

CHAPTER ONE

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE TORAH OF EZEKIEL IN THE TEXTS FROM QUMRAN

Compared with the number of copies of the Psalms, of Deuteronomy or of Isaiah,¹ the number of copies of Ezekiel found at Qumran is rather limited: so far only the very doubtful copies of 1Q19 and 3Q1,² the meagre remains of 11QEzek,³ and the fragments from Cave 4, recently edited by Lust⁴ have been published. All in all, to judge from the number of copies preserved, the importance of Ezekiel for the members of the Qumran Community seems to have been quite limited. Skehan had already concluded that, in terms of textual criticism, “ni pour Ezéchiel ni pour les Petits Prophètes, les rouleaux de Qumran n’ont produit de nouveautés substantielles.”⁵

Nor is the number of explicit quotations from Ezekiel very impressive. In the texts published so far, only three can be noted: Ezek 37:23, cited in 4QFlorilegium I 16–17; Ezek 9:4, in CD XIX 11–12 and Ezek 44:15 in CD III 20–IV 2.

But on the other hand, the number of allusions to the text of Ezekiel or of reminiscences of its use to be found in the texts from Qumran

¹ We have a total of 31 copies of Psalms, as follows: 3 from Cave 1, 1 from Cave 2, 19 from Cave 4 [see P.W. Skehan, “Qumran and Old Testament Criticism,” in *Qumrán. Sa piété, sa théologie et son milieu* [ed. M. Delcor; BETL 46; Paris-Gembloux: Duculot/Leuven: University Press, 1978], 181–82), 1 from Cave 5, 1 from Cave 6, 1 from Cave 8, and 6 from Cave 11 [see J.P.M. van der Ploeg, “Les Manuscrits de la Grotte XI de Qumran,” *RevQ* 12/45 (1985), 3–15]; no fewer than 30 copies of Deuteronomy have been preserved: 2 in 1Q, 3 in 2Q, 1 in 3Q, at least 17 in 4Q [P.W. Skehan, “Littérature de Qumran. A. Textes bibliques,” in *DBSup*, col. 809, speaks of 4QDeut^a, 1 in 5Q, 1 in 6Q, and 1 in 11Q; about 19 scrolls of Isaiah have been found: 2 in 1Q, 16 in 4Q [see Skehan, in *DBSup*, cols. 811–812], and 1 in 5Q. The numbers usually given are slightly different, see G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Qumran in Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 201.

² See DJD I, 68–69, pl. XII and DJD III, 94, pl. XVIII.

³ Published by W.H. Brownlee, “The Scroll of Ezekiel from the eleventh Qumran Cave,” *RevQ* 4/13 (1963): 11–28.

⁴ See J. Lust, “Ezekiel Manuscripts in Qumran : Preliminary Edition of 4QEz” and ^b,” in *Ezekiel and his Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and their Interrelation* (ed. J. Lust; BETL 74; Leuven: University Press and Peeters, 1986), 90–100.

⁵ See P.W. Skehan, “Littérature de Qumran. A. Textes bibliques,” col. 813.

is considerable. Rabin notes no fewer than 25 in the *Damascus Document* alone,⁶ and the eagle eye of Père Carmignac for re-use of the biblical text had revealed an important number of allusions scattered at every redactional level of the main documents.⁷ This widespread use of Ezekiel already indicates that the text of the prophet had a much greater importance for the Qumran Community than the number of copies or of explicit quotations would lead us to suppose.

The study of the Qumran interpretation of the whole of Ezekiel can only be made once the text known as 4QSecondEzekiel has been published, a composition attributed to the Prophet and preserved in at least six copies from Cave 4 (4Q385–390).⁸ Since the influence of Ezekiel on the spirituality of the Qumran group has already been studied by É. Cothenet,⁹ in this note¹⁰ we would like simply to examine the influence on the thought of the Community of a typical block from Ezekiel, i.e. chs. 40–48, known as the “Torah of Ezekiel,” and so honour Jean Carmignac, who has taken so much care to recover the re-interpretations of the Old Testament texts in the manuscripts from Qumran.

The interpretation of Ezek 44:15 in CD III 20–IV 2

The simplest way to begin is to examine the interpretation of Ezek 44:15 in the *Damascus Document*, given that in this case we have all the elements needed to get to the heart of Qumran interpretation and the application of that interpretation to understand another biblical text. In fact, CD III 20–IV 2, gives us an explicit exegesis of the text of Ezekiel.¹¹

⁶ See Ch. Rabin, *The Zadokite Documents* (2d rev. ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), 82 and 84.

⁷ See the indices in J. Carmignac, *Les Textes de Qumrân, traduits et annotés II* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1963), 353–55, as well as the following articles: J. Carmignac, “Les citations de l’Ancien Testament dans la «Guerre des Fils de Lumière contre les Fils de Ténèbres»,” *RB* 63 (1956): 234–60 et 345–65; *idem*, “Les citations de l’Ancien Testament, et spécialement des poèmes du Serviteur, dans les Hymnes de Qumran,” *RevQ* 2/7 (1960): 357–94.

⁸ See J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch. Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 254; In this *Mémorial Jean Carmignac*, J. Strugnell and D. Dimant, “4QSecond Ezekiel (4Q385),” *RevQ* 13/49–52 (1988): 45–58, publish two fragments of 4Q385.

⁹ See his contribution: É. Cothenet, “L’influence d’Ézéchiël sur la spiritualité de Qumrân,” *RevQ* 13/49–52 (1988): 431–39.

¹⁰ This note was read at the Third Congress of the European Association for Jewish Studies which was held in Berlin in July 1987. We have retained its character of a lecture.

¹¹ O.J.R. Schwarz, *Der erste Teil der Damaskusschrift und das Alte Testament* (Lichtland/