

***Enoch and Jubilees: Short Papers  
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(ed. Pierpaolo Bertalotto and Todd Hanneken)\****

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### ***A Reassessment of Qumran's Calendars***

#### *Diverse Contents Among Key Documents*

Today, a growing number of scholars have come to the conclusion that at least three or four divergent groups, who disagreed on a number of *halakhic* issues, are represented among the scrolls from Qumran: the Yahad, the *Temple Scroll* group, the 4QMMT group, and the Enoch/Enastr group. Experts in religious law, including Lawrence Schiffman and Joseph Baumgarten, noted irreconcilable differences between the Temple Scroll and the other Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>274</sup>

Those who have specialized in liturgy have found diversity. Hymns among the Qumran corpus differ in terminology. Even those who worked on the Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice, once considered key for establishing the unity of the manuscripts found in Caves 4, 11 and Masada, now are convinced that it is not a fit for Qumran's Yahad.<sup>275</sup>

Although there has been considerable evidence that some form of revelation was available to Yahad members with respect to the reading and interpretation of scripture (e.g., the *Peshet*), it is not clear that the group had a monopoly on this form of inspired interpretation. There is a wider challenge that the various prophetic and apocalyptic works, if any, were actually produced by the group's members.<sup>276</sup>

As a norm, pseudepigraphy was not a method utilized by the Yahad/Qumran Community for establishing the authority of its

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<sup>274</sup> The lack of congruity between Qumran and the *Temple Scroll* has been ascertained by major scholars for many years (cf. L. Schiffman, "The Temple Scroll and the Systems of Jewish Law of the Second Temple Period," in *Temple Scroll Studies*, ed. G.J. Brooke [JSPSup 7; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989], pp. 239-255, esp. p. 239). Schiffman has recently suggested to me that doctrinally MMT stood midway between Qumran (Yahad) and the Temple Scroll.

<sup>275</sup> C. Newsom, "Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. L. Schiffman – J. VanderKam (New York: Oxford University, 2000), pp. 887-889 (here p. 887). E. Chazon, "Words of the Luminaries," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 989-990 (here p. 989).

<sup>276</sup> G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic Texts," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 29-35 (here p. 34).

compositions. Of the previously unknown legendary, apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, none have been convincingly linked to the authors of that community.<sup>277</sup>

Moreover, doctrine is not the only aspect indicating that the Qumran caves are not a unified whole. Other salient features include such aspects as date range, scroll material, language, and scribal protocols. Even the 60 to 100 manuscripts written in the various branches of the cryptic A script, once considered a unique feature of the Qumran Community, now appear to diverge stylistically along lines similar to that of *halakhic* practice, liturgy, revelation and doctrine mentioned above.<sup>278</sup>

In addition, the material culture associated with each cave and its scrolls must be examined and compared, including especially pottery forms, clay sources, and textiles. Last but not least, the location of the caves with respect to one another and with respect to Qumran itself may be an indicator of ownership. It is high time to abandon the monolithic approach to the caves that assumes that all the caves shared a common owner or origin. Rather, each cave must be assessed on its own merits.<sup>279</sup>

Since there remains no compelling reason to uphold the notion of unified doctrine among the Scrolls, it would seem reasonable to re-examine the distinctive nature of the calendars associated with the key and defining doctrinally based scrolls. Of the major and distinctive rulebooks associated with the various groups mentioned above, at least one exemplar of each has a specific calendar either attached to, or embedded within, it (4Q319 Otot attached to 4Q259 S<sup>e</sup>; 4Q394 3 [similar to 4Q394 1-2] is attached to 4QMMT; there are feasts and calendars defined within 11QTa and *Jubilees*; and the *Astronomical Book of Enoch* was included within *1 Enoch*).

The most noticeable feature that distinguishes and subdivides the calendars into separate groups comes from a comparison of the festivals which are observed during the course of a year. One calendar held by the *1 Enoch* and 4Q317 Luni-Solar calendar ("Group A"), does not indicate that it follows any feast days at all but hints at a cycle of sabbaths and is luni-solar in form. Another set of calendars, connected with 4QMMT and the *Temple Scroll*, observes a number of biblical feasts but also incorporates a series of additional feasts which are part of a pentecontad cycle: i.e., each is separated by 49 days from the preceding feast ("Group B"). Yet another set of calendars, connected with the *Yahad* (especially 4Q319), limits its feasts

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<sup>277</sup> J. Collins, "Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 35-39 (here p. 38).

