

## *A Preliminary Edition of 4QPs<sup>j</sup> (4Q91)*

PETER FLINT  
TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

EUGENE ULRICH  
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

PATRICK W. SKEHAN†

*This article presents an overview of the forty Psalms scrolls or manuscripts incorporating Psalms that were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, followed by a preliminary edition of 4QPs<sup>j</sup>. The edition includes a description and transcription of this interesting manuscript, as well as notes and a full list of variant readings.*

*Key Words: Psalms, Dead Sea Scrolls, Qumran, manuscripts, canon, Hebrew text, Bible*

Almost 900 manuscripts have been discovered in the Judean Desert. Among these the Book of Psalms is represented more frequently than any other work, which clearly shows the importance of the Psalter for the Qumran community and for early Judaism. The Dead Sea Scrolls include forty Psalms scrolls or manuscripts that incorporate Psalms. Thirty-seven of these were found in eight locations at Qumran, and three more were discovered further south (two at Masada and one at Nahal Hever):

### INVENTORY OF THE DEAD SEA PSALMS SCROLLS

#### Psalms Scrolls Found at Qumran

Three Scrolls from Cave 1:	1Q10 (1QPs <sup>a</sup> ) <sup>1</sup>	1Q11 (1QPs <sup>b</sup> )	1Q12 (1QPs <sup>c</sup> )	
One Scroll from Cave 2:	2Q14 (2QPs)			
One Scroll from Cave 3:	3Q2 (3QPs)			
Twenty-two from Cave 4:	4Q83 (4QPs <sup>a</sup> )	4Q84 (4QPs <sup>b</sup> )	4Q85 (4QPs <sup>c</sup> )	4Q86 (4QPs <sup>d</sup> )
	4Q87 (4QPs <sup>e</sup> )	4Q88 (4QPs <sup>f</sup> )	4Q89 (4QPs <sup>g</sup> )	4Q90 (4QPs <sup>h</sup> )
	4Q91 (4QPs <sup>j</sup> )	4Q92 (4QPs <sup>k</sup> )	4Q93 (4QPs <sup>l</sup> )	4Q94 (4QPs <sup>m</sup> )
	4Q95 (4QPs <sup>n</sup> )	4Q96 (4QPs <sup>o</sup> )	4Q97 (4QPs <sup>p</sup> )	4Q98 (4QPs <sup>q</sup> )

1. A Dead Sea Scroll is listed in two ways: by its (arbitrary) number in a Cave (e.g., 1Q10 = the tenth manuscript from Cave 1 at Qumran), or according to a book or document (e.g., 1QPs<sup>a</sup> = the first Psalms manuscript from Cave 1).

	4Q98a (4QPs <sup>r</sup> ) 4Q98b (4QPs <sup>s</sup> ) 4Q98c (4QPs <sup>t</sup> ) 4Q98d (4QPs <sup>u</sup> ) 4Q98e (4QPs <sup>v</sup> ) 4Q236 (4QPs <sup>w</sup> ) 4Q522 (4QProphecy on Joshua) <sup>2</sup>
One Scroll from Cave 5:	5Q5 (5QPs)
One Scroll from Cave 6:	pap6Q5 (pap6QPs)
One Scroll from Cave 8:	8Q2 (8QPs)
Six Scrolls from Cave 11:	11Q5 (11QPs <sup>a</sup> ) 11Q6 (11QPs <sup>b</sup> ) 11Q7 (11QPs <sup>c</sup> ) 11Q8 (11QPs <sup>d</sup> ) 11Q9 (11QPs <sup>e</sup> ) 11Q11 (11QPsAp <sup>a</sup> )

### Psalms Scrolls from Other Locations

Two Scrolls from Masada:	MasPs <sup>a</sup> (M1039-160) MasPs <sup>b</sup> (M1103-1742)
One Scroll from Nahal tleiver :	5/6Hev—Se4 Ps

## DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF 4QPs<sup>j</sup>

In this article the text of 4QPs<sup>j</sup> is made available for the first time to scholarship and to students of the Bible. It is of special interest because it is one of only two Dead Sea Scrolls (the other being 4QPs<sup>c</sup>) to preserve the oldest portions of Psalms 48, 49, and 51.<sup>3</sup> For those interested in the text of Scripture, in this case the Psalms, a document: such as this is a priceless gift from the past that has been found in the Judean Desert. Nine fragments survive, of which one is unplaced; the identified contents are: Ps 48:1-3, 5, 7, 9; 49:9-12, 15, 17; and 51:3-5.

