

# Interpretation of Scriptural Texts<sup>1</sup> in 11QMelchizedek and Its Theological Implications

ANDRZEJ PAWEŁ CEKIERA

The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

cekieraa@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-5770-4602

**ABSTRACT:** Drawing on a partially reconstructed column II, the paper intends to offer a deepened analysis of the scriptural sources used by the author of 11Q13. The manuscript belongs to pesharic creations of the Qumran community and brings to light their deep theological perspective on some important ideas, such as eschatological times, final judgement, dualism and determinism. They were diffused among the members of yahad – a group united under the guidance of the Teacher of Righteousness. The pesharic method of interpretation is indispensable to understand the aforementioned concepts. It also exposes the importance of the figure of Melchizedek, who, despite the fact that his identity as an eschatological figure remains enigmatic, is perceived as the one who executes justice on behalf of the sectarian community.

**KEYWORDS:** 11QMelch (11Q13), Melchizedek, Qumran, peshar

## Introduction

The manuscript 11Q13 (= 11QMelchizedek) is a text probably composed by the Qumran community in accordance with the principles of thematic peshar used by that community. Ten fragments extracted from cave 11 have survived (with *editio princeps* containing nine)<sup>2</sup>, which allowed for deciphering about 55–60% of the text, and together with reconstructions of biblical quotes, about 65% of the second column.<sup>3</sup> Palaeographic dating points to the creation of the manuscript in the Late Hasmonean or Early Herodian Period (50–25 BC).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The terms “Old Testament,” “Bible,” “books of the Bible” in reference to the Pentateuch, the prophets or the psalms are all an anachronism at the time of the Qumran community (2nd century BC – AD 68), since at that time there was still no closed set of canonical books known to us under the term of Hebrew Bible. Furthermore, the Qumran community considered books that did not enter the Hebrew canon, such as 1 Enoch or the Book of Jubilees, as authoritative texts. For this reason, we usually refer to biblical/canonical texts in the article using the adjective “scriptural,” which is derived from the canonically less biased Latin phrase “*Sacra Scriptura*.”

<sup>2</sup> M. De Jonge, A.S. van der Woude, “11Q Melchizedek and the New Testament”, *NTS* 12/4 (1966) 301–326.

<sup>3</sup> F. García Martínez – C.J.E. Tigchelaar – A.S. van der Woude, *Qumran Cave 11/II, 11Q2-18; 11Q20-31* (DJD 23; Oxford: Clarendon 1998) 221–41. The residual fragments of columns I and III do not contain any continuous text that could be subjected to interpretation.

<sup>4</sup> García Martínez – Tigchelaar – van der Woude, *Qumran Cave 11/II, 223*; É. Puech, “Notes sur le manuscrit de XIQMelkisédeq”, *RevQ* 12/48 (1987) 507–508.

It seems that the best-preserved second column of 11Q13 is part of a larger description of the global vision of history (allusion to 10 jubilees in 11Q13 II, 7). The text of a column is usually divided into three parts,<sup>5</sup> each of which contains quotes and interpretations of scriptural texts.<sup>6</sup> Transition from quotation to interpretation is marked by the technical term *pšrw*, which occurs four times, but given the fact that the last part of the second column was considerably damaged, only the first three occurrences are generally taken into account. The first part (II, 2-9) invokes the provisions of the Law concerning the jubilee year and the sabbath year in the context of the end of times and the appearance of Melchizedek's figure.<sup>7</sup> It is based on two pivotal legal texts stemming from the priestly and Deuteronomic traditions (Lev 25:13 and Deut 15:25). The second part (II, 10-14) refers to the final judgment to be administered by Melchizedek, which will be a time of deliverance for the "children of the light". Here one can find a special reference to Psalms 82 and 7, but their original biblical contexts differ from the Qumran understanding as well. In the third part (II, 15-25), a new figure of the "anointed one" (II, 18) appears, who announces the triumph of Melchizedek and his enthronement, and the coming of an era of peace and salvation in the last, tenth jubilee. In this case, the basic text is the prophetic verse of Is 52:7, which appears twice in lines 16 and 23.

Manzi presents his own suggestions connected with the division of the pesher, including the first and the third column.<sup>8</sup> Three parts are distinguished by him too, although the lines are divided slightly differently: I, 12-II, 7 - the "anthropological dimension"; II, 8-15 - "the angelic-divine dimension"; II, 16-III, 18 - "messianic dimension". This division is based on the semantic analysis of the terminology and on the hypothesis supported by Manzi, describing the figure of Melchizedek as a hypostasis of YHWH.

5 M. Flowers, "The two Messiahs and Melchizedek in 11QBerrin", *JAJ* 7 (2016) 194; C. Gianotto, *Melchizedek e la sua tipologia: Tradizioni giudaiche, cristiane e gnostiche (sec. II a. C. - sec. III d. C.)* (SRivBib 12; Brescia: Paideia 1984) 68.

6 E.F. Mason, *You Are a Priest Forever. Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (ed. F. Garcia Martinez) (StTDJ 74; Leiden, Brill 2008) 176-177.

7 The name of the main protagonist of the pesher appears five times in column II, four of the attested cases being certain (II, 5, 8, 9, 13) and one problematic (the second time in line 5). Usually, it is a part of compound phrases ("Melchizedek's inheritance", "Melchizedek's lot", "Melchizedek year of favor"). Only once does the name constitute the subject of action: "Melchizedek will carry out the vengeance of God's judgements" (II,13), except for the conjecture of l. 25: "Melchizedek, who will free them".

8 F. Manzi, *Melchizedek e l'angelologia nell'Epistola agli Ebrei e a Qumran* (AB 136; Roma: PIB 1997) 63-96.

Table 1.1. Scriptural texts in 11QMelchizedek

I.	11Q13 II, 2-9	1. 1. 2: Lev 25:13 2. 1. 3: Deut 15:2 3. 1. 7: Lev 25:9 4. 1. 9: Isa 61:2
II.	11Q13 II, 10-14	5. 1. 10: Ps 82:1 6. 1. 11: Ps 7:8-9a and Ps 82:2
III.	11Q13 II, 15-25	7. II. 15–16 (+ 17–19): Isa 52:7 8. 1. 20: Isa 61:2 9. 1. 23: Isa 52:7 10. 1. 25: Lev 25:9

This pesher came to being as the result of theological search and dynamic experiencing of the temporal reality, strongly marked by evil and sin, and of the hope of the eschatological end of times as the end of iniquity. The figure of Melchizedek occupies an important place in pesher, but because of the fragmentary nature of the manuscript, its interpretation is not devoid of difficulties. This work has already been the subject of interest for many researchers<sup>9</sup>. Some of them focused on issues of the literary genre, others tried to reconstruct the text, especially for the purposes of explaining Melchizedek’s identity. However, the analysis of individual biblical texts cited by the author of 11Q13 has not attracted scholars’ attention. Even the most extensive study of the figure of Melchizedek in Qumran by Kobelski and Manzi does not undertake an in-depth analysis of these texts cited in the pesher. Rather, both authors strive to prove the hypothesis assumed by them. The first author opts for perceiving the main character as an angelic mediator between God and the sons of light. He supports his hypothesis with proposals of far-reaching reconstructions of the text in the places where the manuscript sustained the greatest damage. However, he relies not on *editio princeps*, but on the transcription of the manuscript from the photos made

<sup>9</sup> The question of the literary genre is raised in particular by A. Aschim, “The Genre of 11QMelchizedek”, *Qumran between the Old and New Testaments* (ed. F.H. Cryer – T.L. Thompson) (JSOTSup 290; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1998) 17–31. Attempts at reconstructing the text are proposed by J. Carmignac, “Le document de Qumran sur Melkisedeq”, *RevQ* 27 (1970) 343–378; J. Milik, “Milki-sedeq et Milki-reša’ dans les anciens écrits juifs et chrétiens”, *JJS* 23 (1972) 95–112; É. Puech, “Notes sur le manuscrit de XIQMelkisédeq”, 483–507; In turn, the issues of Melchizedek’s identity are addressed by: A. Cavicchia, “Malky-sedeq, ‘unto’, profeta-araldo, sacerdote e re nel giubileo escatologico (11QMelch II,2-14)”, *Bib* 91/4 (2010) 521; F. Garcia Martínez, “Las tradiciones sobre Melquisedec en los manuscritos de Qumrán”, *Bib* 81/1 (2000) 70–80; J.P. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša* (CBQMS 10, Washington DC: Catholic Association of America 1981); F. Manzi, *Melchizedek e l’angelologia nell’epistola agli Ebrei e a Qumran*; P. Rainbow, “Melchizedek as a Messiah at Qumran”, *BBR* 7 (1997) 179–194; R. van der Water, “Michael or Yhwh? Toward Identifying Melchizedek in 11Q13”, *JSP* 16/1 (2006) 75–86.

available to him directly by the Israeli Department of Antiquities and Museums.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, he mainly describes the dependence of the manuscript on the Old Testament texts about Melchizedek (Gen 14:18-20 and Ps 110:4), but due to the fact that such comparison was insufficient, he also includes other manuscripts found in Qumran (4Q543-548, 4Q280 and 4Q286). Manzi, in his turn, bases his research on the analysis of the structure of the manuscript and literary and semantic issues, expressing the conviction that the main character of the pesher is hypostasis - revelation of the actions of God YHWH Himself.<sup>11</sup>

The aim of the article is therefore to analyse the process of reading scriptural texts integrated into the structure of the pesher in order to learn about the changes made and to show the purposefulness of their application in the context of eschatological expectations contained in 11QMelchizedek. The basis for the analysis is the Hebrew text published in DJD 23,<sup>12</sup> i.e. the text of *editio princeps*, including selected corrections by Milik<sup>13</sup> and Puech<sup>14</sup>.