<sup>278</sup> S. Pfann, "Scripts and Scribal Practice," in *Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. J. Collins – D. Harlow (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming 2009).

<sup>279</sup> An examination of the unique profile of each scroll cave, and its suggested associated caves and groups, is made in F.F. Bruce – S.J. Pfann, "Qumran," in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (New York: Macmillan, rev. ed., 2006) and in S. Pfann, "Reassessing the Judean Desert Caves: Libraries, Archives, Genizas and Hiding Places," *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 25 (2007), pp. 139-162.

to those which are expressly commanded to be observed in the Bible (for the purposes of this paper, “Group C”).

It would appear from this that there is in particular a clear dissimilarity between the 364-day calendars utilized by the Yaḥad, on the one hand, and the Temple Scroll and the MMT group, on the other.

*The Calendar of the Enochic Literature (Group A)*

*Group A includes 1 Enoch, 4Q208 Enastr<sup>a</sup>, 4Q209 Enastr<sup>b</sup>, 4Q317a-f Cryptic A Luni-Solar calendars.*

What began in the Enochic literature as a 360-day lunisolar calendar was subsequently modified to support a 364-day solar calendar. In the minds of the authors, the Enochic calendar and the 4Q317 lunisolar calendar represent a heavenly-based system that operates independently of the earthly sphere (cf. the *Astronomical Book* where the two legitimate systems merely need to be synchronized). Time in heaven is precise and unchanging while time on earth is warped and inexact. Time in heaven is base-60,<sup>280</sup> with which time on earth does not agree. In heaven, the calendar makes sense. It hasn't changed and the perceived incongruences with any earthly calendar are merely coincidental due to earth's imperfections (caused by the sins of the watchers, mankind and the giants). Whatever seasonal feast days humankind should decide to impose upon the calendar, heaven will not adjust its clock nor hurry to catch up. Not even the sabbaths are enumerated, as though the creation of the universe in seven days, and the seven day solar week, were originally peripheral to heavenly time. Since the earthly sphere no longer is synchronized with the heavenly base-60 system, mankind may artificially add one day per quarter or five days at the end of the year (as did the secular Egyptian Calendar). It was the observance of a seven day week that made it necessary to intercalate 4 days so that the year itself would be divisible evenly by seven.

At the same time the Enochic calendar sought to provide a synchronization of the 354-day lunar and 364-day solar calendars. This required that one extra 30-day month be inserted at the end of each three-year lunar cycle. Since the yearly shortfall of ten days led to a shortfall of 30 days after three years, the intercalation of a single 30-day lunar month would seem to do the trick. However, in reality, lunar months are actually 29.5 days long, which leaves a discrepancy of half a day. By the end of the next three-year cycle, the discrepancy increases to a full day. After another six years, the discrepancy increases to two days, and so forth. After thirty years the discrepancy would be half a month.

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<sup>280</sup> In the conception of the Enochic literature, perfect time and space are based upon 60s following a Sumerian/Babylonian base-60 system: sixty seconds to a minute, sixty minutes to an hour, 60 days x 6 = a year of 360 days, 360 degrees to a circle.

These apparently naïve forms of intercalation did not actually fix the 365.25 day clock. The incongruence of the heavenly calendar with the earthly, perceived by a mortal who has ascended to heaven, cannot be fixed until the root of the problem, i.e., the sin of humankind, is resolved.<sup>281</sup>

*1 En* 80:2      And in the days of the sinners the years shall be shortened,  
                     And their seed shall be tardy on their lands and fields,  
                     And all things on the earth shall alter,  
                     And shall not appear in their time:  
                     And the rain shall be kept back  
                     And the heaven shall withhold (it).

