What the Book of First Enoch and the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls Reveal About the History of the Qumran Community

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WHAT THE BOOK OF FIRST ENOCH AND THE ARAMAIC DEAD SEA SCROLLS REVEAL ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY

Introduction

The Aramaic book commonly known as First Enoch is among the most important of all the compositions found in the Dead Sea Scrolls.¹ The fragments of this pseudepigraphal work and related documents provide new information about the use and growth of the Enochic traditions, as well as how their contents influenced the community that collected and placed the Dead Sea Scrolls in the caves in the vicinity of Khirbet Qumran. Research on the Enochic literature in this corpus of documents is important for Jewish studies and for understanding the history of Christianity since the New Testament cites from and alludes to First Enoch while the Ethiopian church reveres it as part of its Scripture.

This study seeks to offer some new insights concerning the development and use of First Enoch and related Aramaic texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls by examining their importance for the Khirbet Qumran community. The first portion explores the transmission of First Enoch and related writings in the Dead Sea Scrolls to uncover what the copies of these texts tell us about the community at Khirbet Qumran and its precursor movement(s). The second section compares the theology of the prayers preserved in the Aramaic texts with those in the Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls to show what they reveal about the use of the Enochic traditions by the Qumran sect and related groups. This investigation pro-

poses that the Qumran community’s precursor movement(s) combined elements of pre-Maccabean Aramaic and Hebrew prayers but preferred the theological perspective of the penitential Hebrew prayer tradition. However, First Enoch and related works held a special status for the Khirbet Qumran community as its calendrical system and doctrine of evil shaped its theology for centuries. The Dead Sea Scrolls also show that the authors of the Enochic writings and those who collected and used them were influenced by literature and events in the Hellenistic world.

1. The Aramaic Enochic Writings from Qumran

The Aramaic texts from Khirbet Qumran comprise an important collection of documents that shed much light on a little-known period of Second Temple Jewish history and theology. It is difficult to determine the number of Aramaic texts found in the Dead Sea Scrolls since the majority are fragments. Consequently, we must exercise some caution in proposing theories about the contents of the Dead Sea Scrolls since most writings deposited in the Qumran caves are partially preserved while many are undoubtedly lost. Nevertheless, the Index volume to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series furnishes some useful information for understanding the likely contents of the original collection. The Aramaic scrolls make up nearly 130 of the approximately 904 Dead Sea Scrolls listed in this catalogue. Approximately 14.4% of the scrolls are written in Aramaic. Nearly 30 literary compositions have been identified among the Aramaic texts. The Aramaic fragments are widely dispersed in the caves. Seven of the eleven scroll caves contained

2 The figures in this section are from the following: Emmanuel Tov, “Lists of Specific Groups of Texts from the Judaean Desert. 5 Aramaic Texts,” in The Texts from The Judaean Desert: Indices and An Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series, ed. Emmanuel Tov et al., DJD 39 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), 221–24; Daniel Machiela, “The Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls: Coherence and Context in the Library of Qumran,” in The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Concept of a Library, ed. Sidnie White Crawford and Cecilia Wassen, STDJ 116 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 245–49. These figures exclude the Aramaic legal documents and receipts from Cave 4, which if added, according to Machiela, brings the total Aramaic writings to 146 texts, or nearly 16.2% of the scrolls. I exclude these documents along with two papyri and a parchment fragment containing text from First Enoch (MS 4612/6, MS 4612/8, MS 4612/12) because their authenticity has been questioned. These First Enoch fragments contain new readings, some of which were proposed by Milik. This raises considerable doubts regarding their authenticity. See further, Kipp Davis et al., “Nine Dubious ‘Dead Sea Scrolls’ Fragments from the Twenty-First Century,” DSD 14 (2017): 178–228.
Aramaic documents. Cave 3 held the largest number, making up nearly 24% of the works found in this cave. The percentages of the Aramaic compositions from Caves 1 and 4 respectively come to approximately 16% and 14%. Although only part of the collection of scrolls survives, the presence of Aramaic texts in multiple caves suggest that the Aramaic works comprised a large portion of the original corpus of documents placed in the caves. But how significant were these Aramaic texts for the community that resided at Khirbet Qumran?

The Aramaic texts may be divided into two broad categories: scientific works and texts about Jewish figures of the past. Many experts have suggested that the Aramaic texts emanated from scribal circles because of the computational astronomical lore found in the Astronomical Book and the presence of Mesopotamian traditions in First Enoch and related compositions. The Aramaic scrolls are widely regarded as pre-sectarian because their paleographical dates indicate that they were produced before the construction of the Khirbet Qumran settlement, which was built in approximately 100 BCE. Because of their language and unique content, the Aramaic scrolls are often placed in a separate category.

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5 For a rejection of classifications that treat the Aramaic texts as a separate body of literature and examine them apart from the other scrolls, see Sidnie White Crawford, Scribes and Scrolls at Qumran (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019), 217–65. The issue of how to distinguish a sectarian work from a non-sectarian composition is beyond the limits of this study. For some concerns about the present classification of sectarian texts of relevance to understanding the use of the Enochic traditions in the scrolls, see...
However, the Aramaic texts are no different than the Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls. Nearly 25% percent of the Hebrew scrolls were produced before the construction of Khirbet Qumran. But how were these pre-sectarian Aramaic and Hebrew texts, particularly the Enochic writings, associated with the Khirbet Qumran community?

