

BALEV TAHOR: THE BLESSINGS OF THE WISE

From the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q525:1.1-2,2.1-12)

One of the most striking of the original materials among the scrolls found at Qumran is this fragment found in Cave 4. The Jewish antecedents forming the background of such Christian literature as the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5:3-10) are clear. This is classic Wisdom literature, echoing Proverbs 1:1-6, and other Dead Sea Scrolls texts such as "The Book of Secrets" and "The Secret of the Way Things Are."¹ Although the Hebrew text uses the masculine gender, reflecting the composition of this segment of the Essenes at Qumran, we understand the mystical message to be universal.

Sons of mine, be attentive now,
for I shall teach about her,
the Wisdom which God granted me,
Wisdom and Understanding He instilled
within me
to teach to all the Sons of Truth.

Bless the walker with the heart immaculate,
whose tongue knows no foul word.

Bless those who adhere to her laws,
clinging not to evil ways.

Bless those who celebrate over her,
and are not overcome with foolishness.

Bless those who seek her with pure hands,
and never with a heart dishonest.

Bless him who embraces Wisdom
and lives by the Torah of God Most High,
who conforms his mind to her path,
who conforms his actions to her discipline,
who welcomes her reproof.



Queen of Qumran, by Victoria Franck Wetsch, S.R.C.

He will not spurn her in moments of pain,
he will not forget her when trouble comes,
not even when terror strikes.

In the humility of his being,
he will not evade her influence,
but make her his constant meditation.

Even during days of danger,
he is busy performing the commandments,
and all his life he bears her in mind
and sets her up before his eyes--
never to walk in evil ways!

Singular, unified his heart!
He will take his seat with kings.

Know this, my sons, and never wander
from this way.²

Endnotes:

¹ See Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr. and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005), 423.

² "Balev Tahor" Translation © 2007 by Shawn Eyer.