THE GENEALOGY OF BILHAH

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The so-called Testament of Naphtali was one of the documents assigned to the writer and Jonas C. Greenfield for publication in the series Discoveries in the Judaean Desert. Unfortunately Professor Greenfield died unexpectedly in March 1995 before we had done any work together on it, and the present paper is the responsibility solely of the writer. It seems more than appropriate to dedicate it to Jonas Greenfield whose untimely passing left so much unfinished but whose life left so much and so many enriched.

The material which was originally attributed to Testament of Naphtali and which was assigned to us consisted of two plates; PAM 43.237 contains three fragments and PAM 43.245 contains four fragments. However, closer examination uncovered the fact that these two plates contain two different documents; one is the so-called Testament of Naphtali (TN) while the other is a sectarian composition.*

On paleographic grounds the manuscript on PAM 43.237 belongs at the very earliest to the late Hasmonean period, but it is probably better placed squarely in the Herodian period.1

Eleven lines of writing survive, one of which is empty and the last of which is very fragmentary. The text contains narrative about two incidents. The first is the genealogy, birth and naming of Bilhah and the second is apparently the story of how Laban gave Bilhah and Zilpah to Jacob. An empty line separates these two incidents. The narrative of neither incident is preserved completely. The text is narrated by a child of Bilhah and Jacob, who are referred to as “my mother” and “my father.” According to Genesis, Bilhah and Jacob had only two children, Dan and Naphtali. Theoretically, the speaker in our document could be either of them.2 If the reading מִן דָּן “Dan [my] brother” is correctly restored in line 10, however, the text itself determines this in favor of Naphtali. Two further considerations support

* This will be published elsewhere by the writer and E. Chazon. I am indebted to M. Bregman, E. Chazon and A. Shinan who made a number of fruitful suggestions.
1 The paleographic analysis as well as the full demonstration of the fact that two different manuscripts are involved will be given in the course of the full publication of this document.
2 Or, for that matter, some other apocryphal son or daughter of Bilhah and Jacob.

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The Genealogy of Bilhah*
according to 4QTNaph

\[ \text{Hannah (Laban's servant)} \quad \text{married} \quad \text{Ahiyot (Greek Rotheus)} \quad \text{Deborah (Rebecca's nurse)} \]

\[ \text{Bilhah} \quad \text{Zilpah} \]
\[ \text{Dan} \quad \text{Naphtali} \quad \text{Gad} \quad \text{Asher} \]

* The children of Zilpah are added from the Bible