Scholars agree that First Enoch has a long and complicated literary history. It is widely regarded as a compilation of five major compositions: The Book of Watchers (chaps. 1–36), the Similitudes (chaps. 37–71), the Astronomical Book (chaps. 72–82), the Book of Dreams (chaps. 83–90), and the Epistle of Enoch (chaps. 91–108). The Apocalypse of Weeks (93:1–10; 91:11–17) is commonly recognized as a distinct unit within the Epistle of Enoch. Although the Aramaic fragments are our earliest witness to the Enochic corpus, scholars continue to debate the history of the compilation of these writings into the single book preserved in Ethiopian (Ge’ez). Because the Ethiopic edition is apparently a Greek translation of the Aramaic original that was likely compiled into a collection of Enochic writings between the fourth and sixth centuries CE, we cannot be certain of the extent to which the Enochic materials from Qumran were altered before or during their translation into Ethiopian. For this reason, this study focuses on the Aramaic texts from Qumran and not the later Greek or Ethiopic editions of First Enoch.

The large number of First Enoch fragments found in the caves and the


6 This division, still widely adopted, was made by Charles, APOT, 2:168–70; idem, The Book of Enoch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1893).

locations of their discovery suggest that it was among the most important writings of the Second Temple Period. Eleven Aramaic manuscripts of First Enoch were discovered in the Qumran caves. Their paleographical dates range from approximately 200 BCE until 1 BCE. Four are dated between 200–100 BCE, which shows that some of the Enochic manuscripts predated Khirbet Qumran’s construction. 4QEnochc (4Q204) is among the most important of the early copies of First Enoch found in the Qumran caves. It is derived from a Vorlage belonging to the last quarter of the second century BCE, which contains the same orthography found in 1QIsa and 1QS. This manuscript includes a portion of the Book of Giants (4Q203=4QEnGiantsa ar). Milik proposed that these


9 Milik, Enoch, 181–83. The orthographic features include the frequent appearance of aleph to denote the vocalic use of yod and waw in the final position as in 1QSa and 1QS, occasional he for the emphatic state of a masculine substantive, and samek in
two documents belonged to the same scroll. Although his controversial theory of an Enochic Pentateuch has not been accepted by many experts, as well his somewhat ambitious efforts to reconstruct the length of the Qumran manuscripts containing the Book of Giants, the similar contents of the two works suggest that they likely circulated together since the same scribe produced a scroll containing both compositions.\(^{10}\) Even if they were not combined, there having been copied onto a single scroll show that they were read together.\(^{11}\) This suggests that the con-

place of etymological ʾšin (as in 4QEnoch\(^{a}\)). See further, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, ”The Early Traditions Related to 1 Enoch from the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Overview and Assessment,” in The Early Enoch Literature, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and John J. Collins, JSJSup 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 50–51.

\(^{10}\) Milik proposed that the Aramaic Astronomical Book was copied separately from the other Enochic works because of its excessive length. He suggested it formed one volume of a two-volume Enochic Pentateuch, whose second volume included The Book of Watchers, the Book of Giants, the Book of Dreams, and the Epistle of Enoch. According to his reconstruction, the Parables of Enoch later replaced the Book of Giants. See Milik, Enoch, 4–7, 57–58, 76–77, 88, 181–84, 227, 310. For an assessment of Milik’s thesis, see further, Jonas Greenfield and Michael E. Stone, “The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes,” HTR 70 (1977): 51–65; Stuckenbruck, “4QEnoch\(^{a}\),” in Qumran Cave 4.XXVI, 8–10. A discussion of the so-called Qumran “Book of Noah” (1Q19; 1Q19BIS), which corresponds with 1 Enoch 106:10 and 12, is beyond the limitation of this study. It is doubtful it is a Hebrew version of First Enoch and should therefore not be combined with the 4QEnoch fragments. See further, Michael E. Stone, “The Book(s) Attributed to Noah,” DSD 13 (2006): 4–23.

\(^{11}\) Given our limited textual evidence, it is difficult to determine which books that make up the present work known as First Enoch were joined in the Second Temple Period. It is likely that the Enochic corpora was quite diverse and different manuscripts likely combined different Enochic writings. See further, Greenfield and Stone, “The Enochic Pentateuch,” 55–60. See also the relevant comments on the Greek fragments of First Enoch that provide some evidence for the combination of the Astronomical Book with other parts of First Enoch by Randall D. Chesnutt, “‘Oxyrhynchus Papyrus’ 2069 and the Compositional History of ‘1 Enoch,’” JBL 129 (2010): 485–505. Although there is no decisive evidence for the exact dating of the various books that comprise First Enoch, it is probable that the Astronomical Book is older than the Book of Watchers. See further Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 1 Enoch 2, 390–94. Efforts to reconstruct the appearance of the scrolls that contained First Enoch and related writings, especially the Book of Giants, using the standardized “geometrical” method largely developed by Hartmut Stegemann are inaccurate since they fail to recognize that degradation began while scrolls were rolled up creating repeated, yet different, damage patterns that cannot be perfectly aligned. Consequently, except for those scrolls that contain portions of the Enochic corpus, any comments on the contents of the Enochic books in the Second Temple Period remains speculative. For these issues, see further, Eshbal Ratzon and Nachum Dershowitz, “The Length of a Scroll: Quantitative Evaluation of Material Reconstructions,” PLOS ONE 15/10 (2020): https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239831.
nection between some of the books that make up First Enoch and the Book of Giants goes back to the pre-Qumranic period. Consequently, I will include the Book of Giants as part of First Enoch since the scrolls show that the two compositions in some editions circulated together.

