All of 4Q251’s identifiable and legible fragments treat halakhic matters. Designated “halakhah” by its editors, what makes this scroll unique is its use of a mixed variety of styles in its treatment of halakhic matters. Several of its fragments present the halakhot apodictically, similar to the Damascus Document; others utilize the style of rewritten Bible, similar to that of the Temple Scroll, Jubilees, and the compositions termed Reworked Pentateuch. On this basis, my colleague Cana Werman and I have suggested that 4Q251 was a copy for personal use made from various scrolls at the scribe’s disposal. Not all of 4Q251’s extant fragments are easily deciphered nor are their subject matter and context readily determined. This article opens with a proposed reconstruction of, and placement for, one of these fragments. This identification of content and context provides a key to sequencing the scroll’s fragments, and sheds light on its nature and purpose. If correct, my proposal also has the ability to illumine features of halakhic interpretation of the Bible in Qumran compositions,
the relationship between the various literary genres represented in sectarian halakhic literature, and the question of the beginnings of midrash halakhah.

My proposed reconstruction of 4Q251, frag. 13, follows: 6

\[
\begin{align*}
01 & \text{כ ינוי אט} \\
02 & \text{א קא ינוי אט רמא יכתיו אטו זיו} \\
1 & \text{לע נמט מאר} \text{א תמי ענלי אט} \\
2 & \text{ךל לע פָּה בָּכָה יכ} \text{א מעכשה זיו פָּטילט} \\
3 & \text{אט אמט אדו האמס זיו תלת בתי} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Translation

01 [if a man deals a blow to
02 a pregnant woman and her children are aborted, but (other) harm does not occur
1 he is to be fined as imposed for him by her spouse[e, but
2 he is to give it (only) according to assessment. For the assessment is by reckoning.
3 But if harm should occur, then you are to give life in place of life

Notes on Readings:

Line 1: Restored according to Exod. 21:22; יבשות—traces of the left stroke of the shin are clearly visible in the photographs; אשת— the MT reads באלי אשת. For the form אשת, see frag. 16 below: אשת אשת [אשת].

Line 2: For the use of the expression צל פָּה בָּכָה, see, for example, 1QS 5:2: צל פָּה בָּכָה ידנור. Other possible reconstructions are: צל פָּה בָּכָה ידנור; the traces of the first letter are unclear and they could form the top stroke of the left arm of a shin. [ז]דנור—the letter yod is almost definitely visible. For the formula "אכז אכז X יכ" see frag. 9: הד—we-[ז]דנור יכרד יכרד הדרה המלאה [ז]דנור יכרד יכרד; see also Lev. 24:18: הד—we-[ז]דנור משלוח משלוח הדורי נפש; see also Lev. 24:18: הד—we-[ז]דנור משלוח משלוח הדורי נפש.

\footnote{6 Larson, Lehmann, and Schiffman, DJD 35.41.}