
The third volume of Meghillot is dedicated to the memory of André Caquot (1922-2004) and is prefaced by an obituary by M. Bar-Asher (in Hebrew and French), as well as a list of Caquot’s publications on the Dead Sea Scrolls and related literature by Bar-Asher, C. Batsch, and D. Dimant.

Eight articles appear under the rubric “Ideology and Interpretation.” I shall use the titles given in the English table of contents. Jonathan Ben-Dov, “Dwq and Lunar Phases in Qumran Calendars: New Mesopotamian Evidence” (3-28), draws attention to non-mathematical astronomical texts from Babylonia mentioning the so-called “Lunar Three,” i.e., the length of the month, the date of the day (after the full moon) on which the moon sets for the first time after sunrise (called NA), and the date of the last visibility of the moon toward the end of the month (called KUR). According to one such document dating from the second half of the third century B.C.E. (BM 32327+; edited by A. Sachs and H. Hunger, Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia, V [Vienna, 2001], 100-09), the interval between NA and KUR (which are not named in this text) is between 12 and 14 days, the converse one, between 15 and 18 days. Ben-Dov relates this evidence to the two much-debated data dwq and X in the Calendrical Documents from Qumran (4Q320, 4Q321, 4Q321a) and claims that it corroborates S. Talmon’s earlier suggestion that these data refer to the first day of the lessening of the moon (dwq, cf. NA) and to the last visibility of the moon in a month (faute de mieux called X, cf. KUR), against the prevailing theory relating them to the new and the full moon, respectively. He also challenges the interpretation of 4Q320 1-3 by the defenders of the prevailing theory that the moon was created as full moon and that this was the first day X. Instead, Ben-Dov claims, these lines should be regarded as a general prologue to 4Q320, unrelated to the following list of days X. This is an important contribution, even though the variation of intervals compared with the Qumran data (dwq—X: 13 days; X—dwq: 16 or 17 days) would merit further attention, and the final word on the prologue of 4Q320 may not have been spoken.

Gabriel Barzilai, “‘The Wife of One’s Youth’: Monogamy as an Ideal in Wisdom, Qumran, and Rabbinic Literature” (29-47), discusses texts promulgating the ideal of monogamy, often by reference to the creation story, and claims that, the ancient halakic and practical realities notwithstanding, it played a notable ideological role. One is surprised to find that the important reading in Gen 2:24 LXX καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν ‘and the two will be one flesh’ (cf. Vulgate, Peshitta, Ethiopic version, Targums Pseudo Jonathan and Neofiti; cf. Mark 10.8; 1 Cor 6:16; Eph 5.31; cf. also Samaritan Pentateuch) is not discussed at all. Devorah Dimant, “The Book of Parables (1 Enoch 37-71) and the Qumran
Scrolls” (49-67), argues that the Book of Parables, composed at the beginning of the Common Era, shows some affinity with the Qumran Scrolls, discussing 1 Enoch 39:10-11 and 58:2-6 as test cases. Although there is no exact verbal agreement, Dimant argues that the Book of Parables draws on the Scrolls and derives from circles ideologically related to the Qumran community but lacking its distinctive organisational pattern. The underlying model of gradual transition from the Qumran community to related circles may as well be of relevance for other apocalyptic texts such as 4 Ezra or 2 Baruch and early Christian writings. Shemaryahu Talmun, “Anti-Lunar-Calendar Polemic in the Covenanter’s Writings” (69-84), makes another effort to show that the Qumran Scrolls rejected any importance of the moon for calendar matters: 4Q503 keeps silent on the moon (but mentions the sun), moon-related Babylonian month names are not used in the Scrolls, and 1Q27 1 i 5 should be taken as polemic against the new moon. Not all of this is equally relevant. The correctness of single observations notwithstanding, Talmun’s approach seems to stay behind the current consensus regarding the role of the moon in the calendar texts from Qumran, judging it here (in contrast to the Book of Jubilees!) as “always matter-of-fact and neutral” (thus Ben-Dov, 14). Hananel Mack, “From Qumran to Provence: The Notion of a Manassite Messiah” (85-100), suggests that the reference to three future messiahs, of David, of Ephraim, and of Manasseh, in a derashah in Midrash Numbers Rab-bah, attributed to Moshe ha-Darshan (Provence, 11th century), is influenced by the group labels Ephraim, Manasseh, and Judah in the Qumran texts as represented by 4QNabum Pesher. However, since the latter does not speak about messiahs from these tribes, the connection remains vague at best. Bilhah Nitzan, “Key Terms in 4QInstruction: Implications for Its Ideological Unity” (101-24), argues that 4QInstruction is not a composite document, consisting of sapiential instructions for every-day life and theological discourses originally composed separately (thus T. Elgvin), but a well-thought unitary composition that aims at influencing its readership on both levels. She shows this by a discussion of key terms common to both materials. Menahem Kister, “4Q392 1 and the Conception of Light in Qumran ‘Dualism’” (125-42), clarifies several textual and structural problems of 4Q392 (= 4QWorks of God) frg. 1 and subsequently elucidates the notion of μτρωα “perfect light” (line 5) against the backdrop of Qumran “dualistic” thought: Whilst light and darkness were created for human beings, “perfect light” belongs to the divine realm only. According to Kister, this raises questions as to how the dual situation in the created world relates to the monotheistic theological system. Aharon Shemesh, “The Law of the Firstborn and the Cattle Tithe in Qumran Literature and Rabbinic Halakhah” (143-161), compares the Scrolls and rabbinic halakah on three issues, (a) the firstborn of pure cattle (where both agree that it is given to the priests, apparently reflecting early preference of Num 18:15 over Deut 15:19-20), (b) redemption of the firstborn of unclean cattle (for which 4Q270 frg. 2 and 4Q251 frg. 10 follow Num 18.15 in including all unclean