The Book of Giants clearly draws on the myth of the Watchers. In some places, the Book of Giants fills in missing details in its narrative or expands stories found in the Book of Watchers. For example, whereas the Book of Watchers names the angels but not the giants, the Book of Giants provides names for both. The Book of Giants also contains an expanded version of the vision given to the two giant-sons of the Watchers, ‘Ohyah and Hahyah. Because of these and other features, it is likely that the Book of Giants used the Book of Watchers as one of its sources. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between these two compositions. Some elements in the Book of Giants appear to contradict the Book of Watchers. One example is the differences between the judgment of the giants and the roles of the heavenly angels in the destruction of the giants and the Watchers. However, it is possible that these variances show that the Book of Giants is based on a different version of First Enoch than the edition preserved in the Aramaic fragments found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Because the same scribe copied material from First Enoch and the Book of Giants, the Book of Giants, in at least among some groups, was apparently part of the corpus of Enochic works that were eventually combined to form the composite text of First Enoch. The Book of Giants adds approximately nine manuscripts to

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14 For this possibility, see Goff, “When Giants Dreamed,” 82.

15 For the possible relationship of these books, see further, Milik, Enoch, 58, 183, 310–39; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, 172–73.
the list of Qumran copies of First Enoch. What do these manuscripts tell us about their use at Khirbet Qumran?

Because most of the First Enoch manuscripts date between 50–1 BCE, it appears that First Enoch become more important over time for the communities that produced and collected the Dead Sea Scrolls. Although one could argue this is merely the result of chance, the same statistics hold true for the Book of Giants. The manuscripts of the Book of Giants in the Dead Sea Scrolls also increase over time. The origin of First Enoch and the Book of Giants may tell us something about the pre-history of the Khirbet Qumran community. Many experts place First Enoch’s composition in Palestine or the eastern Jewish diaspora during the late third or second century BCE. Klaus Beyer classifies the old-


17 The terminus ante quem is indicated by the oldest manuscript (4Q530), which may be paleographically dated to approximately 100 BCE. See Puech, “4QLivre des Géants,” 12. Because the Book of Giants appears to have used the Book of Watchers, which is generally dated to the third century BCE, the Book of Giants must date sometime afterwards. The Aramaic of the Book of Giants suggests that it emanated from an environment familiar with Mesopotamian traditions, especially about Gilgamesh, as well as those possibly preserved in Pseudo-Europolemus. See further, Joseph L. Angel, “Reading the Book of Giants in Literary and Historical Context,” DSD 21 (2014): 313–346; André Lemaire, “Nabonide et Gilgamesh: L’araméen en Mesopotamie et à
est manuscripts of 1 Enoch (4Q201, 202, 208) as written in Jüdisch-Altpalästinisch, or, more specifically, as Jüdisch-Altostjordanisch, with the latest copies in the Hasmonäisch variety of Aramaic, which was also used in other documents from Qumran. The Herodian date of some of the fragments of the Book of Giants reveal that the composition, like First Enoch, was still being copied in the Herodian era. The Qumran manuscripts of First Enoch and the Book of Giants show that the Enochic corpus is one of the oldest and longest traditions preserved in the Scrolls.

If we look once again at the number of Aramaic texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls, their distribution may tell us more about their importance in antiquity. There are eleven fragmentary copies of First Enoch. Next is the ten copies of the Book of Giants. Daniel, including its Hebrew and Aramaic portions, is preserved in eight copies. However, if we look at the distribution of texts found in multiple caves, we find that New Jerusalem text has the greatest circulation; it is found in five caves (1, 2, 4, 5, and 11). Next is the Book of Giants, which was found in four caves (1, 2, 4, and 6). This is followed by Daniel, which was preserved in three caves (1, 4, 6). New Jerusalem and the Book of Giants are the most widely dispersed Aramaic texts. Many of the Aramaic scrolls are of high quality. Several of them (1Q20, 4Q202, 4Q204, 4Q209, 4Q541) contain features that Tov uses to classify manuscripts as deluxe editions. The appearance of many Aramaic scrolls suggests they were particularly important as evident by their careful production. Like most Hebrew scrolls, they are written on leather rather than less durable papyrus. Their dates, contents, and skilled production shed some important light on the Khirbet Qumran community.

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19 Machiela, “The Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls,” 246–47. I have removed those fragments of unknown and likely of dubious origin from Machiela’s figures. Including the Book of Giants as part of First Enoch would make First Enoch the most popular of the Aramaic works preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls.