## 1. Thematic Pesher in Qumran

11Q13 is a classic example of the use of the pesher technique, so characteristic for the sectarian writings of the Qumran community. It is “a form of biblical interpretation [...], where biblical poetic/prophetic texts, with the help of various literary techniques, are applied to post-biblical historical/eschatological conditions in order to specify theological belief regarding God’s reward and punishment”.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of this literary device is to confirm the belief in the fulfilment of biblical predictions at the end of times, which according to the pesharim authors have just come.

Pesher writings constitute therefore just a commentary and update of copied scriptural texts in relation to entire books (continuous peshers) and selected issues (thematic pesharim). This distinction was introduced in 1970 by J. Carmignac, who noticed some differences between the two types.<sup>16</sup> First of all, various scriptural quotations are arbitrarily grouped by the authors of thematic pesharim, creating a peculiar anthology referring to the central issue, followed by

<sup>10</sup> Kobelski, *Melchisedek*, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Manzi, *Melchizedek*, 51.

<sup>12</sup> See footnote 3.

<sup>13</sup> Milik, “Milki-sedeq”, 97–99.

<sup>14</sup> Puech, “Notes”, 483–513.

<sup>15</sup> S.L. Berrin, “Qumran Pescharim”, *Biblical Interpretations at Qumran* (ed. M. Henze) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2005) 110.

<sup>16</sup> Aschim, “The Genre”, 19.

the process of interpreting selected texts. A number of features characteristic of the pesher genre have been distinguished<sup>17</sup>:

1. the scriptural text is the reference point;
2. the scriptural text is not cited in its entirety;
3. cited fragments, short or long (sometimes even whole paragraphs) are well distinguished from interpretation;
4. the order of quotations from scriptural sources follows the order complying with the interpretative intention of the pesher author;
5. there is basically no information on detailed historical data related to the author or the circumstances of the text creation;
6. there is a belief that the described events refer to the times in which the commentator lived or to the future in its eschatological dimension;
7. the full explanation of scriptural texts is supposed to take place thanks to “the Teacher of Righteousness”<sup>18</sup>, who is able to correctly interpret the texts, facing the end of times, which, according to the community of Qumran, is just coming;
8. ambiguous typological reading of the characters discussed, even within one manuscript.

Attention should also be paid to technical elements of the pesher genre, which could be identified by the established order of exegetical work:

1. an introductory formula for a scriptural quotation, usually ואשר אמר “as he said,” most often having YHWH as the subject. Alternatively, (כ)אשר כתוב “as is written” may occur;
2. quotation of a biblical passage;
3. the usage of one of the formulas introducing an explanation, depending on what type of pesher we are dealing with. Most often it is the phrase: ופשרו “and its explanation”;
4. the contents of the interpretation of the cited scriptural text.

17 M. Bockmuehl, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of Biblical Commentary”, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, Jointly Sponsored by the Hebrew University Center for the Study of Christianity, 11–13 January, 2004* (ed. R.A. Clements - D.R. Schwartz) (Leiden: Brill 2009) 17–19.

18 M. Knibb, “Teacher of Righteousness”, *EDSS* II, 920. The title “Teacher of Righteousness” probably refers to the historical figure of the temple high priest of the line of Zadok in the Maccabean era (162-142 BC), who was supposed to have been removed from the ministry in the not entirely clear circumstances of the temple conflict and after his departure from Jerusalem with a group of priests he was supposed to have been the initiator of the Essene movement and the very Qumran community. In the Damascus Document (CD I, 11) he is presented as ordained by God to guide the community in the end days. He was also to be the guardian of revelation and the correct interpretation of the Scriptures, having received from God a profound understanding of the mysteries and words spoken by the prophets. Quite enigmatic, and sometimes even contradictory information about him appears many times in Qumran literature (Pesher to Habakkuk, e.g., 1QpHab I, 13; II, 2.7-10, Pesher to Psalms, e.g. 4Q171 III, 15-17; 4Q173 fig. 2.2; Pesher to Micah, e.g., 1Q14 fig. 8+10,1). This information is often expressed in figurative language, which makes the personage very mysterious.

In its origins, this literary genre refers to the tradition of oral interpretation of dreams and prophecies, as attested, for example, in the Book of Daniel.<sup>19</sup> The term *peshar* itself, derived from the Aramaic root  $\sqrt{ptr}$ , etymologically related to the Akkadian verb *pāšaru*, is translated as “to unfasten”, “to release” and was used specifically to describe the interpretation of dreams.<sup>20</sup> Apart from 11QMelchizedek, the manuscripts 4Q174 (Florilegium) and 4Q177 (Catena A) can be included in the category of thematic *peshars*.<sup>21</sup>

A scriptural text is cited in isolation from the original context of a given book. It is used for interpreting the current events of the community in the perspective of the expected end of times. There even occurs conscious alteration of the copied text, something that would be unthinkable in the work of the Masoretes several centuries later. Therefore, it is an interpretation at the core of the theology of history, with a special emphasis on eschatology. It was believed that the old texts had not revealed their true meaning either to their authors or to previous generations because only a special revelation which was given to the “Teacher of Righteousness” allowed for revealing their true meaning.<sup>22</sup> Thus, two main principles underlay Qumran exegesis: “the author who made the prophecy had future times in his mind, not his own [...], and the commentator assumed that it was he who lived in those later times”.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Scriptural texts in 11QMelchizedek

The manuscript 11Q13 is a thematic *peshar*, so it interprets texts drawn from the Pentateuch, the prophets, and the Scriptures, applying them to the figure of Melchizedek and his eschatological function exercised at the end of times. It cites passages from scriptural texts most commonly found at Qumran, used either for their cultic-liturgical, legal, eschatological or apocalyptic value. These include the Book of Psalms (36 copies), Deuteronomy (29), the Book of Isaiah (21), and Leviticus (13).<sup>24</sup> Howsoever the book of Daniel is cited in 11Q Melchizedek, (II, 18), the contents of the quotation are not preserved in the fragmentary manuscript. The proposed reconstructions of the contents of the quotation remain in the realm of undocumented probability.

19 G. Brooke, “Peshar”, *Dictionary of Biblical Hermeneutics* (ed. R.J. Coggins - J.L. Houlden) (Warsaw: Vocatio) 664; The book of Daniel is chronologically close to the time of the foundation of the Qumran community, so this convergence should come as no surprise.

20 S.L. Berrin, “Pesharim”, *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. L.H. Schiffman - J.C. VanderKam) (Oxford: Clarendon 2000) I, 644.

21 Berrin, “Pesharim”, *EDSS* I, 646.

22 J. Maier, *Il Giudaismo del Secondo Tempio* (Brescia: Paideia 1991) 169.

23 VanderKam, *Manuscripts*, 54.

24 See J.C. VanderKam, *Manuskrypty znad Morza Martwego* (Warszawa: Cyklady 1996) 39–76.

The analysis of individual parts of the pesher and the scriptural quotations contained therein is conducted in the order in which they appear in the well-preserved second column of the text.<sup>25</sup> Columns one and three and fragments 5–11 are too fragmentary for interpretation. The pesher of 11QMelchizedek contains 9 texts sourced from the Book of Deuteronomy (1 quotation), Leviticus (2 quotations and 1 - borrowed lexemes), from Deutero- (2 quotations), and Trito-Isaiah (2 quotations), the Book of Psalms (2 quotations). The scriptural texts which are reconstructed in the missing parts of individual lines are not considered in this article.

In the first part of the pesher (II, 2-9), the author refers mainly to priestly legislation as he intends to introduce the theme of the jubilee year. While reinterpreting Lev 25:13, he announces first the purpose of the jubilee and only later details the way it is carried out on the heavenly plane (Lev 25:9), even though it thus disrupts the original chronological arrangement of the text from the scriptural source. The author refers to this quote at the end of the second column, thereby defining both the structure and the dominant theme of the eschatological jubilee. The quote from Deut 15:2 completes this issue by narrowing down the scope of the jubilee to debt forgiveness. The second part (II, 10-14) seems to be based on quotations from Psalms 7 and 82. The author introduces the issue of judgment and the heavenly enthronement of Melchizedek, responsible for the final reckoning with evil. In the third part (II, 15-25), the twice-cited quotation from Is 52:7, allows the author to emphasize the topicality and imminence of the foretold events. Is 61:2 quoted in the first and third part is used to present the eschatological function of Melchizedek in the jubilee year and expresses the proximity of the fulfilment of God's promises. The last quotation in II, 25 probably introduces the sign of beginning the time of propitiation and liberation by blowing the shofar. Since the beginning of the third column of the text is missing, the interpretation of the pesher author has not survived.

