A VISIT TO SOME DEAD SEA SCROLLS. November 2007

As remembered by Bill Huntley and Lillian Larsen

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as a realistic fear of Romans they probably also held desire to withdraw from society and forge a strong community in the desert.

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B. (Bill) that is a great question and one I can answer. The scribes did not want readers later to mention the name of the Deity except in reverence, so when a reader would see those four letters, he would hesitate to say the[m] out loud. Sometimes those 4 letters written in a very old "font" as if in Old English for us, or in "Paleo-Hebrew," from before the Exile to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BCE, readers of the particular scroll would be careful not to speak the name; sometimes the scribes who wrote the scrolls we just saw put just 4 big dots where the name for the Divine one would have appeared in a text. In modern Jewish reading from the scriptures, Jews will say "Adonoi" (my lord) when they see those four letters.

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B. I did have a class in graduate school at Duke years ago, under John Strugnell, (Fields, p. 676) who had studied Hebrew at Oxford, just in time to be invited to Jerusalem to put the small pieces of the manuscripts together. He had us read selections from the Hodayot or the Psalms. I recently found my paper for him on "1QH xv" 12-25. My translation and comments on those 13 verses now seem a very amateur project and my translation was never published, nor should it have been (But I do still have it).

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Q. What about this Enoch manuscript, I never heard of him until today?

L. Enoch is a well-known text that stands outside the canons of both Hebrew and Christian Scripture but seems to have been well known by both. The story attaches itself to the biblical figure of Enoch found in Genesis. Enoch is significant because he is said never to have died a normal death but was taken to be with G d. There are repeated allusions to Enoch in Christian Scripture, particularly in the book of Revelation.

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Charlesworth, James, ed.(1992) Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls. New York: Doubleday. Charlesworth was a class mate of Bill's at Duke, who made a career from the study of literature like the Scrolls in the era between the Hebrew Scriptures endings and the Christian Scriptures beginnings. He is a scholar of the "second generation" of Qumran studies.

Cross, Frank (1961). The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies.(The Haskell Lectures 1956-7) Anchor Books: New York. This is the shortest and clearest statement which demonstrates the excitement of a scholar of the first generation of "handlers"

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Vermes, Geza (1967). The Dead Sea Scrolls: translated with an introduction with commentaries. The Heritage Press: New York. Some of the translations seem to follow the King-James-Translation-English, but the format of this publication is attractive.