21 Machiela, “The Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls,” 247. Machiela estimates that 8.5% of 130 Aramaic Scrolls are papyrus.
Based on the oldest Aramaic fragments of First Enoch, we can roughly date the composition of a few of its books to sometime before the end of the third century BCE. This means that the Qumran copies are close to the time of the composition of some of the books that were combined to form our present version of First Enoch. Because of its pre-Qumranic date, it is not surprising that First Enoch lacks the terminology in the scrolls that is commonly identified as sectarian. Yet, this traditional division between sectarian and non-sectarian writings is problematic.22 Although First Enoch and related compositions such as the Book of Giants are clearly non-sectarian, they are works of sectarian thinking that inform other Qumran writings.23 Consequently, we cannot exclude the likelihood that the Khirbet Qumran sectarians and related groups read the Enochic books as sectarian compositions.

It has been suggested that the Aramaic texts from Qumran emanated from a scribal background. This would fit their inclusion in the caves as the Dead Sea Scrolls bear the hallmarks of a deliberately collected body of texts that reflect a scribal interest.24 The entire collection is similar to

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22 See further García Martínez, “Sectario, No-Sectario, O Qué?,” 383–94.
23 Influential non-sectarian writings that appear to have influenced some of the Dead Sea Scrolls include Jubilees, the Temple Scroll, and 4QInstruction. In the case of 4QInstruction, the nature of these parallels is difficult to determine. Although it is plausible that there is a literary relationship between it and other scrolls, some differences between them make it probable that the Enochic writings and many scrolls used traditions from the second century BCE that shaped their distinctive forms of apocalyptic wisdom. See further, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “4QInstruction and the Possible Influence of Early Enochic Traditions an Evaluation,” in The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought, ed. Charlotte Hempel and Armin Lange, BETL 159 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 245–61. Elgvin, however, places the composition of 4QInstruction to the late third century BCE, around the same time as portions of First Enoch. See Torlief Elgvin, “Priestly Sages?: The Milieus of Origin of 4QMysteries and 4QInstruction,” in Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Sixth International Symposium of the Orion Center, 2012 May, 2001, ed. John J. Collins et al., STDJ 51 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 83–84. The affinities between 4QInstruction and the Hodayot as instruction texts have been recognized by several scholars. See further the discussions and citations in Matthew Goff, “Reading Wisdom at Qumran: 4QInstruction and the Hodayot,” DSD 11 (2004): 263–88.

24 For this evidence, see further the discussion and extensive literature cited in Crawford, Scribes, 217–65. The large number of scrolls written in cursive script in Cave 4, and the high number of texts in this cave associated with the Maskil, may indicate that many of the documents in this cave were intended for a more restrictive audience than the majority of texts found in the other Qumran caves. For this possibility, see further, Charlotte Hempel, The Qumran Rule Texts in Context: Collected Studies (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 303–37. Because all the Aramaic fragments of First Enoch come
other “private” communal libraries kept for the benefit of a community of philosophers for their scholarly pursuits. It contains a wide variety of literature, yet with a particular sectarian focus. This library at Khirbet Qumran not only had a long history, as shown by the Enochic writings, but it also came from many sources. Some of these texts, moreover, show that their authors were shaped by events in the Hellenistic world.

Pieter Hartog observes many similarities between the systematic interpretations of the base texts in the pesharim and the *hypomnemata*, which elucidate passages in Homer’s *Iliad*. These resemblances, Hartog proposes, reflect a global phenomenon in which connections between Egypt and Palestine led to the spread of this interpretative method to Judea. Regarding the Aramaic texts, Drawnel and others have convincingly demonstrated that they contain traditions that emanated from Babylon. Drawnal notes that the Qumran fragments of the Astronomical Book include Babylonian computational astronomical teachings and contain evidence of scribal training. Aramaic was the cultural medium for the transmission of this cuneiform lore. This shows that the Enochic writings had a wide circulation and travelled a great distance before they ended up at the settlement of the *yahad* at Khirbet Qumran. Yet, this group was merely one of the sectarian communities that used the copies of First Enoch preserved in the scrolls.

from Cave 4, this may indicate that First Enoch was used along with other cryptic and esoteric texts in this cave by the leaders at Khirbet Qumran and its related communities. It is uncertain whether the wider distribution of the Book of Giants in four caves (1, 2, 3, and 6) shows it was read by a larger audience. Its greater distribution suggests it was likely used by several communities whose writings were later deposited in the Qumran caves. See further notes 28–32.


Scholars now recognize that the *yaḥad* existed at many locations other than Khirbet Qumran.28 This is evident by the contents of the sectarian scrolls. For example, the Damascus Document reflects an earlier stage of development in the *yaḥad’s* existence than the group described in the Community Rule, which espouses a quasi-monastic lifestyle. Both forms of living persisted at multiple locations: consequently, we should not assume that both texts describe life at Khirbet Qumran.29 Likewise, the dates of the Aramaic fragments of First Enoch and the Book of Giants show that the copies of these works originated in earlier communities. Many not only predate the Khirbet Qumran settlement, but some were in use up to the time of Khirbet Qumran’s destruction nearly a century after the dates of the latest Aramaic fragments of First Enoch.30 Although we interpret the Dead Sea Scrolls as a single collection, their presence in the caves is an accident.