Although lacking the precision of the Aramaic Enochic *Astronomical Book*, (which includes the rising and setting of the moon through the various gates), the cryptic A manuscripts of 4Q317 Luni-Solar calendar provide a broader sampling of the calendar. 4Q317 traces the phases of the moon throughout a cycle of three 364-day solar years. Neither feast days nor *mishmarot* are mentioned. The observance of the seven day week (“Sabbath”) is clear, however. In which case, the scroll does mention certain days of the week but only with respect to the appearance of the first day of the week upon which the moon begins to wax or to wane.

In all 4Q317 manuscripts virtually every date in the solar month has been modified by a second scribe to read one day later than the date written by the first scribal hand. It is possible that the calendar was being modified to conform to a Jubilees-based Creation Day, where the moon is created after the sun (cf. Gen 1:14-18) thereby making the full moon visible only as the sun sets at the end of the first day of the month (thus the full moon is only visible on Wednesday evening, i.e., the evening of the fifth day). The enumeration of months is according to a solar calendar of 30 days (or 31 days, intercalated) each.

The various feast days and priestly courses that appear in other calendrical documents do not appear in either the 4QEnastr or in 4QLuni-Solar calendars. However, this does not mean that the authors did not observe a liturgical year. Neither of these calendars allows much room for these feasts to be incorporated and still remain within the space of a single scroll. On the other hand, the feasts, whether biblical or pentacontad, are noticeably missing in the Enochic literature in general.

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<sup>281</sup> The *Book of Jubilees* interprets this error to be due to humankind’s abandonment of the festivals and Sabbaths and their erring “regarding the beginning of the month, the Sabbath and the Jubilee” (*Jub* 1:14). This is also likely the reason that the rest of the calendars of group B rejected outright the lunar calendar in their calculations. On this see J. VanderKam, *Calendars in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Measuring Time*. (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 30.

*The Pentecontad Calendar (Group B)*

*Group B* includes the *Book of Jubilees*, 4Q324d–h (Cryptic A) Festal Calendar, 4QMMT, the *Temple Scroll*, and 4Q365 RP. It typically contains at least 4 Pentecontad Feasts (PF), incorporated into the biblical festal scheme. It also characteristically lacks the biblical festival of Second Passover.

- 1,1 *Teqfah* (Jubilees: Day of Remembrance)
- 1,14 Passover
- 1,15 Feast of Unleavened Bread
- 1,26 Feast of Barley (PF I)
- 3,15 Feast of Weeks (PF II)
- 3,15 Feast of First-Fruits
- 4,1 *Teqfah* (Jubilees: Day of Remembrance)
- 5,3 Feast of New Wine (PF III)
- 6,22 Feast of New Oil (PF IV)
- 6,23 Wood Offering
- 7,1 *Teqfah* (Jubilees and Temple Scroll: Day of Remembrance)
- 7,10 Day of Atonement
- 7,15 Feast of Tabernacles
- 7,22 Solemn Assembly
- 10,1 *Teqfah* (Jubilees: Day of Remembrance)
- 12,29 Feast of Ingathering (PF VIII)

This calendar adopted the same 364 day solar calendar found in 1 Enoch but without integrating the lunar phases. In the *Book of Jubilees*, the calendrical and festal years are determined solely by yearly circuit of the earth around the sun, and subsequently the movement of the stars, ignoring the phases of the moon.<sup>282</sup> The days of the month were schematized with every month made up of 30 days, with an intercalary day added every 3rd month. The most complete form of this calendar is found in 4Q324d-h Cryptic A Festal Calendar, 4Q394 1-2 Calendrical Document D and 4Q394 MMT<sup>a</sup> which details the sabbaths and festivals within a single solar year.

In the conception of the pentecontad calendars, perfect time is built upon “sevens”: (a) seven days constitute a week, (b) seven weeks constitute a pentecontad cycle, (c) seven pentecontad cycles constitute a year, (d) seven years constitute a sabbatical cycle, (e) and seven sabbatical cycles constitute a jubilee. Similarly, according to Philo, the *Therapeutae* counted time in sevens. Although not one of the calendars from Qumran preserves the entire set of sevens (item (c) in particular), the sizable lacuna left in the manuscripts, coinciding with the latter months of the year, would allow for such a scenario.

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid. p. 32.

