

The Secret of Time

Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah

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The Secret of Time

Reconfiguring Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls

By

Arjen F. Bakker



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Voor Erna en Richard, mijn ouders



El tiempo es alegría

Time is joy

PABLO NERUDA, Oda al pasado



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Preface

For over two decades the vast majority of the fragmentary materials from Qumran Cave 4 have been available to the public, and thus we are now beginning to see the contours of a changed landscape. Ancient Judaism and the Hebrew Bible are transformed before our eyes with the new information we currently possess. This book contributes to the rethinking of the Dead Sea Scrolls as an essential and integral part of Judaism in the Greco-Roman period. This requires a reconsideration of the normative model of sectarianism that has been projected onto the scrolls and fragments. Soon after the discoveries, the extraordinary finds of the Dead Sea Scrolls were assigned to the margins of ancient society by their association with a separatist community that had withdrawn to the desert. Notwithstanding the bitter polemic that some fragments exhibit, and the profound tensions in late Second Temple society that our ancient sources reveal, we can now see a picture that involves a more diverse network of communities and a richer variety of texts that continue to transform our understanding of the emergence of the biblical corpus.

My thinking on the Dead Sea Scrolls has been deeply shaped by the tradition of Groningen, where I currently teach and do research. This book started as a doctoral dissertation under supervision of Eibert Tigchelaar at KU Leuven. I am very fortunate to have been taught by a great scholar with a vast and extremely detailed knowledge, who is a sharp and critical reader with a curious and open mind. I am deeply grateful for his patience, generosity, and support. His work in deconstructing and reconstructing the basic terms of Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship, from manuscript to categorization, has been foundational for my own research. Another significant teacher in the Groningen tradition is Florentino García Martínez, who introduced me to the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and has continued to be a source of inspiration and support across the years. Mladen Popović has created a vibrant and welcoming environment at the Groningen Qumran Institute and has set new standards for innovative and fundamental research. I am grateful for his collegiality, support, guidance, mentorship, and conversation.

Generous financial support of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls has enabled me to do research at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem under the guidance of Menahem Kister. His advice, generosity, and friendship have been crucial to my research and to my development as a scholar. His honesty, erudition, and command of the sources continue to be an example and an inspiration. I want to express my gratitude to him and to the many other incredible scholars and fellow students from whom and with whom

I was fortunate to learn so much during my time in Jerusalem and afterwards. As a Postdoc at the University of Haifa, I had the good fortune of working with Jonathan Ben-Dov, who has been a wonderful teacher and mentor. His work on ancient astronomy and calendar has been most important for my own thinking on concepts of time. I am grateful for his support and hospitality.

Hindy Najman is an incredible scholar, teacher and mentor who has taught me to see many new possibilities and pathways forward in the fields of Hebrew Bible and ancient Judaism, and in the academy more generally. Her scholarly brilliance and originality have inspired a generation of young scholars and no doubt will continue to do so for many decades to come. I have been fortunate to work closely with her at Oriel College and the Centre for the Study of the Bible, and I have benefitted tremendously from her mentorship and guidance. Her thinking on soul-formation, linguistic border crossing, reading practices and the vitality of scripture has been formative for my work. In 2017 and 2018 we presented several versions of a co-authored paper on heavenly and earthly time that has had a deep impact on my understanding of time in ancient Judaism and has shaped chapter 5 of this book. At the University of Oxford, I have profoundly enjoyed the many and endless conversations with senior scholars, peers, and students. I am grateful for all that I have learned and for the friendships that were forged.

It is not possible to list all the people who have contributed to this book with advice, feedback, and encouragement. Among my senior colleagues and teachers, I want to thank Wout van Bekkum, George Brooke, Esther Chazon, Sarit Kattan-Gribetz, James Kugel, Noam Mizrahi, Judith Newman, Carol Newsom, Ishay Rosen-Zvi, Francis Schmidt, Michael Segal, Shaul Shaked שׂר, Michael Stone, Loren Stuckenbruck, and Pierre Van Hecke. Among my peers and friends, I want to thank Hallel Baitner, Federico Favi, Yael Fisch, Asaf Gayer, Barry Hartog, Daniel Schumann, and Olivia Stewart Lester. I also want to thank the students at Oxford and Groningen whom I have had the privilege to teach and learn from in the past years and who have contributed in significant ways to my thinking and scholarship.

It is a great honour to publish my first book in the STDJ series and I want to thank George Brooke, the editor, for his critical and supportive feedback. His careful reading and encouragement have been most significant. Chapters one and five are new, while chapters two through four are revised chapters of my doctoral dissertation. These chapters have greatly benefitted from the critical reading and feedback by the members of my PhD committee, Charlotte Hempel, Annette Steudel, and Pierre Van Hecke. I want to thank them for their diligence and generosity. I also want to thank the anonymous readers

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Finally, I want to thank my family and friends for their patience and support throughout the years in which I have worked on this book. Their presence in my life has made the completion of this work possible and joyful. Most of all I want to thank my parents for their continuous support and their wisdom. This book is dedicated to them.

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
DCH	<i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i> . Edited by D. J. A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993–2004.
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
DSSSE	Garcia Martínez, Florentino, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar. <i>The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition</i> . 2 vols. Leiden: Brill; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.
EDSS	<i>Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls</i> . Edited by L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam. 2 vols. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000.
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999.
HAWTTM	<i>Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch zu den Texten vom Toten Meer einschließlich der Manuskripte aus der Kairoer Geniza</i> . Edited by R. G. Kratz, A. Steudel, and I. Kottsieper. 2 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017–
HeBAI	<i>Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
JAJ	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism—Supplements
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
Jouön-Mur	Jouön, P. <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</i> . Translated and Revised by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991.
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
JSJSup	Supplement to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JTC	<i>Journal for Theology and the Church</i>

<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
OTS	Old Testament Studies
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
SBM	Stuttgarter biblische Monographien
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
<i>ThWAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> . Edited by G. J. Botterwerk and H. Ringren. 9 vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1970–2000.
<i>ThWQ</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zu den Qumrantexten</i> . Edited by H.-J. Fabry and U. Dahmen. 3 vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2011–2016.
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAC</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum/Journal of Ancient Christianity</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>