Those who lived at Khirbet Qumran apparently had some relationship with earlier like-minded groups and shared many writings with them. Each of these communities, as evident by the existence of multiple recensions of texts in the scrolls such as the *Community Rule*, shared certain documents and ideologies but interpreted them differently based on their unique histories.31 The fragments of First Enoch and the Dead Sea

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Scrolls that predate the site of Khirbet Qumran represent Judaism of the third and second centuries BCE that was adopted by later communities that produced, collected, and preserved the scrolls. If not for the First Revolt, some of the Enochic writings and Dead Sea Scrolls would not have ended up in the Qumran caves since many of these texts were not produced there.\textsuperscript{32} The differences between the Aramaic and Hebrew prayer texts from Qumran may tell us more about these earlier Jewish movements, whose use of the Enochic corpus contributed to the later theological and historical development of the \textit{yahad} at Khirbet Qumran.

2. Prayer Texts from Khirbet Qumran

The presence of Aramaic and Hebrew prayers in the non-sectarian Dead Sea Scrolls suggest that that Khirbet Qumran community incorporated pre-existing prayers in their worship.\textsuperscript{33} These pre-Qumranic

\textsuperscript{32} The textual diversity in the biblical scrolls from Khirbet Qumran was imported to the site. These biblical writings came from different communities and were brought to Khirbet Qumran and deposited in caves there. Many of the biblical scrolls and the sectarian and non-sectarian scrolls likely came from various communities—at least some of which were somehow connected or associated with the Khirbet Qumran community—and were only brought there for hiding on the eve of the First Revolt. The same is undoubtedly true for many other scrolls and possibly the Enochic writings. See further, Kenneth Atkinson, “Are the Dead Sea Scrolls from Khirbet Qumran?,” *QC* ("Claus-Hunno Hunzinger volume," forthcoming); Emanuel Tov, “The Background and Origin of the Qumran Corpus of Scripture Texts,” in *Sacred Texts and Disparate Interpretations: Qumran Manuscripts Seventy Years Later,* ed. Henryk Drawnel, STDJ 133 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 50–65.

\textsuperscript{33} For a succinct survey of prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see further, Eileen Schuller, “Prayer at Qumran,” in *Prayer from Tobit to Qumran: Inaugural Conference of the ISDCL at Salzburg, Austria, 5–9 July 2003,* ed. Renate Egger-Wenzel and Jeremy Corley, Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 411–28. Rodney Werline classifies penitential prayer as a “direct address to God in which an individual, group, or individual on behalf of the group confesses sins and petitions for forgiveness as an act of repentance.” See Rodney A. Werline, “Defining Penitential Prayer,” in *Seeking the Favor of God,* vol. 1 of *The Origins of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism,* ed. Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline, EJL 21 (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2006), xv. This definition is broad enough to cover the variety of prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls, including communal, individual, and apotropaic, among others. It is difficult to determine the number of prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls since many are embedded in other texts such as rule books. For a discussion of the problems in identifying prayers in the Qumran corpus, and detailed listing of prayers in this collection, see further, Kenneth Atkinson, “Understanding the History, Theology, and Community of the Psalms of Solomon in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Psalms.*
documents are, therefore, witnesses to third and second century BCE Jewish prayer traditions that this later community regarded as important enough to incorporate in their religious life. This early period ironically appears to have been among the most significant times for the development of the group’s theology since these pre-sectarian texts were used alongside later sectarian compositions at Khirbet Qumran although they date considerably earlier. Non-sectarian Works, such as Words of the Heavenly Luminaries, Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, Daily Prayers, and Festival Prayers, have been dated to the pre-Maccabean period. These earlier pre-Maccabean writings were used alongside sectarian prayers and apparently interpreted together. One copy of Festival Prayers, for example, appears on the back of a copy of the War Scroll, which is universally recognized as a sectarian composition and contains prayers to be recited at fixed times. The back of another copy of the War Scroll contains a copy of the non-sectarian Words of the Luminaries. The copying of these two texts on the same scrolls—one of which espouses predestination and the other free will—suggests that the earlier pre-Maccabean prayer literature was used in conjunction with sectarian texts despite their conflicting theologies.

Because it is unlikely that the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls with their apocalyptic worldview were written by the same circles that composed the Qumran penitential prayers in Hebrew, any passages in the Dead Sea Scroll Hebrew prayers that reflect the cosmology of the Aramaic Enochic texts does not necessarily indicate a common origin. Rather, their shared use of apocalyptic imagery shows that these traditions were widely known, but apparently rejected by the writers of the Hebrew penitential prayers. Yet, the Aramaic prayer texts and Enochic writings continued to be used for centuries alongside one another despite their

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differing theologies. They were not of mere antiquarian interest for the community at Khirbet Qumran, for the Enochic writings shaped sectarian scrolls and life at the site and likely its related precursor communities as well.