## 2.1. Leviticus 25

The jubilee regulations in Lev 25 are of social and religious character. The chapter begins with the rules for the Sabbath year and then moves on to the rules for the jubilee year, which takes place after seven Sabbath years, that is 49 years, have elapsed. Each fiftieth year was solemnly proclaimed by the sounding of a horn on the tenth day of the seventh month, that is the Day of Atonement. A proclamation was then made to free the inhabitants of the land and the return to their heritage. Everyone was to be restored to their original state of possession, to what they had lost through personal debts. Besides the blessing for the Sabbath

<sup>25</sup> See Table 1.1.

year, the text of the chapter discusses the method of buying out land ownership, regulations concerning houses, aid for poor compatriots, and the issue of slavery in Israel.<sup>26</sup>

Table 2.1. Lev 25:13<sup>27</sup> in 11QMelch II, 2

בשנת היובל הזאת תשובו איש אל־אחוזתו:	In this year of jubilee, each of you will return to his property.	Lev 25:13
[ ] ואֲשֶׁר אָמַר בְּשַׁנַּת הַיּוֹבֵל [הוּאֵת תְּשׁוּבוּ אִישׁ אֶל אַחֲזוֹתוֹ]	[ ] And as for what he said: “In [this] year of jubilee, [each of you will return to his property].”	11QMelch II, 2

Line 2 introduces the main theme of the first part of column II of the manuscript, concerning what will happen in the jubilee year. The term “in the jubilee year” belongs to the priestly language and may designate the origin of the pesher’s author. This two-part phrase occurs only 7 times and only in the Book of Leviticus: in two cases together with the preposition *bə* in a temporal sense<sup>28</sup> (Lev 25:13; 27:24), and in the other five places in a non-prepositional form (Lev 25:40, 50, 52; 27:18, 23). When it comes to the Qumran writings, the occurrence of this term is even rarer. Except 11Q13 II, 2, only two uses, both without the preposition *bə*, have been attested in passages of the Essene normative documents containing a close reference to the liturgical regulations of Leviticus (fragments of the Damascus Document 4Q271 3, 2 and the Pentateuch Paraphrase 4Q366 2, 5).<sup>29</sup> The standalone noun יֹבֵל means “a ram’s horn” and refers to a musical instrument used in the context of the temple liturgy. Its second meaning applies to the jubilee year in Lev 25:10.11.12, also when it appears with an article (and possibly a preposition) in Lev 25:15.30.31.33; 27:21, and in Num 36:4.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> See S. Łach, *Księga Kapłańska: Wstęp, przekład z oryginału, komentarz, ekskursy* (PŚST, II/1; Poznań: Pallotinum 1970) 272–273.

<sup>27</sup> The underlining indicates the presence of the biblical texts used by the author of the pesher. It also applies to non-attested texts enclosed in square brackets, most often reconstructed on the basis of biblical texts.

<sup>28</sup> B.K. Waltke – M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 1990) 196.

<sup>29</sup> This work uses the M.G. Abegg module, *Qumran Non-biblical Manuscripts (Accordance module: Qumran text and grammatical tags, version 4.5, 2019)*. This module is more up-to-date than the Abegg concordance, M.G. –Bowley, J.E. –Cook, E.M., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance, I* (Leiden: Brill 2003), which was published before all the Qumran manuscripts were published.

<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, we find this term in the phraseological connection of “trumpets of ram’s horns” in Joshua 6: 4–8, 13 or as an apposition for the term קֶרֶן “horn” in Jos 6:5, but also in this context it is an instrument for sacral use, as it is the priests who sound trumpets or horns. The possible meaning of the Hebrew verb root יָבַל completes this image: “bring back”, “send away solemnly”, e.g., exiles

The introduction of the quotation from Lev 25:13 opens up the time perspective of the jubilee year in which everyone will return to their land property. The social justice perspective concerning the purchase and sale of land dominates the remainder of the pericope (Lev 25:14-17). This topic, however, is of no interest to the author of the pesher, who, quoting Deut 15:2, defines the meaning of the jubilee year as forgiveness of debts (שמטה) to one's neighbour. The theme of the jubilee recurs in the eschatological interpretation of the pesher, where in II, 7 the time of eschatological liberation is specified for the first week of the jubilee, which takes place after nine jubilees of years. As it is clarified by the further part of the line, the end of the tenth jubilee, which also includes the first week of the years, is the time of the Day of Atonement in which propitiation will be performed for all the sons of light and for the people of the Melchizedek's lot.

The second theme of Lev 25:13 used by the author of the pesher in an eschatological context is the return of the imprisoned (l. 4) probably accomplished by Melchizedek (l. 6). The verb שׁוּב "to return" in line 6, used in Hiphil, clearly refers to the same root in Qal in Lev 23:15. By using the Hiphil conjugation instead of Qal, the author of the pesher expresses the supreme authority of Melchizedek, who brings the Israelites back to their own property. Moreover, in Lev 25:10 the verb "to return" in Qal is used as often as twice, which considerably increases the connection between the text of pesher in l. 6 and the scriptural text. The term "inheritance" (נחלה) of Melchizedek in 5 denotes teachers and exiles, whom all faults are forgiven in l. 6. It may be an allusion to "property" (אחזה) in Lev 25:13 but presented metaphorically in the pesher.

## 2.2. Deuteronomy 15

Deut 15:2 describes the forgiveness of debts (שמטה)<sup>31</sup> at the end of the seventh year (Deut 15:1), a date referring indirectly to the jubilee celebrated after the elapse of seven sabbatical years (Lev 25:8). This verse is a part of the pericope Deut 15:1-7, where v. 1 introduces the chronological context, the verses 2-3 explain what forgiveness of debts is, while the verses 4-7 foreshadow the blessed results of debt forgiveness and obedience to God's voice in this area. The forgiveness of debts in Deut 15:2 relates to loans made by creditors to other Israelites, while the next verse (Deut 15:3) allows a debt to be claimed from a stranger but not from a brother.<sup>32</sup>

(e.g., Jer 31:9; Isa 55:12) or a victorious army (Ps 108:11) or "to offer a solemn sacrifice" (Zeph 3:10, Ps 68:30; 76:12).; see R. North, "yōbēl", *GLAT*, III, 647.

<sup>31</sup> See Mulder, "šāmat," *GLAT*, IX, 550.

<sup>32</sup> S. Lach, *Księga Powtórzonego Prawa: Wstęp, przekład z oryginału, komentarz, ekskursy* (PŚST II/3; Poznań: Pallotinum 1971) 189.

Table 2.2. Deut 15:2 in 11QMelch II, 3-4

<p>וְזֶה דְבַר הַשְּׁמִטָּה שְׂמוֹט כָּל־בֹּעֵל מִשָּׂה יָדוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִשֶּׂה בְרַעְיוֹ לֹא־יִגְשׁ אֶת־רַעְיוֹ וְאֶת־אָחִיו כִּי־קָרָא שְׁמִטָּה לַיהוָה:</p>	<p>And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall release what he lent to his neighbour. He shall not coerce his neighbour or his brother, for it has been proclaimed a release for God.</p>	<p>Deut 15:2</p>
<p>[כאשר כתוב וזו]ה [ד]ב[ר] [השמטה] שמוט כול בעל משה יד אשר ישֶׂה [ברעהו לוא יגוש את רעהו ואת אחיו כיא קרא [שמטה] לאל</p>	<p>[as it is written: “Th]is is [the man]ner [of the remission:] every creditor [shall re]lease what he lent [to his neighbour. He shall not coerce his neighbour or his brother, for it has been proclaimed] a release for God.</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 3</p>

The main theme of the quotation from the Book of Deuteronomy is debt forgiveness. Used in the sense of the personal verb in Dt 15.2 *infinitivus absolutus* (Qal) שְׂמוֹט and the feminine noun שְׁמִטָּה come from the root שָׂמַט “to unfasten, remove”<sup>33</sup>. The lexemes derived from this root occur very rarely in the Old Testament, not to mention the Qumran literature, where apart from the analysed line, only two forms were noted in the same line in the Words of Moses 1Q22 III, 4. We can assume that the Qumran community guided by a particular rigour in the observance of the Law (although based on its own biblical exegesis)<sup>34</sup> also showed greater radicalism in the matter of debt forgiveness in line with the concept of the new covenant (cf. CD III, 14-15). Certainly, however, this concept is explained in the pesher in the context of eschatological forgiveness of sins.

The quotation of Deut 15:2 introduced immediately after Lev 25:13 develops the theme of the jubilee year treated in the eschatological context. With the exception of replacing the Tetragrammaton with the noun אֵל “God”, which is a common phenomenon in Qumran, the scriptural text is not changed. However, its position after Lev 25:13 places the forgiveness of debts in the context of the jubilee year, and not in the seventh, or sabbatical, year, as in the text of Deuteronomy. According to the pesher, the forgiveness of debts takes place (II, 4-8) in the last days for men taken captive, whose teachers remained hidden, and who belong to the inheritance (נַחֲלָה) of Melchizedek.

Immediately after the end of the quotation, there appears a technical term [פֶּשֶׁר] (l. 4) “its explanation”, introducing a commentary to the two scriptural quotations preceding it. The author transfers the reality of the jubilee year to the end times, as indicated by the formula לְאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים, “at the end of the days/

33 M.J. Mulder, “šāmat,” *GLAT*, IX, 548. He lists eight other places where this stem occurs in various verbal forms, mostly in the Qal conjugation: Ex 23,11; 2 Sm 6:6; 2 Kng 9.33 (2x); Jer 17:4; 1 Chr 13:9; in the Niphal conjugation: Ps 141:6; in the Hiphil conjugation: Dt 15:3); The noun based on this stem, *šamūtā* (h), appears only 5 times and only in Dt 15:1,2 (2x).9; 31,10 with the meaning “giving”.