*The Yahad's Calendar (Group C)*

Group C includes *Serekh ha-Yahad* (4QOtot/Se), 4Q320, 4Q321, 4Q321a *Mishmarot* and 4Q503 *Daily Prayers*. These are 364-day biblical festal calendars (which notably include Second Passover). They do however include a Day of Remembrance which coincides with the half-way point, approximately the autumnal equinox, in the year. It contains the most streamlined festal schedule.

- 1,14 Passover
- 1,26 Raising of the Omer
- 2,14 Second Passover
- 3,15 Feast of Weeks
- 7,1 Day of Remembrance
- 7,10 Day of Atonement
- 7,15 Feast of Tabernacles

The most exhaustive collection of calendars intrinsically connected with the Yahad and its literature was found attached to a single copy of the Community Rule 4Q259 4QS<sup>c</sup>, dubbed 4Q319 Otot. The Yahad's 364 day Festal calendar contained all the biblical feasts, including Second Passover (4Q319 Otot 13,1). Although the cycle of the moon is accounted for and is synchronized with the solar year, the feasts are defined by the sequence of days in the solar year.

Akin to 4Q319, the lunisolar calendars of 4Q320, 4Q321, and 4Q321a include all of the feasts exactly as listed above, and at the same time provide the Enochic synchronization of the 354-day lunar and 364-day solar calendars, but starting the cycle from "Creation Day" (4Q320 1i3). This indicates that the lunisolar calendar was created by God to be accurate as of the beginning of creation. Perhaps this is intended to support the Enochic view that the subsequent sins of the watchers and mankind upset the accuracy of the originally perfect calendar.

The creation of this synchronized calendar may not have been simple naïvety, but may represent the ideal cycle set in place at creation (thus the term "creation day") which was no longer in effect due to some event that changed the cycle by just that much: one day every six years per lunar year and one and a quarter days per solar year.

*Concelebration of festivals within the solar calendrical system?*

The relevance of heavenly time to the events on earth is manifested in the apparent synchronization of the cycle of the heavenly bodies, the stars, with the progression of the agricultural year. The liturgical year, whether biblical or pentecontad in its cycle, must be reset regularly, so as not to be out of sync with heaven. Whether heaven and earth are intended to celebrate the feasts together appears to be the subject of an ongoing debate

among the groups. If there is intended to be a concelebration of the heavenly hosts and humankind, it seems pretty obvious as to who is awarded the privilege to set the schedule of worship. It is up to the priests to “hear” or to confirm the days of heaven’s yearly feasts and the precise time of heaven’s daily prayers.

From a certain standpoint these calendars share some very important features, in particular a 364-day solar calendar. The groups who held to these calendars set themselves apart from others who favored a lunar calendar, which would make concelebration of festivals in all ways impossible. There are a number of features that would make a concelebration between the groups who held to a 364 day solar calendar (i.e., groups A, B and C) possible for at least a few biblical festivals during the year.<sup>283</sup> On the other hand there are also certain incongruences that can be drawn between various calendars, especially between Group B and within Group C, where the yearly sequence of feasts is not always agreed upon. Although these distinctions may have been seen as a nuisance by groups attempting to share a liturgical year, it still may not have inhibited the concelebration of certain agreed biblical feasts.

### *Conclusion*

1. The long-standing assumption that the caves represent the doctrine and practice of a single group is no longer accepted.

2. One area where this is clearly seen is in the study of the calendars. This paper has suggested that the calendar system is even more complex than just two major systems, having multiple variations and nuances depending on adherents.

3. While the solar calendars share a 364-day year, they differ in significant details, particularly in the schedule and names of the festal celebrations. Feast days in particular are indicators of group identification (e.g., compare the three Christmases and three Easters celebrated in the Holy Land today). This data must be taken seriously. Groups celebrate their feasts only according to their specific festal calendar. This paper has distinguished at least three major and separate kinds of calendars among the Scrolls, based on these festal systems, and has illustrated how these distinct systems indicate that their practitioners come from distinct groups.

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<sup>283</sup> Group A, silent on the observation of the feasts, theoretically could have chosen to celebrate the festivals and could have concelebrated certain festivals with the other groups as long as the festivals were scheduled according to the months of the solar year. However, the *Book of Jubilees* apparently condemns other groups for abandoning feasts. That would likely include both Groups A and B. See note 281 above.