It is difficult to identify references or allusions in the scrolls to earlier documents. However, several sectarian works clearly show the influence of the Aramaic Enochic writings. The sexual sin in the section about Šemiḥazah is one example. It is reminiscent of the polemic against the priesthood in the Damascus Document as well as the Testament of Levi. If we add the dependence of Jubilees on the Enochic literature, especially its use of materials found in the Book of Watchers and the Astronomical Book, and the manuscripts of Jubilees found in the scrolls and allusions to Jubilees in other scrolls, this provides additional evidence of the importance of Enochic traditions for the community of the scrolls. The prayer text of Daily Prayers (4Q503), moreover, is significant for understanding the use of Enochic traditions in the scrolls. It has a literary and structural intertextual relationship with 4QCrypticALunisolar Calendar (4Q317), which shows influences from the Aramaic calendrical fragments in the Astronomical Book (4QAstronomicalEnocha-b; 4Q208–209) in its understanding of the daily change in the

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36 Milik (Enoch, 59–69) and William R. G. Loader (The Dead Sea Scrolls on Sexuality: Attitudes Towards Sexuality in Sectarian and Related Literature at Qumran [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009], 360) identify similarities between First Enoch and the following Qumran texts: New Jerusalem (1Q19); 4Q246; 1QpGenAp; 5Q13; 3Q14; 4Q180; 4Q181; 4Q227; 4Q252; 4Q260; 4Q260b; 4Q317; 4Q416; 4Q534. Stuckenbruck detects influences of First Enoch on the following Aramaic Scrolls: Aramaic Levi Document, 4QTestament of Qahat, 4QPseudo-Daniel, 1QGenesis Apocryphon, and possibly Words of Michael. For the Hebrew Scrolls, he proposes influences of the early Enochic traditions on the following Hebrew works: 4QPesher on the Periods, 4QPesher on the Apocalypse of Weeks, 4QExhortation on the Flood, 11QApocryphal Psalms, 4QSongs of the Maskil, and the Book of Jubilees. The influence of First Enoch on texts, such as Pesharim, Apocryphal Psalms, the depiction of the “angels of destruction” (e.g., 1QS IV, 12; CD-A II,6; 1QM XIII,12) has also been noted by several scholars. See further, Daniel M. Gurtner, Introducing the Pseudepigrapha of Second Temple Judaism: Message, Context, and Significance (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 89–91; Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “The Book of Enoch: Its Reception in Second Temple Jewish and in Christian Tradition,” Early Christianity 4 (2013): 12–13.


38 Stone comments that the fourteen copies of Jubilees in the scrolls are evenly spread from approximately 125 BCE to approximately 50 CE. See Michael E. Stone, Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 135.
moon’s presence. Daily Prayers was apparently a text that was recited communally at specific times of each day together with the angels at sunset and sunrise in co-ordination with the phases of the moon, to praise the daily renewal of the solar and lunar lights.

The focus on the heavenly realm in many Dead Sea Scrolls should not be surprising since these texts suggest that the sectarian community that used them sought to create on earth a replica of the heavenly world. This is evident in prayers such as the *Songs of the Sabbath* that describes the Sabbath worship and sacrifices conducted by the angelic priests in the heavenly temple. Possible Enochic influence is not only visible in this and other prayer texts, but also in sectarian writings like the *Rule of the Community* that describe how the community can imitate their angelic counterparts through communal living.

Of significance for understanding the use of the Enochic traditions in the Second Temple Period are the incantations and apotropaic prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The incantations address evil forces directly, while the apotropaic prayers seek God’s protection from threatening external evil forces. Both the apotropaic prayers and incantations in the Dead Sea Scrolls draw on traditions from First Enoch and Jubilees, particularly the story of the Watchers.

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42 Note, for example, 4Q510 frg. 1 in which the evil forces are taken from traditions about the Watchers. Cf. Jub. 6:1–6. Esther Eshel identifies the following works containing apotropaic prayers as non-sectarian: Aramaic Levi Document, 11QPs³, and Jubilees. The following are among those she lists as sectarian: 4Q510–4Q511, 4Q444, 6Q18, 1QHa frg. 3. Incantations against demons include: 4QS60, 8Q5, 11Q11. See Esther Eshel, “Apotropaic Prayers in the Second Temple Period,” in *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 19–23 January, 2000*, ed. Esther Chazon, STDJ 48 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 69–88. See also 11Q11 V, 6.
The writers of the texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls that show influence of the tradition of the Watchers found in the Enochic literature, as well as Jubilees, were concerned with the influence of malevolent beings that posed a threat to the community. The illicit mingling of angels and humans according to the Book of Watchers resulted in a race of giants who were both angelic and human. God sent the angel Gabriel to destroy them. Because they could not be completely eradicated, evil spirits emanated from their bodies and threatened humanity (1 En. 10:9; 15:11–16:1). Apotropaic prayers, such as the Songs of the Sage, were intended to reestablish the cosmic boundaries around the community by serving as instruments of war to protect the group from these demons. Some scrolls clearly presuppose the future judgment of these evil spirits (1 En. 16:1–02; IQH a XI, 17–19); for the present it is understood that they will continue to attack humans. The use of such Enochic materials about the Watchers in prayers that defined and regulated the daily life of the community of the scrolls shows the continued use and importance of the Enochic traditions for the communities that produced and collected the scrolls. Because Daily Prayers is dated quite early, and possibly to the pre-Maccabean era, its use of Enochic materials shows the importance of the Enochic books at the time immediately preceding or during the early years of the Maccabean rebellion.