The leather of the manuscript is very thin, and ivory or white in color, with traces of light gray. Both the recto (writing side) and the verso (other side) are smooth, and the writing surface has been well prepared. The appearance is so much like that of modern paper that a small piece of paper with a trace of blue ink had been placed on Inv. 1151<sup>4</sup> with the other fragments (cf. PAM 43.030<sup>5</sup>); this was removed on the editors' instructions in the summer of 1996. The fragments have deteriorated considerably, and some are now quite calcified and abraded. Holes from stitching appear down the right side of frg. 1 and vertical dry-point lines are faintly detectable, but no horizontal rulings are discernible.

It is possible—but not assured—that the letters on frg. 9 belong to the final column of the scroll (see note to frg. 9). Frg. 1 is the largest

2. 4Q522 is not a Psalms scroll as such but features in this listing because it includes Psalm 122.

3. For previous discussion of this scroll, see P. W. Skehan, "Littérature de Qumran: A. Textes bibliques," *DBSup* (1973-81) 9/10.806-22, esp. 814-16; and P. W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and The Book of Psalms* (STDJ 17; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 35.

4. That is to say, the inventory number in the Rockefeller Museum where the scroll is housed.

5. That is, the photograph number in the "Palestine Archaeological Museum" (the earlier name for the Rockefeller Museum).

surviving piece, measuring 5.7 cm vertically and 2.9 cm horizontally, and preserving portions of six lines. The distance between the tops of letters in successive lines measures 9-10 mm, and the number of letter-spaces per line is between 42 (frg. 1, line 3) and 56 (frg. 1, line 2). A right margin is preserved on the same piece (measuring 1.6-1.8 cm), and left margins on frgs. 8 and 9.

#### FORMAT, TEXTUAL CHARACTER, DATE, OTHER FEATURES

4QPs<sup>j</sup> is written in prose format, which will be of interest to scholars concerned with the format (i.e., prose versus stichometry) of ancient biblical manuscripts. While very few variant readings are evident against the Masoretic Text (MT) or other scrolls, an accurate textual assessment cannot be reached because so few words are actually preserved on the fragments. As can be surmised from the chart below, the orthography<sup>6</sup> is clearly full, with consistent use of *waw* as a vowel letter. One morphological feature on the unplaced frg. 9 is the apparent כֹּה־ suffix, which has accordingly been adopted in the reconstructed portions of the transcription. On the basis of paleographic analysis, Patrick Skehan assigned a date of ca. 50 CE to this manuscript, which makes it roughly contemporaneous with 1QPs<sup>b</sup>, 3QPs, 4QPs<sup>c</sup>, 4QPs<sup>e</sup>, 4QPs<sup>g</sup>, 4QPs<sup>q</sup>, 4QPs<sup>s</sup>, 4QPs<sup>t</sup>, 5QPs, 8QPs, 11QPs<sup>a</sup>, 11QPs<sup>b</sup>, 11QPs<sup>e</sup>, 11QPs<sup>d</sup>, 11QPsAp<sup>a</sup>, 5/6Hev–Se4 Ps, and MasPs<sup>a</sup>.

Orthography Chart					
Frg.	Line	Psalm	4QPs <sup>j</sup>	4QPs <sup>c</sup>	MT
1	2	48:2	אלוהינו		אלהינו
3-7	2	49:11	ינאבדו.	יאבדו	יאבדו
3-7	3	49:12	משכנותרם	משכנתם	משכנותם

Traces of ink belonging to other layers of 4QPs<sup>j</sup> are clearly visible on some pieces, especially frg. 1. In an attempt to identify this writing, the remains of this scroll were taken in 1996 on behalf of the IAA<sup>7</sup> to Germany, where the backs of frgs. 1-2 were photographed in both regular format and reverse image. Despite these efforts, the editors have so far been unable to identify the passages represented by the writing on the backs of the fragments involved (but see notes to frgs. 1-2).