34 L.H. Schiffman, “Sabbath,” *EDSS* II, 805.

times”. In Qumran texts, this expression occurs about 30 times<sup>35</sup> always in an eschatological sense.<sup>36</sup>

### 2.3 Leviticus 25

In the context of the jubilee year, Lev 25:9-10 announces the Day of Atonement which falls on the tenth day of the seventh month. On that day, the horn should be blown, and liberation should be announced in the country for its inhabitants as well as return to their property. Since the detailed description of the Day of Atonement occurred in chapter 16, the author of the Book of Leviticus does not repeat the rites associated with this celebration but concentrates on describing the activities associated with jubilee year. The expression “each of you is to return to your family property” (Lev 25:10) is repeated almost verbatim in Lev 25:13 at the beginning of the pericope on the rules of buying and selling in the jubilee year.

Table 2.3. Lev 25:9-10 in 11QMelch II, 6-7

<p>והעברת שופר תרועה בהדש השבעי בעשור לחדש ביום הכפרים תעבירו שופר בכל ארצכם:</p>	<p>And on the tenth day of the seventh month, you will sound the trumpet; on the Day of Expiation, you will sound the trumpet throughout the land.</p>	<p>Lev 25: 9</p>
<p>וקדשתם את שנת התמישים שנה וקראתם דרור בארץ לכל יושביה יוכל הוא תהיה לכם ושבתם איש אל אהלו ואיש אל משפחתו תשבבו:</p>	<p>And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.</p>	<p>Lev 25:10</p>
<p>ישיבמה אליהמה וקרא להמה דרור לעזוב להמה [משא כו]ל עוונותיהמה ו[יעש]ה הדבר הזה</p>	<p>(Melchizedek) will make them return and liberty will be proclaimed for them, to free them from [the debt of all] their iniquities. And this [will happen]</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 6</p>
<p>בשבוע היוכל הראישון אחר תשעת היובלים ו[יום הכפרים] ה[וא]ה ס[וף] ה[יו]בל העשירי</p>	<p>in the first week of the jubilee which follows ni[ne ju]bilee. And the “D[ay of Atone]ment” is the en[d] of the tenth [ju]bilee,</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 7</p>
<p>לכפר בו על כול בני א[ל]אנשי גורל מל[כי] צדק [ובמרום] עלי[ה]תד[בר] לפי גורל ותמה(?)</p>	<p>in which atonement shall be made for all the sons of G[od and] for the me[n of the lo]t of [Melchi]zedek. [And on the heights] with regard [to them] it will be [announced] according to their [lot]s</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 8</p>

35 For example, in CD IV, 4; VI, 11; 1QpHab IX, 6; 1QSa I, 1, and many fragments from cave 4, incl. in 4Q174 and 4Q177.

36 J.J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York, NY: Routledge 2002) 57.

The occurrence of the terms “liberation” and “Day of Atonement” in two adjacent verses allows for the supposition that the author of pesher refers to the text of Lev 25:9-10, where liberation is announced on the Day of Atonement. In addition, the root שׁוּב “return” occurring in the scriptural text in Qal as often as twice appears in verse 6 in Hiphil. The text of the Book of Leviticus is therefore not formally a quotation here, but it is nevertheless clearly the source of the terms used referring to the liberation of all people belonging to Melchizedek’s lot in eschatological times. On the other hand, the expression וְקָרָא לְהֵמָּה דְרוּרָא “will proclaim liberation to them” may be inspired by Lev 25:10 וְקָרָאתֶם דְרוּרָא “you will proclaim liberation”. A similar expression with the verb in the infinitive occurs in Is 61:1: לְקָרָא לְשָׁבוּיִם דְרוּרָא “to announce liberation to the captives”. It is more similar to the text of pesher, since the term שְׁבוּיִם “captives” appears in II, 4 in an eschatological context. Moreover, another expression derived from Is 61:2 “year of grace” occurs in II, 9, so there is a conscious link with the beginning of chapter 61 of Isaiah.

In I. 7 the announcement of the coming of the Day of Atonement appears only as the culmination of the last tenth jubilee, which changes the biblical chronology of the event, where according to Lev 16:29 and 25:9 it takes place on the tenth day of the seventh month. There appears time calculation typical of apocalyptic literature<sup>37</sup> using jubilees and weeks of years. A similar system with slight differences can be found in Dn 9:2, 24–27, 1 Enoch (Apocalypse of Weeks 91:12-17); 93:1-10, Testament of Levi 16:1-18:14, Jubilees (4Q216 II, 17; IV, 5; VI, 8) and Pseudo-Ezekiel (4Q385a IV,2). In 11Q13, the story is grouped into ten jubilees, which are then consecutively divided into weeks of years. It is unlikely that the description of the tenth jubilee will be independent and separate from the previous nine, but the fragmentary nature of the text does not allow for unequivocal conclusions in this regard.<sup>38</sup> Undoubtedly, the Day of Atonement ends the history of eschatological times, as it takes place at the very end of the tenth jubilee (I. 7).<sup>39</sup>

In the pesher, the day of Atonement is the eschatological time of final atonement for all the sons of God and the men of <sup>40</sup>Melchizedek’s lot. None of the el-

<sup>37</sup> Collins, *Apocalypticism*, 52–53.

<sup>38</sup> Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 50.

<sup>39</sup> D.P. Wright, “Day of Atonement”, *ABD* (ed. D.N. Freedman) (New York, NY: Doubleday 1992) II, 72.

<sup>40</sup> The term *gwrl* is firmly rooted in the dualistic vision of reality and places the entire event on the plane of heavenly beings, as the use of the term always refers to God and/or His angels or similarly to Belial and/or his angels. Such use appears, for example, in the Rule of the Congregation: גורל אל (1QS II, 2), *gwrl bly'l* (1QS II, 5), or גורל עול (1QS IV, 24). Melchizedek’s inheritance can be identified with the heavenly lineage of those belonging to his lot, for, as noted, also the verb form from the root *nhl* refers in the Rule of the Congregation to the eternal heavenly inheritance, that is, those who are chosen by God. See Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 57–58.

ements of the ritual contained in Lev 16 is even briefly mentioned in the description of that day (11Q13 II, 7. 25), and this does not seem to be caused by the damage to the peshar text. The tone of the salvific announcement, therefore, focuses not so much on the manner in which redemption will take place, but on the ultimate meaning of this event and its universal scope. The infinitive לכפר appearing in II, 8 expresses the function of the High Priest performing atonement for the sins of the people in Lev 16:16, 30.<sup>41</sup> The text of the peshar clarifies it in II, 7 that the Day of Atonement, during which atonement is performed over all the sons of light - men of Melchizedek's lot, takes place at the end of the tenth jubilee. Nevertheless, the author of this composition does not specify who is the subject performing the atonement, so it can only be assumed that it is the main character of the entire composition.<sup>42</sup>

## 2.4. Isaiah 61

Chapter 61 of Trito-Isaiah is composed of five speeches addressed to the post-exile community. In the first one (vv. 1–3), the messenger anointed by the Lord proclaims good news to the poor, freeing captives, and joy for those weeping in Zion.<sup>43</sup> These events are part of the year of the Lord's grace and the day of His vengeance. The second speech (vv. 4–5) announces the reconstruction of the cities of post-exile Judah, which will also be inhabited by foreigners. Then the author of the vision of reconstruction addresses the people as priests who will enjoy the riches of the nations (vv. 6–7), and God Himself makes an everlasting covenant with the people through which they become the blessed tribe of the Lord (vv. 8–9). The chapter ends with a singular first-person narration (vv. 10–11), which clearly alludes to the three opening verses, where the subject is the “one anointed by the Lord.” Here the speaker expresses his joy for being clothed by the Lord with the garments of salvation and the mantle of righteousness in the face of the coming glory of the Lord encompassing all nations. Thus,

41 The meaning of this verb includes a number of activities, from “covering”, “erasing”, to “propitiation”, “reconciling”, “forgiving”, “exculpation”, “being merciful”, “forgiving of guilt”, where in combination with the preposition 'ל, both in the Hebrew Bible and in Qumran literature, it most often has God as its subject, see J. Koehler - W. Baumgartner - J. Stamm, “כפר”, *Wielki Słownik Hebrajsko-Polski i Aramejsko-Polski Starego Testamentu*, ed. 2 (Warsaw: Vocatio 2013) I, 465–466. The infinitive *lkpr* in the Piel conjugation occurs almost one hundred times in the entire Qumran literature, e.g., CD II, 5; IV, 9; 1QS V, 8; VIII, 10; 1QM II, 5; 1QHa IV, 24; XXIII, 33. Qumran texts confirm the delegation of the expiatory function to the “annointed ones” (CD XIV,19, 4Q266 I,12-13), and even to the community itself, albeit in a substitute form in the form of bloody sacrifices, as well as through prayer and perfect life (1QS III,11-12; IX,4-5); see Cavicchia, “Malky-sedeq”, 526.