Although the Enochic corpus predates Khirbet Qumran by several centuries and therefore cannot be a sectarian composition, it contains the basic sectarian thinking found in many Dead Sea Scrolls and influenced their authors. The Enochic corpus also influenced many pre-Qumranic documents, some of which in turn influenced later sectarian writings. It is likely that many at Khirbet Qumran and its precursor communities read First Enoch as a sectarian composition; the same is likely true of related Aramaic works in the scrolls. Because the figure of Enoch in


First Enoch addresses God directly and is depicted as the recipient of revelation while praying (1 En. 12:3), the writers of the prayers and other texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls were undoubtedly attracted to him as a model since he lived before the flood and was able to relate the story of the Watchers. He imparted this tale and related divine revelation and prophecy through his “tongue of flesh” (1 En. 14:2) and “breath of mouth” (1 En. 84:1). Enoch’s “blessing” of God appears to imply the liturgical formula “Blessed are you/is the God…” found in many Jewish texts, particularly the Hodayot (1 En 12:3; 84:2; 1QH 13(5):20; 18(10):14). This language facilitated its use in later prayers, many of which are preserved in the scrolls. First Enoch adopts the biblical optimism towards language as a means of communicating God’s will; its themes influenced prophetic and prayer literature in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Because texts, such as Words of the Heavenly Luminaries, Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, Daily Prayers, and Festival Prayers, all have been dated to the pre-Maccabean period along with the Enochic writings, this suggests that this period was among the greatest times of theological vitality in Second Temple Judaism. The Enochic writings appear to have been the most important works to have originated during this time.

The communities that used the Dead Sea Scrolls clearly inherited from First Enoch and Daniel an apocalyptic view of history and the belief in a reward and punishment after death. It is perhaps not a coincidence that the dates of the Qumran Aramaic fragments of First Enoch and the Book of Giants coincide with the time when the Danielic

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45 The use of Isaiah 50:4 in Enoch (1 En. 14:2–3) is also quoted in the Hodayot (1QH 15(7):10–11; 16(8):36) and is reminiscent of 1QH 9(1):21–31. Enoch, like Isaiah, states that God has chosen him as the recipient of divine revelation which he imparts through human speech. See further, Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, 235, 252. For Enochic influences in the Hodayot, particularly its use of references to places of punishment mentioned in the Book of Watchers, see Angela Kim Harkins, Reading with an “I” to the Heavens: Looking at the Qumran Hodayot through the Lens of Visionary Traditions, Ekstasis 3 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 141–47.


traditions were popular. What is unique about the Aramaic scrolls is that they appear to have been important and influenced many sectarian writings, but were never translated. This may be the result of its content and use. In his classic article on Enoch 6–16, David Suter proposed that this section of First Enoch is a paradigm rather than an etiology about the origin of evil. George W. E. Nickelsburg suggested that the myth represents a reaction to the suffering in Palestine brought about by the wars of the Diadochi following Alexander the Great’s conquests. The giants, and their bloodshed and destruction, symbolically depict these epic conflicts at the end of the fourth century BCE. John Collins raises an important point in this debate by noting that both views may be correct: the multivalent nature of this myth allowed it to be reapplied to the temple priests of the Hellenistic period. In his study of the similarities between Daniel 4 and the Book of Giants, Joseph Angel observes that Enoch and Daniel contain numerous similar elements, such as the twin theophanies, a wild man story, the humbling of arrogant figures, and dreams, yet uses them differently. Much of this material, moreover, appears to have an origin in Mesopotamia. It is possible that the presumed antiquity of the Enochic writings as texts that contained revelations before the flood, and its eastern origins in Mesopotamia, led to these works becoming regarded as special, likely sacred, literature. Consequently, scribes may have been reluctant to translate them, and preferred to preserve the Enochic traditions in their original Aramaic. By not rendering them into a more familiar vernacular, the Aramaic of these books and their exotic and unfamiliar images likely served to support the claims of these writings that their contents preserved ancient lore from before the flood.

