

Hosea Commentary

Pesher Hoshe`a



4Q166 (4QpHosa)

Parchment

Copied late first century B.C.E.

Height 17.5 cm (6 7/8 in.), length 16.8 cm (6 5/8 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (6)

This text is a commentary, or "pesher," on the prophetic biblical verses from the book of Hosea (2:8-14). The verse presented here refers to the relation of God, the husband, to Israel, the unfaithful wife. In the commentary, the unfaithful ones have been led astray by "the man of the lie." The document states that the affliction befalling those led astray is famine. Although this famine could be a metaphor, it may well be a reference to an actual drought cited in historical sources of that time.

The manuscript shown here is the larger of two unrelated fragments of the Hosea Commentary found in Cave 4. The script, which is identical to that of a commentary on Psalms, belongs to the rustic, semiformal type of the Herodian era.

The Hosea Commentary Scroll was first published by J. Allegro as the fifth volume of the official publication series, "Discoveries in the Judaean Desert."

In 1979, M. Horgan completed a work on all the "pesharim," or commentaries, which included an extensive treatment of the Hosea Commentary fragments. The "pesharim" interpreted the biblical text in light of events of the late Second Temple Period--seeing within the text prophesies and messages relevant to the community's beliefs and practices.

References

John Marco Allegro **Qumran Cave 4. DJD V** (Oxford, 1968) Printed book.

General Collections, Library of Congress

Maurya Horgan **Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books**

(Washington, D.C., 1979) Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress

English Translation of Hosea Commentary (Pesher Hoshe`a)

1. (10)[SHE DID NOT KNOW THAT] I MYSELF HAD GIVEN HER THE GRAIN [AND THE WINE]
2. [AND THE OIL, AND] (THAT) I HAD SUPPLIED [SILVER] AND GOLD ... (WHICH) THEY MADE [INTO BAAL. The interpretation of it is]
3. that [they] ate [and] were satisfied, and they forgot God who [had fed them, and all]
4. his commandments they cast behind them, which he had sent to them [by]
5. his servants the prophets. But to those who led them astray they listened, and they honored them []
6. and as if they were gods, they fear them in their blindness.
7. vacat
8. (11)THEREFORE, I SHALL TAKE BACK MY GRAIN AGAIN IN ITS TIME AND MY WINE [IN ITS SEASON,]
9. AND I SHALL WITHDRAW MY WOOL AND MY FLAX FROM COVERING [HER NAKEDNESS.]
10. (12)I SHALL NOW UNCOVER HER PRIVATE PARTS IN THE SIGHT OF [HER] LO[VERS AND]
11. NO [ONE] WILL WITHDRAW HER FROM MY HAND.
12. The interpretation of it is that he smote them with famine and with nakedness so that they became a disgra[ce]
13. and a reproach in the sight of the nations on whom they had leaned for support, but they
14. will not save them from their afflictions. (13)AND I SHALL PUT AN END TO ALL HER JOY,
15. [HER] PIL[GRIMAGE,] HER [NEW] MOON, AND HER SABBATH, AND ALL HER FEASTS. The interpretation of it is that
16. they make [the fe]asts go according to the appointed times of the nation. And [all]
17. [joy] has been turned for them into mourning. (14)AND I SHALL MAKE DESOLATE [HER VINE]
18. [AND HER FIG TREE,] OF WHICH SHE SAID, "THEY ARE THE HIRE [THAT MY LOVERS HAVE GIVEN] ME."
19. AND I SHALL MAKE THEM A FOREST, AND THE W[ILD BEAST OF THE FIELD] WILL DEVOUR THEM.

Transcription and translation by M. Horgan

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