42 See Kobelski, *Melchisedek*, 64; Cavicchia, “Malky-sedeq”, 525.

43 See Brzegowy, *Księga Izajasza*, 723.

the dominant theme of the entire chapter is the rebuilding of post-exile Judah along with Jerusalem, presented in a universalist context as the year of grace announced by the Lord's messiah.<sup>44</sup>

Table 2.4. Isa 61:2 in 11Q Melch II, 9

לקרא שנת־רצון ליהנה ויום נקם לאלהינו לנחם כל־אבלים:	... to proclaim the year of the Lord's grace and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn...	Isa 61:2
כיא הואה הקץ לשנת הרצון למלכי צדק ולהר[ים בדין] קדושי אל לממשלת משפט	for it is the time for the "year of grace" of Melchizedek and for elevating the holy ones of God in judgement for the rule of law...	11QMelch II, 9

The author of peshet borrows the expression "a year of Lord's grace" from Isa 61:2, replacing the Tetragrammaton with the name Melchizedek. The expression "year of favour" occurs only in the Book of Isaiah, so the borrowing of the prophetic text is obvious. It should be noted, however, that the author of the peshet uses the expression from Isa 61:2 to introduce a chronological and soteriological concept which is of importance to him but considers the entire syntagma as part of his own vision of salvation, without using the quotation formula used in other texts. The last words of Isa 61:2, "to comfort all who mourn", seem, however, to be presented as a quotation in II, 20, with their interpretation given, specific to the peshet. However, the context of the line is fragmented and the technical expressions specific to the quoted text and its interpretation are not preserved.

The replacement of the name YHWH from Isa 61:2 with Melchizedek is an interpretative procedure assigning to Melchizedek the salvific and judicial functions ascribed in the scriptural text to the God of Israel. The paraphrase of the clause "יום נקם לאלהינו" "the day of vengeance of our God"<sup>45</sup> parallel to the "year of grace" in Isa 61:2 appears in II, 13: "Melchizedek will carry out the vengeance of God's judgments" אל משפטי אל ומלכי צדק יקום נקם משפטי אל. The author of the peshet, therefore, unequivocally interprets the "year of favour to Melchizedek" in a legal sense, as does the text of Isaiah, where God's vengeance is linked to the liberation of captives. A year of grace, however, is promised to the captives (II, 4) in an eschatological context. Freedom from their sins is bestowed upon them (II, 6) as members of Melchizedek's lot (II, 5). In the immediately preceding context,

<sup>44</sup> See John D.W. Watts, *Isaiah 34–66* (WBC 25; Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005) 871.

<sup>45</sup> This expression appears in Isaiah (34:8; 63:4) and Jeremiah (46:10), where it is found in the context of God's vengeance; see Stachowiak, *Book of Isaiah I*, 284.

the year of grace for Melchizedek is the Day of Atonement for the sons of light (II, 8) and for the people of Melchizedek’s lot (II, 8).

The judicial dimension is present in the second part of verse 9 where the rule of law (לממשל משפט) is foretold for the saints of God. The expression קדושי אל appears only once in extra-biblical Qumran texts and is a further complement to the earlier expressions: “captives” and “sons of God”. The judicial function is ascribed to Melchizedek and comes down to his carrying out the vengeance of God’s judgments (II, 13), while its execution in II, 8 is assigned to Melchizedek on the basis of quotations from Ps 82:1-2 and 7:7.

### 2.5. Psalm 82

Psalm 82 describes the judgement of God rendered in the assembly of the gods (v. 1), while the ones on trial are probably unjust judges who judge partially (v. 1). 2–8). The psalm ends with an apostrophe to God in order to bring Him to render judgment over the earth and all nations (v. 8).<sup>46</sup> God appears in the Psalm as a judge who rejects the wrongdoings of those who administer justice, however, the apostrophe directed at them in the verses 2–4 does not have a clearly formulated subject. It is not known whether God’s speech is addressed to other “gods,” as suggested in v. 6, or to ordinary people, in accordance with v. 8, which concerns the judgment of the earth. The expression “divine assembly” and “gods” indicate the mythological conceptual background of the psalm that can be traced back to the mythological environment of Canaan to which Hebrew poetry is often related.<sup>47</sup>

Table 2.5. Ps 82:1 in 11Q Melch II, 9-10

<p>אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בְּעֵדֵת־אֵל בְּקִרְב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט:</p>	<p>God takes his stand in the divine assembly; He renders judgment among the gods.</p>	<p>Ps 82:1</p>
<p>כִּאֲשֶׁר כָּתוּב עָלָיו בְּשִׁירֵי דָוִד אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים [נִצָּב בְּעֵדֵת אֵל] בְּקִרְבֹּב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט</p>	<p>as is written about him in the songs of David, who said: “God [tak]es his stand in the assem[bly of God], in the midst of the gods he judges”.</p>	<p>11Q Melch II, 9-10</p>

<sup>46</sup> See S. Łach, *Księga Psalmów: Wstęp, przekład z oryginału, komentarz, ekskursy* (PŚST VII / 2; Poznań: Pallotinum 1990) 368–369.

<sup>47</sup> See F.-L. Hossfeld - E. Zenger, *Psalms 2: A Commentary on Psalms 51–100* (Hermeneia 19B; trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005) 329.

Ll. 9–10 introduce the main theme of the second part of the column (II, 10-14), i.e. משפט “judgment”<sup>48</sup> including the nations, the wicked, and the world of supernatural spirits, i.e. Belial and the spirits of his lot (II, 12). Both the quotation from Ps 82:1 and the subsequent quotations from Ps 7:8-9a and again in Ps 82:2 in 11Q13 II, 11-12 concern Melchizedek’s identity as a judge and introduce the subject matter of the judgment that will concern Belial and the spirits of his lot (II, 12-13).

The quotation of Ps 82:1 is introduced as a scriptural text using the formula באשר כתוב “as it is written”, while the pronominal suffix in the expression עליו refers to Melchizedek in the previous context of II, 9, which again equates Melchizedek with God performing the judicial function.<sup>49</sup> The phrase שירי דוד “songs of David” refers here to Ps 82:1 and probably to the quotation from Ps 82:2 and 7:8-9 in the immediately following text of the pesher in II, 11-12. The relative pronoun in the syntagm אשר אמר “who said” unambiguously identifies the quote with David as its author.

The quoted text of the psalm is described by the author of the pesher not as תהלה “song of praise, psalm” but as שיר “song”. In another Qumran manuscript, the lexeme, תהלים, “songs of praise,” refers to several compositions believed to have been composed by David, including canonical psalms. 11Q5 (11QPsa) XXVII, 2-11 contains a narrative text called “David’s Compositions” which lists both the number of psalms (3600) and the number of songs (שירים) composed by David for various sacrifices and exorcisms (450).<sup>50</sup> This text was composed by writers who were members of the Qumran community or closely related to it. The understanding of “songs” in 11Q5, however, does not correspond to 11QMelchizedek, where the phrase “songs of David” refers to Psalms 7 and 82.

The interpreters who identify Melchizedek with God find strong arguments in lines 9-14, where the judgment during the last tenth jubilee is mentioned. The whole discussion concerns the determination of who the subject of this final settlement is. The name “Melchizedek” appears to coincide with the title אלוהים through the quotation from Is 61:2, in line 9. In both cases, the scriptural phrase “the year of the grace of YHWH” is used, with the abovementioned replacement of God’s name with Melchizedek’s name in the pesher. In II, 10 the author of

<sup>48</sup> Among the 83 noun forms and 161 verb forms with the root *špt*, there is a regular division into legal and penal references (Damascus Document, Rule of the Congregation) in the face of offenses in the Essene community (e.g. theft CD IX, 10-11, apostasy CD XII, 3 or lies 1QS VI, 24), where the judicial function is assigned especially to the sons of Aaron, who guard the law of *yahad* (1QS IX, 7) and those related to the final judgment, which is commonly present in texts with an apocalyptic-eschatological tinge (The Rule of War, Pesher to Habakkuk) and will also appear in line 23 of Pesher 11Q13.

<sup>49</sup> See Carmignac, “Le document”, 365.

<sup>50</sup> See J. A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumrân Cave 11: (11QPsa)* (DJD 4; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) 48, 91–93.

the pesher clarifies that the quotation from Ps 82:1 also applies to Melchizedek, in which the first use of אֱלֹהִים means Melchizedek and the double expression בְּרוּב אֱלֹהִים [בְּעֵדוּת אֱלֹהִים] denotes a heavenly court, i.e. “divine assembly”. For the author of the pesher Melchizedek’s heavenly origin and the function of judge in the presence of other אֱלֹהִים are beyond doubt<sup>51</sup>.

But does this necessarily imply his identification with God Himself? He may as well just be yet another superior celestial being. It is on this assumption that the arguments of the opponents of the hypothesis identifying Melchizedek with God are based. First of all, the text of 11Q13 seems to clearly indicate the distinctiveness of the figure of Melchizedek from YHWH. From the very beginning of the text in column II, he appears as the agent of liberation (in reference to the commented verse of Lev 25:13). The verb שׁוּב “return” in Hiphil, which occurs twice there, has Melchizedek as its subject, which is indicative of his mediating role. He also reveals God’s deliverance (שְׁמֻטָה), announced during the sabbatical year (reference to Deut 15:2). 11Q13 II, 6, in turn, interprets Melchizedek in the prophetic key as proclaiming liberation (in reference to Is 61:1), thus implying that he is sent by someone else and not acting in his own name. Also in II, 13 his task is to be the executor of God’s judgments.<sup>52</sup> In II, 14 the support that “other gods” will give to Melchizedek is mentioned, which contradicts the vision of a God transcendent and ruling over other heavenly beings.<sup>53</sup> In the Qumran writings, the term אֱלֹהִים was very rarely used to describe God, while the term אֵל was a fairly common substitute for the tetragrammaton.<sup>54</sup> It is possible that this was due to the rather broad scope of the first term, which already in the Old Testament and later in the late Jewish literature had a broader meaning and also defined “spiritual being”, “heavenly being”, “angel”, although in Qumran itself it was not overly attested.<sup>55</sup>

## 2.6. Psalms 7 and 82<sup>56</sup>

Psalm 7 is the lamentation of a man who has been wrongly accused by his enemies and invokes God in his defence. He asks God Himself to preside the assem-

51 C. Gianotto, *Melchisedek e la sua tipologia: Tradizioni giudaiche, cristiane e gnostiche (sec. II a.C. - sec. III d.C.)* (SRivBib 12; Brescia: Paideia, 1984) 74.