The prayer traditions from Qumran largely reflect the pre-Maccabean

49 Angel, “Reading the Book of Giants,” 341–44.
52 Collins, Apocalyptic, 51–52. See also, Gurtner, Introducing, 31–34.
period and appear to have originated in ancient Israel. However, the Enochic literature presupposes a Babylonian milieu. This is especially true of the myth of the Watchers, the Aramaic Astronomical Book, as well as related works such as Aramaic Levi. These writings show a relationship between the Qumran Aramaic manuscripts and Late Babylonian cuneiform traditions regarding astronomy, astrology, and demonology. As Henryk Drawnel has demonstrated, Aramaic served as the medium for the transmission of this cuneiform lore for Jewish culture and religion. Although the criticism in First Enoch 6–16 is apparently directed towards the Jerusalem priesthood, some material in First Enoch (13:7–9) points to an origin in the Upper Galilee for this polemic. During the Hellenistic period, this region had considerable contact with Mesopotamia. Babylon and adjacent regions passed from Seleucid control to the Parthians. Many wars between these two powers increased trade and cultural exchanges between Jews and pagans in the Galilee and Mesopotamia that continued when the Ptolemies fought their Seleucid foes in these regions. Various Mesopotamian traditions were apparently transmitted to the Galilee during these turbulent times and reshaped in a thoroughly Jewish milieu when the Ptolemies and Seleucids were fighting in this and other areas for control of Judea. The Enochic corpus reflects this contentious new multicultural era and Jewish opposition to Hellenistic kings, the temple cult, and Jewish institutions through a unique mingling of traditions from Mesopotamia and Syria.

56 See further, Suter, “Fallen,” 115–35; George W. E. Nickelsburg, “Enoch, Levi, and Peter: Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee,” JBL 100 (1981): 575–600; idem, 1 Enoch 1, 238–47. For the sanctity of Mt. Hermon as reflected in ancient texts, particularly the traditions associated with the sacred geography of First Enoch 6–16, see further, Kelley Coblenz Baught, A Study of the Geography of 1 Enoch 17–19: “No One Has Seen What I Have Seen,” JSJSup 81 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 59–66. See further, Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, 238–47. The Upper Galilee and Iturea during the Maccabean period and Hasmonean eras were closely connected with Syria and for many periods formed part of it. These regions had rather porous boundaries, which facilitated the movements of peoples and goods. Helen R. Jacobus, in a study of the Qumran Hebrew and Aramaic calendrical texts, concludes that the Aramaic calendars are not modeled on the Sabbath and partly originated in the Seleucid era-Babylonian magical and divinatory texts. See Helen R. Jacobus, “Function and Creativity in the Hebrew, Aramaic and Cryptic Calendars from Qumran,” in Dead Sea Scrolls, Revise and Repeat, 199–249. The Upper Galilee
Conclusion

The use of the Enochic traditions by Jewish communities before Khirbet Qumran’s construction, alongside pre-Maccabean prayers and distinctively sectarian writings, such as the Community Rule and the Damascus Document, show that the Dead Sea Scrolls include documents that contain the teachings of several unknown Jewish communities of the third to the second centuries BCE. What is puzzling is that while the earliest scrolls date to this time, the dates of the remaining Dead Sea Scrolls reach a peak in the first century CE. The curve then dips and flattens in the first century CE and ends abruptly in the last quarter of the first century CE. For nearly the last century of its existence, we have few original compositions in the scrolls. Rather, earlier texts were largely copied and revised. This suggests the pre-Maccabean and early Maccabean eras when the Enochic texts were written and widely circulated were major periods for the formation of Second Temple Jewish theology. It was this time, as reflected in the Qumran Aramaic and Hebrew texts and prayers found at Qumran, that the most important non-sectarian and sectarian writings were produced. Much of the theology and practices of the Khirbet Qumran community and its related groups developed during this period and were influenced by the Enochic writings, which continued to be used until the site’s destruction.

and Iturea regions were the perfect locals for the transfer of such Mesopotamian traditions to Judea. The Wadi Brisa reliefs and an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar in southern Lebanon are reminiscent of the tree stump and wild man motifs in Daniel 4 and provide physical evidence of the contact and spread of Mesopotamian traditions to territory that formed part of Syria in the Hellenistic era. See further, Angel, “The Humbling, 472–75

Although it is important not to needlessly create previously unknown communities or new forms of Judaism based on individual texts, the presence of scrolls of varying dates and conflicting theologies suggest that they emanated from different communities and were brought to Khirbet Qumran. The diversity reflected in the biblical texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls show that they were imported to Khirbet Qumran and came from earlier related communities. Many of the pre-sectarian documents described in the present study are best explained as the products of earlier unknown sectarian Jewish communities that predated the Khirbet Qumran sect. The scrolls represent a mixture of writings produced by those related to this settlement, texts undoubtedly produced there, and many earlier documents unrelated to this community that were later brought to Khirbet Qumran.

For this evidence, see further, Kenneth Atkinson, The Hasmoneans and Their Neighbors: New Historical Reconstructions from the Dead Sea Scrolls and Classical Sources, T&T Clark Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies, 27 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018), 107–102; Webster, “Chronological Index,” 351–75. See also Crawford, Scribes, 261.
The continued use of the Enochic writings up to the time of Khirbet Qumran’s destruction is not surprising as its symbols and messages, particularly the colorful images in First Enoch, could easily be used to describe any period or oppressor. The use of the Enochic traditions during the Herodian era suggests that many Jews likely employed their symbolic language and images to denounce the Roman Republic, Herodian rule, and the Roman Empire. Their preservation in the caves along with other writings shows the importance of the Enochic books for Jews at Khirbet Qumran and related communities, who transported them to a remote desert location to preserve them. The contemporary use of First Enoch by the Ethiopian church shows that the Enochic traditions remain perhaps the oldest and most widespread Jewish tradition outside the Hebrew Bible.  

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59 See further, Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, 104–108.


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