6. That is, the spelling.

7. That is, the Israel Antiquities Authority.

## A NOTE ON SIGLA AND INVENTORY DETAILS

First, in the transcriptions that follow,  $\aleph$   $\aleph$   $\aleph$  denote a certain letter, a probable letter, and a possible letter, respectively. The midline circlet  $^{\circ}$  denotes remnants of a letter that cannot be identified. Second, it is important for scholars who have access to the Dead Sea Scrolls to know the Inventory Numbers of the manuscripts they are working on. 4QPs<sup>1</sup> is found on Museum Inventory number 1151 in the Rockefeller Museum. Most scholars, however, would study this manuscript by consulting photographs of the fragments, which appear on: IAA 565.896, 565.892 (reverse image); PAM 43.030; 40.588, 42.028, 42.719.<sup>8</sup>

TRANSCRIPTION, NOTES AND VARIANT READINGS<sup>9</sup>

Frg. 1, Psalm 48:1-9

שיר מזמור לבני קורח גדול יהוה ומהולל מאוד בעיר	1
אלוהינו נ הר קדשו יפה נוף משוש כול הארץ הר ציון ירכתי צפון	2
קרן את מנלך רב אלוהים בארמנותיה נודע למשגב כין	3
הנה מלכנים נועדו עברו יחדו המה ראו כן תמהו נבהלו נחפזו	4
רעדה אןחזתם שם חיל כיולדה ברוח קדים תשבר אניות תרשיש	5
כאשר שמענו כן ראינו בעיר יהוה צבאות בעיר אלוהינו אלוהים	6

## General Comment

This is the largest fragment, and the right margin is preserved. Several letters from a different layer of the manuscript appear on the verso; some of these have seeped through to the recto (especially in the intercolumnar space to the right of lines 1 and 3, adjoining שיר and קרן, respectively). Unfortunately, examination of the leather, of the main photograph PAM 43.030, and of the special photographs taken more recently (see introduction) has not so far yielded a firm identification of the passage represented by the writing on the verso. Possible letters include final *mem*, *lamed*, and *he* (line 3), *bet* (4), and *reš* (6).

## Notes

L. 4 (48:5) מלכי הארץ. A longer reading (מלכי הארץ) is witnessed by P<sup>mss</sup> La<sup>mss</sup>, but spacing seems to favor the shorter text found in M P.

8. Scholars usually consult more than one photograph, since in many cases only some of the fragments from a particular manuscript are found on each.

9. In the edition that follows, a *variant reading* denotes any word or combination of words that disagree with the Masoretic Text (M) or with another Psalms scroll. The Septuagint (P) is usually—and the Old Latin sometimes—included in the collations of variants but plays no role in the actual determination of these.

L. 6 (48:9) כְּעִשְׂרֵי [ר]. The transcription is based here on PAM 43.030; all but the first ink trace has since been dislodged on IAA 567.896. Reconstruction suggests that the line began with either תרשיש or כשר. The first two ink marks are more likely from *kap* and *'alep* than from *taw* and *reš*. The third and fourth ink marks (the latter barely visible) are consistent with *šin*.

Variant

48:5 (4) [מלכי ארץ] P<sup>mss</sup> La<sup>mss</sup> (=מלכי ארץ; cf. 2:2 and 72[71]:11)  
 המלכים M P

*Frg. 2, Psalm 49:6(?)*

למה אין רא בינמי רע 1

General Comment

Identification of this tiny fragment is difficult. The combination א בי is found only at Psalms 5:8 (אבוא ביתך), 49:6 (אירא בימי), 55:6 (בי אבוא ביתך), 66:13 (אבוא ביתך) and 118:3 (נא בית). The sequence א בת occurs at 24:5 (ישא ברכה), 50:16 (אבוא ביתך), 49:6 (אירא בימי), 55:6 (בי אבוא ביתך), 66:13 (אבוא ביתך), and 118:3 (נא בית). The sequence א בר occurs at 24:5 (ישא ברכה), 50:16 (ותשא בריתי), 89:48 (שוא בראת), and 126:6 (ברנה יבוא), while the (less likely) combination א בו is not found in Psalms (at least in the MT-150 Psalter). The first extant letter cannot be *waw* or *šin/šin*, and the absence of ink to the bottom right of the following *'alep* indicates that it was not *nun* or *bet* (On *bet*, note that the bottom leg of *bet* in this MS is not particularly low. In any case, the fuller orthography of 4QPs<sup>j</sup> requires a reading of אבוא בי for 55:6). Thus the fragment most likely belongs to Ps 49:6, with the first letter read as *reš* in view of the preserved upward tic (cf. שיר in frg. 1, line 1, רעדה frg. 1, line 5, and ובער frg. 5, line 2).