52 Gianotto, *Melchizedek*, 73, suggests how to understand the judicial power mentioned in II, 13: “God, of course, remains the supreme judge; this, however, does not preclude some heavenly being from exercising judicial authority in His name or as His instrument. And this is the function of Melchizedek according to line 13”.

53 Cavicchia, «Malky-sedeq, 521.

54 Carmignac, «Le document», 364.

55 Gianotto, *Melchisedek*, 71–72.

56 Psalm 82 was discussed in the introduction to § 2.5.

bly and render judgement according to His justice.<sup>57</sup> The Psalm is divided into two main parts: in vv. 2–11 the psalmist presents his case to God as the judge and asks Him to acknowledge his rightfulness; the second part (vv. 12–18) presents God as a just judge (vv. 12–14) and speaks of the unsuccessful endeavours of the unrighteous (vv. 15–18).

Table 2.6. Ps 7:8-9a and 82:2 in 11Q Melch II, 11-12

וַעֲדַת לְאֻמִּים תְּסֻבְּבָהּ וְעֲלֶיהָ לְמָרוֹם שׁוּבָהּ:	Let the assembly of nations gather round you; return above it on high.	Ps 7:8
יְהוָה יִדְיוֹ עַמִּים	The Lord shall judge nations.	Ps 7:9a
עַד-מָתַי תִּשְׁפֹּטוּ-עָוֹל וּפְנֵי רָשָׁעִים תִּשְׁאוּ-סֶלָה:	How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?	Ps 82:2
וְעַלֵּיו אָמַר [ו]עֲלֵי[ה] לְמָרוֹם שׁוּבָה אֶל יְדֵי עַמִּים וְאִשֶׁר אָמַר עַד מָתַי תִּשְׁפֹּטוּ עוֹל וּפְנֵי רָשָׁעִים תִּשְׁאוּ סֶלָה	And about him he sa[id, “and] above [it] to the heights, return; God will judge the peoples”. And as for what he sa[id, “How long will you jud[ge] unjustly and sh[ow] partiality to the wic[k]ed? [Se]lah”.	11QMelch II, 10-11
פֶּשֶׁר עַל בְּלִיעַל וְעַל רְוֵהֵי גוֹרְלוֹ אֲשֶׁר כּוֹלְמָה הֵיוּ הַמַּמְרִים בְּסוֹרְמָה מֵחֻקֵּי אֵל לְ[הַרְשִׁיעַ]	The interpretation thereof refers to Belial and the spirits of his lot, w[ho were all rebe]l turning away from God’s commandments to [do evil].	11QMelch II, 12

The two quotations from Psalms 7 and 82 are a continuation of the quotations from the “Song of David” in I. 10, beginning with Ps 81:1. Ps. 7:8b-9a is preceded by a formula introducing the quote “and about him he said”. The pronoun suffix in עליו “about him” in II, 10 refers to Melchizedek mentioned in I.9; similarly introduced is the quote from Ps 82:1 in II, 10, where the prepositional phrase “about him” stands at the beginning of the sentence and is separated from the verb “said” with reference to the Song of David; see also II, 23: “כאשר בוחב עליו” “according to what is written about him”. The third quotation from Ps 82:2 is introduced as “ואשר אמר” “and as to what he said”, as in II, 2, 10, 15, 18 (כאשר), 25. Both introductory formulas in II, 9-10 certainly refer to David, and not to God, as the author of the quoted text, according to the preceding reference to the “Song of David” at the beginning of II, 10.

The quotation from Ps 7:8b-9a omits the phrase “assembled peoples will surround you”, however, the reconstructed pronoun suffix for the feminine gender in [ו]עלֵי[ה] referring anaphorically to “assembly” probably remains unchanged.

<sup>57</sup> Łach, *Księga Psalmów*, 122–123.

All quotations introduced as cryptic quotes do not change the quoted text, although they only list a part of it. The reference to the pronoun suffix could be “the assembly [of God]” in the preceding line 10, which would give Melchizedek, to whom the quote refers, a significant place from which he renders judgement - above the “assembly of God” on high, from which he will judge the nations as אֵל.

The second quotation from Ps 82:2 in the text of the Psalm is a statement by God directed at unjust judges; in the text of peshar it seems to be part of Melchizedek’s discourse to which the previous two quotes refer. Since the recipients of God’s chastening questions are not mentioned by name in the text of the psalm, the author of the peshar takes advantage of this lack of detail. The next verse which is introduced by the technical term פִּשְׁרוֹ, “its interpretation”, recipients of speech are identified with Belial<sup>58</sup> and demons who rebelled against God’s commandments and committed wrongdoing. The scene constructed in that way is immensely elevated: Melchizedek is judging high above the assembly of God and is addressing an accusatory question to Belial and demons. This is most probably the part of a trial where the judge acts as the prosecutor and the accused are rebelled spiritual beings.<sup>59</sup>

In Qumran, a dualistic concept of the world of supernatural beings (possibly of Iranian origin<sup>60</sup>) is associated with the supremacy of God’s power and with the representation of God as the creator of angels of darkness who seduce people and influence their behaviour (cf. 1QM XIII, 10-15), in order to be able to assign them to “sons of righteousness” or “sons of darkness”, and to give them a proper payback in the end times on these grounds.<sup>61</sup>

## 2.7 Isaiah 52

Isa 52:3-12 is a poetic literary work which describes the time when Israel was under oppression of slavery, the return of YHWH to Zion, consolation brought by God, and an appeal summoning the nation to return.<sup>62</sup> The technical term which describes the God’s speech as an oracle (נְאֻם) appears twice in v. 5. Isa 52:7 metaphorically describes an anonymous messenger who announc-

<sup>58</sup> The noun בְּלִיעַל means “miscreant”, “villain”, “vicious”. It appears more than twenty times in the Hebrew Bible in the idiomatic terms “vicious men” or “iniquitous men (= sons of Belial)”, see, e.g., 1 Sam 25:25; 2 Sam 16:7; 20:1; Pr ov 16:27; Sir 11:32. In both 11QMelchizedek and other Qumran texts, Belial denotes an evil spirit or leader of evil spirits, see e.g., CD IV, 12; V, 18-19, 1QS I, 16-18, etc.

<sup>59</sup> See Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 18.

<sup>60</sup> For more on this subject, see Kobelski, *Melchisedek*, 84-98.

<sup>61</sup> J. Duhaime, “Dualism,” *EDSS* I, 216-217.

<sup>62</sup> Stachowiak, *Księga Izajasza I*, 213-214.

es God’s reign in Jerusalem after the period of oppression and Babylonian exile. This verse is preceded by an oracle with a narrating voice of YHWH, whereas the next verses describe the joyful singing of Zion’s guardians as they witness God’s return to Zion (v. 8), apostrophes to the destroyed Jerusalem (vv. 9–10) and the commandment to leave bondage, where the God of Israel leads a joyful procession (vv. 11–12).<sup>63</sup>

Table 2.7 Isa 52:7 in 11QMelch II, 15-16 (17-18)

<p>מה־נָאוּ עַל־הַהַרִים רַגְלֵי מְבַשֵּׂר מְשַׁמְעֵי שְׁלוֹם מְבַשֵּׂר טוֹב מְשַׁמְעֵי יְשׁוּעָה אָמַר לְצִיּוֹן מִלֶּד אֱלֹהֶיהָ:</p>	<p>How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”</p>	<p>Isa 52:7</p>
<p>הַזּוֹאת [ ] הוּאָה יוֹם הַשְׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי עָלָיו לְפָנַי בְּדַבְרֵי יֵשׁוּעָה הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר אָמַר [מֵה] נָאוּ</p>	<p>This [ ] is the day of [peace about wh]ich [God said before through the words of Isaiah the prophet, who said: [“How] beautiful</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 15</p>
<p>עַל &gt;הַהַרִים רַגְלֵי מְבַשֵּׂר מְשַׁמְעֵי שְׁלוֹם מְבַשֵּׂר טוֹב מְשַׁמְעֵי יֵשׁוּעָה הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר אָמַר לְצִיּוֹן מִלֶּד אֱלֹהֶיהָ</p>	<p>upon the mountains are the feet of the messen[ger who announ]ces peace, the messen[ger of good who announces salvat]ion, who [sa]ys to Zion: your God [reigns].”</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 16</p>

After describing the judgment process and the execution of God’s judgments upon Belial and demons (II, 12-14), the author of pesher identifies in II, 15 these events (הַזּוֹאת) with the announcement of the good news in Is 52:7. The quote is preceded by the formula אֲשֶׁר אָמַר “who said” appearing in a fragmented context. It is followed by the text entry of Isaiah: “through the prophet [Isaiah who said]” (l. 15). The subject here is certainly Isaiah, as in the “Song of David” in II, 10. The entire line 15 links II, 12-14 with the quote in II, 16, and the latter verse with the earlier context, “This (fem.) [ ] is the day [of peace].” A feminine demonstrative pronoun together with the article refers to a noun in an earlier context which unfortunately has not survived at the end of the fragmentary line 14.

