Still another Coptic Gnostic text preserved outside Nag Hammadi, the Pseudepigrapha, is a compendium of Gnostic traditions that can be divided into at least two separate works (Books 1–3 and Book 4). In both Melchizedek is a heavenly being whose job is to gather purified motes of light from the universe and deposit them in the Treasury of Light. In addition, in I:25-26; II:86; III:112, 128-29, 131; IV:139-40, Zerokothora Melchizedek has conflicts with the archons, who destroy as many souls as they can, and with the underworld goddess Hekate, who holds souls prisoner in her realm. In this compendium, all traces of the biblical Melchizedek and all eschatological elements have disappeared.

We find two versions of a strange story of Melchizedek in the Slavonic manuscripts of Enoch 71–72, a work that seems to have been translated from Greek and that contains at least some ancient traditions. Melchizedek is born posthumously of Sophanim, wife of the priest Nir, who had conceived him in her dotage without intercourse. The precocious infant looks like a three-year-old child and begins to speak immediately. He is made a priest by his family and is later taken to the Garden of Eden by the archangel Michael.

Two trajectories stand out in this long history of tradition: Melchizedek as the warrior angel and Melchizedek as the heavenly high priest. A case can be made that the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice mention him in both capacities. If the three suggested restorations of his name are correct, he is called "priest in the assembly of God," in 4Q401; II; he is associated with a priestly investiture in 4Q401; 22; and there is a reference to a "wondrous priesthood of Melchizedek" in VIII 4Q403 I:i12:i1 (supplemented by 4Q405 8:9-6 and 11Q17 ii:7). The first two passages may be associated with the eschatological war in heaven in Song V (see the commentary on these fragments). Moreover, a particular angel seems to be singled out in several other passages: the mention of the "tabernacle of the exalted chief" in VII 4Q403 ii:10 may imply that the heavenly high priest had his own tabernacle, like the Youth of the Hekhalot literature. This exalted chief may be the same figure as the "chief of the divinities" mentioned just before in line 5, the "priest of the interior" is line 24 (Song VIII), and the subject of the phrase "his priesthood" in VII 4Q405 7:8. It is possible that the "prince of holiness" in 4Q401 23:1 is the same angel. The reference to "a seat like the throne of His kingdom in His inner chambers of glory" (XI 4Q405 20ii:21-22:2 + 11Q17 viii:4) also seems to imply the existence of a heavenly enthroned being other than God, someone contrasted with others who do not sit in heaven. This figure may be the same heavenly high priest.

The case is not conclusive since it is based on passages that are either damaged or difficult to interpret, but the cumulative force of the evidence makes it probable that the heavenly high priest Melchizedek played a role in the cosmology and perhaps the eschatology of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. For more on this figure, see the bibliography on Melchizedek in the introduction to this chapter.