Frgs. 3-7, Psalm 49:9-12, 15, 17

[ויקר פדיון נפשם וחלו <sup>9</sup> ל [ לעולם <sup>10</sup> ויחי ] עוד לנצח לוא	1 f. 3-5
יראה השחת]	
[ <sup>11</sup> כי ירא <sup>11</sup> חכמן <sup>11</sup> ים ימותו <sup>11</sup> יחד כס <sup>11</sup> יל ובער יונאבדו ועזבו לאחרים]	2
[חילים <sup>12</sup> קרבם בתימו לעולם <sup>12</sup> משכנותם ] לנדור ודור קראו	3
בשמותם עלין	
[אדמות <sup>13</sup> ואדם ביקר כל ילין נמשל כבהמות נדמו <sup>14</sup> זה דרכם כסל]	4
[למו ואחריהם בפיהם ירצו סלה <sup>15</sup> כצאון לשאון לשאל שתו מות ירעם]	5
[ויירדו במ ישרים לבוקר וצורם] לבלות [שאול מזבול לו <sup>16</sup> אך]	6 f. 6
[אלוהים יפדה נפשי מיד שאול כי יקחני סלה <sup>17</sup> אל תירא כי יעשר]	7
איש כיו [ ירבה כבוד ביתו <sup>18</sup> כי לוא במותו יקח הכול לוא ירד אחריו]	8 f. 7

## General Comment

No margins are preserved for this column. The 8.5 mm of blank leather at the bottom of frg. 6 does not indicate a bottom margin since for this manuscript the distance between the tops of letters in successive lines measures 9-10 mm. Fragment 3 is placed near the right margin of the column since its text extends at least 25 letter-spaces on frgs. 4-5 (line 2).

## Notes

L. 1 (49:9) [פ] וְיִוֵן. The bottom of the final *nun* has partly chipped off the leather.

L. 1 (49:9) נִפְשָׁם. The *sin* and *mem* are on separate fragments, which raises the question of whether the placement is secure. A computerized search of the book of Psalms (M) shows that נִפְשָׁ־ is preceded by וְיִוֵן only at Ps 49:9 (פַּדְיִוֵן), thus lending support to this placement.

L. 1 (49:9) ] וְהָלוֹׁ. Following *lamed* is a clear vertical stroke from *waw* or possibly *yod*, plus an apparent diagonal stroke that probably belonged to another letter. A computerized search shows that this word belongs here, despite the lack of *dalet* (cf. וְהָדַל M; see variant). The only occurrence of יְהַל־ preceded by a final *mem* is at Ps 5:10 (לְשׁוֹנֵם יְהַל יְקוֹן); however, the other words on this fragment are not found in the vicinity of 5:10.

L. 2 (49:11) חֲכָׁׁם. A trace of the *yod* is barely visible on the photograph.

L. 2 (49:11) יְמוֹתָׁ. The *mem* looks very much like a *kap* (cf. מְשַׁכְּנוֹן תָּם in line 3), but a trace of the diagonal descender is just visible to the bottom right of the *waw*.

L. 3 (49:12) בְּתִימוֹׁ. *Taw*'s characteristic leftward curve is visible at the bottom of the left descender.

L. 3 (49:12) [ ] מְשַׁכְּנוֹן תָּם. A trace of the *mem* is discernible to the upper right of *sin*.

L. 6 (49:15) לַ בְּלוֹת. Placement of the fragment is not easy, owing to the similarity of *bet* and *kap* in this hand (for *bet*, cf. בִּימֵי in frg. 2, line 1 and וּבַעַר in 3-7, line 2. For *kap*, see מְשַׁכְּנוֹן תָּם in frgs. 3-7, line 3 and כִּי in 3-7, line 8). However, the sharp angle of the right foot and the straight horizontal bar correspond to *bet* rather than to the more rounded *kap* in the given examples. This locates the fragment at 49:15, the only verse where the combination בְּלוֹת is found in the Psalter (כָּל לוֹת also occurs only once, in כָּבַל לוֹת at 71:9). Since for this MS the distance between the tops of letters in successive lines measures 9-10 mm, the blank leather below the script is by no means indicative of a bottom margin.