Just as in other cases in the pesher, the quotation from Isaiah is cited in accordance with the Masoretic Text, except for slight spelling differences and omission of the article before הַרִים by parablepsis. The verse contains the three attributes

63 J.D.W. Watts, *Isaiah 34–66* (WBC 25; Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005) 773–75.

that specify Melchizedek's judicial and salvific activities, "peace, goodness, salvation". Nevertheless, they do not completely exploit the exegetical potential included in the Isaian pericope, where the identity of the one who brings good news is unknown. The author of the pesher first allegorically interprets (פֶּשֶׁר) "mountains" (II, 17) as prophets, where this term certainly should not be understood as referring to Isaiah only, quoted as often as four times in the text of pesher, but rather the entire prophetic tradition preceding the time of composition of 11QMelchizedek. Unfortunately, the rest of l. 17 is fragmentary and nothing else can be said about it, but it is certain that the interpretation of the noun "mountains" was limited to just one verse.

Line 18 equates מְבַשֵּׂר "the one who brings news" (Is 52:7) to מְשִׁיחַ הַרוּחַ "the anointed of the spirit" based on a quotation from the Book of Daniel that unfortunately has not been preserved in the text of the pesher. The quotation is introduced by the standard formula [כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר דָּנִיֵּאל] "as Daniel said", which indicates that the book of Daniel together with Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and the Songs of David were used by the author of pesher as a scriptural text. The term מְשִׁיחַ "anointed" appears twice in the book of Daniel. Dn 9:24–27 includes Jeremiah's interpretation of the text talking about seventy years of punishment after the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer 25:11; 29:10). According to Dn 9:26 the destruction of Jerusalem and the destruction of the "anointed" are predicted to happen 62 weeks later, while the earlier line (Dn 9:25) provided information about seven weeks before the coming of the anointed one in the context of the return from slavery to rebuild Jerusalem. Both lines may refer to the quotation used in II, 18, but due to the absence of this part of the line of the text, it is impossible to resolve the question unambiguously.

The phrase "the anointed of the spirit" with a definite article is absent in scriptural texts, while the Damascus Document and related manuscripts speak about anointed ones, without the use of the definite article (CD II, 12; 4Q266 2 II, 12; 4Q270 2 II, 14; 4Q287 10,13). The use of the definite article, which adds definiteness to the whole expression on the part of the author of the pesher, seems to be pointing at Melchizedek who vindicates God's judgments. There is no explicit identification, however the next line tells us about yet another salvific figure which is based on the same verse from the Book of Isaiah. The expression "the anointed of the spirit" may have come from the reinterpretation of Isa 52:7 in the context of Isa 61:1, which speaks of an anonymous anointed person in connection with the spirit of God, hovering over the anointed.

The second use of the term מְבַשֵּׂר "messenger" in Isa 52:7 quoted in II, 18 gave rise to yet another interpretation which, similarly to the previous one, is supported by a quotation from another scriptural book. In II. 18–19 the author quotes Isa 52.7: [וּמְבַשֵּׂר] טוֹב מִשְׂמִיחַ עֵשׂוּעָה] "and a messenger [of good who proclaim]ms salvation", then he identifies the messenger with the person mentioned

in the unsaved scriptural quote: [ ] הַרְאָה הַכְּתוּב עָלָיו אִשְׂרָאֵל [“is the one about whom it is written [ ] (II, 19)”. While in II, 18 the author cites only one term, “messenger”, here he extends it by adding a detail about his salvific function. It is not certain whether he speaks about someone else rather than Melchizedek, or more probably about the latter who is positively presented as the one who brings freedom, atonement, judgment on Belial and his demons, and releases mankind from slavery of the latter. It is likely that the author presents here his own interpretation of the history of salvation, beginning with the prophets and then mentioning the anointed of the spirit defined as a messenger who brings salvation.

Since verse 20 begins with a quote from Isa 62:2 (“to comfort the grieved”), it is possible that the missing quote in line 19 ends at the beginning of line 20: [“to proclaim a year of favour to the Lord and a day of vengeance for our God; to com]fort [the grieved]”. Nevertheless, this hypothesis is rather unlikely because the interpretation presented in II, 20 applies only to two words from Isa 61:2: to comfort the grieved”.

Isaiah 52:7 is an important, if not the most important, scriptural text for the author of the pesher, for as many as four lines of the Pesher (II, 15-19) are devoted to its interpretation. The focus is on “prophets” identified allegorically with “mountains” (II, 17). The focus of attention is the “herald/messenger” interpreted as “One anointed by the Spirit” (II, 18). The second text containing the same term given in the broader context taken from Isaiah 52:7 is interpreted based on a different quotation from the scriptural text, which unfortunately has not survived in the pesher. The “One anointed by the Spirit” is probably interpreted in the same way in the text quoted from the Book of Daniel, which has not survived in the fragmentary manuscript either. When considering the interpretation of scriptural texts in the second column of 11QMelchizedek, the fragment from Isa 52:7 is the only verse cited in whole, from which terms being of interest to the author are then selected for further interpretation in light of the other scriptural text cited.

## 2.8. Isaiah 61<sup>64</sup>

Isa 61:2 appears in II, 9 not as quoted text—the author of the pesher borrows the expression “a year of favour to the Lord” (Isa 61:2a), reformulating it to present the jubilee year as the year of Melchizedek’s grace. The vocabulary referring to God’s vengeance found in the same verse (Isa 61:2b) is applied to Melchizedek in II, 13. The author of the pesher thus builds his theological vision of the time of favour also as a time of vengeance and the execution of

<sup>64</sup> See § 2.4.

God’s judgments. The same verse from Isaiah returns in II, 20 this time as a quotation.

Table 2.8. Isa 61:2 in 11Q Melch II, 20

<p>לקרא שנת־רצון ליהנה יום נקם לאֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲ לְנַחֵם כָּל־אֲבֵלִים:</p>	<p>...to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.</p>	<p>Isa 61:2</p>
<p>[לְנַחֵם] הַ [אֲבֵלִים פֶּשֶׁר] [הַ] [לְ] שְׂכִילְמָה בְּכֹל קְצֵי הָעוֹלָם [ ... ]</p>	<p>“To comf[ort] the [mourning], explanation of this]: to [in]struct them in all the ages of the wo[rld] ]</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 20</p>

The identification of the quote as coming from Isaiah 61:2 is based only on the partially reconstructed infinitive “to comfort [the grieved.].” The article before the missing text indicates the noun “grieved” which implies the omission of the noun כל “all” from the Isaiah text. In the text of the Book of Isaiah, the consolation of “those who mourn” takes place in the context of the year of favour given by the Lord, while the interpretation of the pesher (II, 20) concerns “instructing them in all the ages of the w[orld] ([כֹּל קְצֵי הָעוֹלָם])”.<sup>65</sup>

A noun with the article הָעוֹלָם can be understood as meaning “the world” that is all that exists; the other meaning, a temporal one, “epoch, eternity” seems to fit better the context of the pesher, which speaks of the “year of the jubilee” (II, 2), “the final days” (II, 4), and especially about “the time (קֶץ) of the year of favour” (II, 9). The whole phrase “all ages (eras, epochs) of eternity/the world” certainly refers to the division of history into ten jubilees (II, 7), the last of which ends with the Day of Atonement. According to the interpretation of the author of the pesher, the science of temporally divided eras/epochs of history or the world constitutes a consolation to lamenters because it depicts to them an eschatological perspective of the time of redemption and propitiation in the tenth jubilee. One can only conjecture that the missing columns of 11Q Melchizedek contained a description of earlier epochs/jubilees.

### 2.9. Isaiah 52<sup>66</sup>

The author of the pesher returns to Isaiah 52:7, quoting its last part. Earlier in the pesher column, he quoted the entire verse (II, 15-16), interpreting three of its

<sup>65</sup> The same expression without an article occurs, e.g., in 1QH<sup>a</sup> V, 26; 4Q417 frg. 1 I, 7; 4Q419 frg. 8 II, 6; 4Q427 frg. 7 II, 6.

<sup>66</sup> See §2.7.

phrases sequentially (II, 17-19), but without considering the last part of the verse. It is striking that there is no reference, in the interpretation of this phrase, to the royal function of Melchizedek mentioned in Gen 14:18. Instead, the author focuses on the identity of the people establishing/preserving the covenant and possibly on the identity of Melchizedek as אלהים.

