

Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Shirot `Olat ha-Shabbat



4Q403(ShirShabbd)

Parchment

Copied mid-first century B.C.E.

Height 18 cm (7 in.), length 19 cm (7 1/2 in.)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (9)

The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, also known as the "Angelic Liturgy," is a liturgical work composed of thirteen separate sections, one for each of the first thirteen Sabbaths of the year. The songs evoke angelic praise and elaborate on angelic priesthood, the heavenly temple, and the Sabbath worship in that temple.

The headings of the various songs may reflect the solar calendar. Although the songs bear no explicit indication of their source, the phraseology and terminology of the texts are very similar to those of other Qumran works.

Eight manuscripts of this work were found in Qumran Cave 4 (4Q400 through 407) and one in Cave 11, dating from the late Hasmonean and Herodian periods. One manuscript of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice was found at Masada, a Zealot fortress.

References

Newsom, Carol. *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition*. Atlanta, 1985.

This is the definitive translation and analysis of these distinctive hymns.

Strugnell, J. "The Angelic Liturgy at Qumran--4QSerek Shirot `Olat Hassabbat." In *Congress Volume*, Oxford 1959. *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, vol. 7, pp. 318-45. Leiden, 1960.

English Translation of Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (Shirot `Olat ha-Shabbat)

4Q403(ShirShabbd)

Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (9)

30. By the instructor. Song of the sacrifice of the seventh Sabbath on the sixteenth of the month. Praise the God of the lofty heights, O you lofty ones among all the
31. elim of knowledge. Let the holiest of the godlike ones

sanctify the King of glory who sanctifies by holiness
all His holy ones. O you chiefs of the praises of

32. all the godlike beings, praise the splendidly
[praiseworthy God. For in the splendor of praise
is the glory of His realm. From it (comes) the praises
of all
33. the godlike ones together with the splendor of all [His]
maj[esty. And] exalt his exaltedness to exalted heaven,
you most godlike ones of the lofty elim,
and (exalt) His glorious divinity above
34. all the lofty heights. For H[e is God of gods] of all
the chiefs of the heights of heaven and King
of ki[ngs] of all the eternal councils.
(by the intention of)
35. (His knowledge) At the words of His mouth come into
being [all the lofty angels]; at the utterance
of His lips all the eternal spirits; [by the intention
of His knowledge all His creatures
36. in their undertakings. Sing with joy, you who rejoice
[in His knowledge with] rejoicing among the wondrous
godlike beings. And chant His glory with the
tongue of all who chant with knowledge;
and (chant) His wonderful songs of joy
37. with the mouth of all who chant [of Him. For He is]
God of all who rejoice {in knowledge}
forever and Judge in His power of all the
spirits of understanding.

Transcription and translation by C. Newsom

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