

CONDITIONAL SENTENCES WITH אִם IN THE PROTASIS IN QUMRAN HEBREW

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I: The use of qatal in the protasis of conditional clauses

In BH, conditional clauses with introductory אִם expressing a condition that is regarded as possible or real in the future usually take *yiqtol* in the protasis, occasionally *qatal*.¹ In MH *qatal* in the protasis of a conditional sentence is more frequent.² Professor Qimron, in his *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, noticed that in QH, too, the use of *qatal* in the protasis of conditional sentences increases.³ The preference for *qatal* is especially manifest in such pairs as⁴

CD 9:6-7 אם החריש לו מיום ליום ובחרון אפו בו דבר בו ׀ בדבר בו מות ענה בו thereafter speaks to him in the heat of his anger [delete first בו], he testifies against himself concerning a capital matter',⁵ but Num 30:15 ואם החריש יחריש לה אישה מיום אל יום ׀ והקים את כל נדריה 'but if her husband keeps silent to her from day to day, he shall establish all her vows'.⁶

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¹ Driver 1892:178; Joüon-Muraoka 1993:§ 167h, n. 1; Qimron 1986:84; Segal 1932:198.

² Pérez Fernández 1997:126, 215; Mishor 1983:57-58.

³ Qimron 1986:84-85. Note also the relatively high frequency of *qatal* in Ben Sira: In the extant Hebrew text we find 14 cases of *'im qatal* as against 28 cases of *'im yiqtol*.

⁴ See also Qimron's examples from 11QT 66:4-5 (cf. Deut. 22:25) and 4Q158 7:10 (cf. Exod. 21:3). In many instances we follow the translation in García Martínez-Tigchelaar 1997-98.

⁵ Similarly 4Q270 (4QD^c) 6.3:19 [DJD 18, 158]. For our translation compare Vermes 1997:168; differently García Martínez-Tigchelaar 1997-98:1.565, who consider מות ענה as part of the protasis. The double vertical stroke marks the border between the protasis and the apodosis.

⁶ On the dependence of CD 9:6-7 on Num 30:15 see Thorion-Vardi

4Q161 2-4.2-3 [DJD 5, 12] אם הינה עמכה ישראל כחול הים ׀ שאר ישוב בו כליון חרוץ ושוטף צדנקה
 Israel, wer[e like the sand of the sea, only a remnant will
 return; extermination is decreed, but just[ice] will overflow',
 but Isa 10:22 כי אם יהיה עמך ישראל כחול הים ׀ שאר ישוב בו כליון
 חרוץ שוטף צדקה;

4Q266 6.2:2-3 [DJD 18, 55] ואם ראתה [ענד והיא] לו [בעת 'and if she ag[ain] sees
 (blood), and it is not [לוא = לו] [at the time of her menstruation]
 of seven days, she shall not eat anything hallowed',
 but Lev 15:25 'and if a woman has an issue of her blood many days not at the time of
 her menstruation ...'.⁷

4Q266 6.2:12 [DJD 18, 55] 'and if he cannot afford [a lamb]',
 but Lev 12:8 ואם לא חמצא ידה די שה.

At first sight there is a counter-example in

11QT 53:19-20 ואם הנא יאנה אביה אותה ביום שומעו ׀ כול נדריה
 'but if her father forbids ואסריה אשר אסרה על נפשה לוא יקומו
 [יניא?] her on the day when he hears her, all her vows and
 all her pledges with which she bound herself formally will
 not remain in force',

which is based on Num 30:6 ואם הניא אביה אותה ביום שומעו ׀ כל נדריה
 ואסריה אשר אסרה על נפשה לא יקום, but here the use of *yiqtol* in the
 protasis in the Temple Scroll passage may be related to a text-
 critical issue, because in the Samaritan Pentateuch the protasis
 has an imperfect. Accordingly, it is possible that the scribe of
 the Temple Scroll took the imperfect from his biblical source,
 rather than that he replaced a perfect in his source by an imperfect.⁸

Since the use of the perfect in the protasis of conditional
 sentences is well attested in Aramaic,⁹ some scholars consider
 the increase of this use in post-biblical Hebrew as a result of
 Aramaic influence. It should be noted, however, that the
 distribution over the Aramaic dialects is uneven. Dr Folmer has
 demonstrated that the use of the perfect in the protasis is frequent

1985:86.

⁷ On the relation between the passage in 4Q266 and the Leviticus
 passage, see DJD 18, 56. For the apodosis in the Qumran passage see below,
 Section IV.

⁸ It should also be noted that the verbal form as it is found in 11QT is
 likely to be emended anyway, and that instead of an emendation of יאנה to יניא
 an emendation to הניא (changing only the order of the letters) is easily possible;
 cf. Yadin 1977:2.170.

⁹ Muraoka-Porten 1998:324-326; Folmer 1991, 1995:394-415.