Table 2.9. Isa 52:7 in 11QMelch II, 23

<p>מה־נָאוּו עַל־הַהַרִים רְגְלֵי מְבַשֵּׂר מִשְׁמִיעַ שְׁלוֹם מְבַשֵּׂר טוֹב מִשְׁמִיעַ יְשׁוּעָה אָמַר לְצִיּוֹן מְלֶךְ אֱלֹהֶיהָ:</p>	<p>How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”</p>	<p>Isa 52:7</p>
<p>[[במשפט[י] אל כאשר כתוב עליו [אומר לצי]ון מלך אלוהיך [צי]ון ה[י]אה...[מקימ]י] הברית הסרים מלכה [בד]רך העם ואל[ו]היך הואה ] י[צ]ל[מה מי]ד בליעל</p>	<p>[ ] through the judgment[s of] God, as is written about him: “[saying to Zi]on: your God rules”. [ Zi]on i[s ... who] establish the covenant, [those who] avoid walking on the path of the people. And “your God is [Melchizedek, who will fr]e[e] them from the ha[nd] of Belial.</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 23-25a</p>

As far as the fragmentary text allows us to determine, a separate thematic unit is provided by lines II, 22-25, in which the author of the pesher interprets Isa 52:7c and begins to interpret Lev 29:9 in a very fragmentary context. Verse 22 gives two singular feminine verbs, where the subject might be the salvation community belonging to Melchizedek’s lot, led in the process of conversion to God/Melchizedek’s lot: “was driven away (הוסרה) from Belial and returned ...”. This theme is continued in II, 24, where reference is made to men “strengthening/fulfilling the covenant who turn away (הסרים) from the path of people.” Departure or straying from the path of people has a positive meaning, that is, detachment from people to strengthen the observance of the covenant. The author likely has this group in mind when he speaks of “their instruction concerning all eternity” in II, 20. Thus, the entire section covers the subject of the repentance of the community of believers in their process of leaving Belial, separating from the people, and being granted access to the salvific actions of Melchizedek.

The author of the pesher uses the same method here as in the previous section - after quoting the scriptural text, he introduces allegorical exegesis, attributing a different meaning to the expressions from the quoted text. This quote from Isaiah 52:7c is introduced by כאשר כתוב “as it is written” same as in II, 18 therefore, the author clearly understands Isaiah as a written and authoritative book. By adding the prepositional phrase עליו “concerning him,” the pesher’s author applies the quoted text probably to Melchizedek, as suggested by the beginning of II, 25 where deliverance from Belial’s power is mentioned.

From the quoted text of Isaiah 52:7c, the author selects two terms, the first of which is identified by him with a particular community, the other one is probably equated with Melchizedek. For him, the proper name “Zion” means a community of persons faithful to the covenant, or rather establishing it. It seems that the reference is here made rather to those who have separated themselves from the people, as it is clearly indicated in verse 24. For the author of the pesher, it may be the Essene community in the broad sense, that is, all those, who having separated from the people, belong to the lot of Melchizedek’s who frees them from the influence of Baal<sup>67</sup>. The interpretation of the phrase “Zion” from Is 52:7c is performed by quoting in II, 24 the passage from Is 8:11, in which the Lord advises the prophet against going along the path of the people: “This is what the Lord says to me with his strong hand upon me, warning me not to follow the way of this people” (מלכת בדרך העם הזה). The author of the pesher, however, changes the subject of this infinitive phrase to “the community of those who establish/maintain the covenant”. Thus, the latter are shown rather unambiguously as those who separate themselves from the people in order to establish/fulfil the covenant.

The second concept selected from Is 52:7c is “your God”. It is preceded by the conjunction *waw*, which introduces a new coordinate complex sentence, as in II, 18. After the personal pronoun, which is certainly interpreted here as a predicate in a nominal sentence, unfortunately the line breaks off, while the reconstructed phrase “[by the hand of Belial]” suggests that Melchizedek is identified with “your God”. Although the reconstruction is hypothetical, already in II, 10-11 אלהים “God” from Ps 82:1 and Ps 7:9 is presented as Melchizedek. After portraying a community of covenant-keepers who have separated from the people, the author of the pesher ascribes to Melchizedek the main causative power of their deliverance from Belial’s rule. This reconstruction thus seems to emphasize the soteriological function of Melchizedek, consistent with the theme of the entire third section of the column (II, 15-25) concerning the “day [of peace]”, in which persons associated with the coming deliverance appear: the prophets, the One Anointed by the Spirit, the recipients of salvation, and Melchizedek as the overarching redeeming force.

<sup>67</sup> Reconstructed here the verb *nsl* “to liberate, to save” in Hiphil appears frequently in typically Essene texts, e.g., CD XIV, 2; 1QpHab VIII, 2; XII, 14; 1QM XIV, 11; 4QpHos II, 11; 4QpPs IV, 21. With one exception in CD XIV, 2, the subject is God or a spiritual being, while the recipient of the action is always a person liberated from a hostile reality (most often the preposition *min*), see F.L. Hossfeld – B. Kalthoff, “nsl,” *GLAT*, V, 1009. In scriptural texts, however, out of 191 forms in the Hiphil conjugation, only in 65% of cases, the subject is a divine being, in 30% a human being, and in 5% a different reality (e.g. personified justice). See Hossfeld – Kalthoff, “nsl,” *GLAT*, V, 1002.

## 2.10. Leviticus 25

The last preserved quote in the second column stems from Lev 25:9 and concerns sounding the horn throughout the land. It is part of a thematic structure concerning the interpretation of the jubilee year as the time of liberation and salvation based on Lev 25. This theme is introduced at the beginning of the column in II, 2, where a quotation from Lev 25:13 makes a reference to the jubilee year, in which every Israelite shall return to their property. In II, 6-7, the author of peshet introduces the theme of the Day of Atonement and liberation based on the text of Lev 25:9-10. The last quote in the second column concerns the proclamation of the time of redemption in the jubilee year.

Table 2.10 Lev 25.9 in 11Q Melch II, 25

<p>והעברת שופר תרועה בהחדש השביעי בעשור להחדש ביום הקפרים תעבירו שופר בקל-ארצכם:</p>	<p>And on the tenth day of the seventh month, you will sound the trumpet; on the Day of Expiation, you will sound the trumpet throughout the land.</p>	<p>Lev 25:9</p>
<p>[השר(?) מלכי צדק אשר יצי]ל[מה מי]ל בליעל ואשר אמר והעברתמה שנפר[בכול]א[רץ]</p>	<p>[prince (?) Melchizedek, who will s]av[e them from the ha]nd of Belial. And as for what he said: “You shall blow the ho[rn ...] in all the [la]nd”.</p>	<p>11QMelch II, 25</p>

After the interpretation of Is 52:7 in II, 23-24, the following text is introduced by a standard introductory phrase “As for what he said”, similarly to that in II, 2, and 11. However, although this quotation concludes the preserved part of the second column, the manner of its introduction suggests the beginning of a new interpretative section, which was certainly concerned with how the time of salvation was to be proclaimed. Given the context of this verse in Lev 25:9, blowing/sounding the trumpet/horn announces the Day of Atonement in the jubilee year. In relation to 11QMelchizedek, the blowing of the horn may also mean the announcement of the Day of Atonement, which, however, is to come not after 49 years have elapsed, as assumed by the Leviticus chapter, but at the end of the tenth jubilee (II, 7-8), and therefore at the end of history. Until the last verse in the second column, the salvation events during the Day of Atonement and the day of peace are announced as future events. Perhaps the blowing of the horn in II:25 marks the announcement of the beginning of Melchizedek’s judicial and redemptive actions. Since the text of the quotation in line 25 ends the column and the beginning of the third column is not preserved, we cannot say anything more about the understanding of the quoted text by the author of the peshet.

The author of the pesher changed the form of the verb העביר “to blow” from imperfectum in the scriptural text to inverted perfectum, without any significant difference in meaning. On the other hand, the omission of the article and the pronominal suffix in “all your land” (Lev 25:9) imparts a universal content to the quote, not limited to one recipient (Israel). Unfortunately, this is only a hypothesis, not supported by the author’s interpretation of the text.

## Conclusions

Analysing the use of the scriptural citations in 11QMelchizedek, we demonstrated the method of thematic pesher used by its author to create his own vision of liberation in the end-times. The author of 11Q13, while choosing the biblical texts, selects only that part of a given scriptural text which allows him to construct his own theological vision of the Day of Atonement and the salvific activity of Melchizedek, presented as אלהים. He further describes Melchizedek’s function as the executor of God’s judgments in relation to Belial and the spirits allied to him.<sup>68</sup> The introduction of quotations as well as terminology concerning the year of jubilee and the Day of Atonement from Leviticus constitutes the soteriological context of Melchizedek’s actions. The author of 11QMelchizedek furthermore uses a typological method to refer to Melchizedek as “God”. He allegorically interprets the mountains as prophets, and occasionally explains a given scriptural passage with another quotation. The text of the pesher does not allow us to perceive any intertextual connection with Gen 14:18-20 and Ps 110:4, where Melchizedek is a king and priest.

Melchizedek’s function as judge in the end times is constructed in II, 9-14 based on quotations from Ps 7:8-9a and 82:2 and consists primarily in the final resolution of the problem of dualism - the struggle between good and evil on the spiritual plane. Although the author of the text is probably a member of the Qumran community, he did not intend to reflect the history of his community in relation to the historical events surrounding the figure of the Teacher of righteousness.<sup>69</sup> His purpose is to portray his community, the covenant-keeping/covenant-establishing people, as those who belong to the Melchizedek lot, subject to instruction concerning the history of the world and deliverance from the power of Belial.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> S.L. Berrin, “Pesharim”, *EDSS* II, 645.

<sup>69</sup> J. Maier, *Il Giudaismo del Secondo Tempio* (Brescia: Paideia 1991) 169.

<sup>70</sup> Gianotto, *Melchisedek*, 46–51.

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