L. 8 (49:17) ] אִישׁ כִּי. Of the five letters preserved on frg. 7, *sin* (or *sin*) and *kap* are easy to identify, and the second letter is most

likely *waw* or *yod* (כּ שׁשׁ does not occur in the Psalms [M]). The combination כּוּשׁ is found at Ps 48:3 (משׁושׁ כל), and כּוּשׁ at 19:6 (ישׁוּשׁ כּוּשׁ). The sequence כּוּשׁ occurs at 8:5 (אנוּשׁ כּוּשׁ), 25:20 (אבוּשׁ כּוּשׁ), 55:14 (כלבוּשׁ כּוּשׁ), 56:2 (אנוּשׁ כל), 103:15 (אנוּשׁ כחציר), and 104:6 (כלבוּשׁ כּוּשׁ), while כּוּשׁ is at 49:17 on (אישׁ כּוּשׁ) and 62:13 (לְאִישׁ כַּמְעַשְׂהוּ). Because the letter following *kap* cannot be *lamed*, *mem*, *samek*, or <sup>c</sup>*ayin*, 48:3, 55:14, 56:2, 62:13, and 104:6 are eliminated as possibilities. Since the other extant pieces from the manuscript contain text from Psalms 48-51, the placement at 49:17 is thus plausible but not assured; the other possibilities are 8:5, 19:6, 25:20, and 103:15.

## Variant

49:9 (1) ] ןוּחלוּ ן [ 4QPs<sup>c</sup> (וּחְדַּל) M; αἰ ἐκόπασεν [v 10] P = M?

Frg. 8, Psalm 51:2-5

1 ] לַמְנַצָּח מִזְמוֹר לְדוֹד בְּבוֹא אֱלֹהֵי נֹתַן הַנְּבִיא כְּאֲשֶׁר בָּא אֵל [בְּתָ	1
2 ] שְׁבַע חֲנָנִי אֱלֹהִים כַּחֲסֹדְכָה כְּרֹב רַחֲמִיכָה [ מִחֶה ] פְּשַׁעִי הַרְבֵּה	2
3 ] כְּבִסְנִי מֵעוֹנִי וּמַחֲטָאֵתִי טַהַרְנִי כִּי פִשְׁעֵי אֲנִי אֲדַע [ וַחֲטָאֹתַי נִגְדִּי	3
4 ] תַּמִּיד לֵכָה לְבַדְכָה חֲטָאֵתִי וְהִרַע בְּעֵינַיִכָה עֲשִׂיתִי לִּי [ מַעַן ] תִּצְדֹּק	4

## General Comment

The surface of this fragment is badly flaked and cracked. Three dots of ink, which may have been intentional because they seem to be regular, appear in the blank leather between lines 3 and 4. The left margin is preserved, which assists in the placement of the identifiable letters.

## Notes

L. 2 (51:3) פְּשַׁעִי. There is a gap between *šin* and <sup>c</sup>*ayin*. Perhaps this was distortion in the leather, or the gap may have possibly held a *waw* as a mater indicating the plural form (cf. 4QDeut<sup>c</sup> and 4QIsa<sup>c</sup>).

L. 4 (51:6) תִּצְדֹּק. This word is identified by the apparent tops of *taw* and *sade*.

## Variant

51:4 (1) הרבה *Hip<sup>c</sup>il* imper. form 4QPs<sup>c</sup> M ] הרב apocopated form

M<sup>q mss.</sup>; ἐπὶ πλεῖον P

Frg. 9, Unidentified

ה° [	]	1
כה [	]	2

## General Comment

The left margin of this fragment is preserved, but the blank leather below line 2 does not indicate a bottom margin since the ends of lines are involved. It appears that these few letters belong to the final column of the scroll; however, this is not assured in view of the wide left margin also to be found on fig. 8.

## Note

L. 2 (51:3) כה[ ]. For the shape of *kap*, see מִשְׁכַּנְוֹתָם (frgs. 3-7, line 3).