

# Orphans in the Dead Sea Scrolls

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This study investigates the literary references to orphans in writings amongst the Qumran texts that were written in Hebrew and can be associated with the sectarian Qumran movement. The study focuses on passages where forms of the word יתום are used. These include the *Damascus Document* (CD 6:16–17), *Hodayot* (1QH<sup>a</sup> 13:22) and *Barkhi Nafshi<sup>a</sup>* (4Q434 1 i 2). The investigation concludes that the references to orphans in these passages do not have the same rhetorical functions. In CD 6, the wordings of authoritative scriptures are adapted to portray orphans and widows as the victims of wrongdoing. In 1QH<sup>a</sup> and 4Q434, however, orphans are mentioned in hymns that praise the Lord's positive treatment of needy people.

## Introduction

Orphans are often mentioned in the literature of the ancient Near East, including the writings of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>1</sup> These fatherless and/or parentless children did not own landed property or inherit ancestral real estate and, therefore, could not make a living off the land. The loss of their fathers meant that orphans were left without an economic base on which to subsist and without the support of a familial network (cf. Simkins 2014:28). They served as 'personifications of a misfortunate state because they had no family to protect them' (King & Stager 2001:53). The protection of vulnerable members of society such as orphans and widows is a common theme in the literary writings of the ancient Near East. It is presented as the will of the gods, the virtue of kings and the duty of people to provide for these children (Fensham 1962:129, 137).<sup>2</sup>

In the writings of the Hebrew Bible, the literary references to orphans (יתומים) appear in a variety of genres (e.g., legal material, prophetic passages, poetic texts and wisdom literature)<sup>3</sup> and reflect the contexts of different historical eras, including the Second Temple period. At this time, the wordings of the Hebrew Bible writings changed during the processes of textual development and transmission. Orphans also feature in some non-biblical compositions of the period. For the study of early Judaism, this raises two sets of questions that merit closer examination. The first set

1. In his discussion of terminology, Sigismund (2009:86) shows that the English word 'orphan' usually refers to a child who has lost both parents, but it can also be used for a fatherless or motherless child. In some passages of the Hebrew Bible, יתום specifically means a fatherless child (cf. HALOT, 451; BDB, 450; Ringgren 1990:479). Cf. also the Hebrew and Greek texts of Sir 4:10, יהיה כאב ליתומים ותמרר בעל, לאלמנות (Ms A; Beentjes 1997:24); γίνου ὀρφανὸς ὡς πατήρ καὶ ἀνὴρ ἄμετρος τῆ ἰσότητος (Ziegler 1980:143), as well as the discussion of the passage by Balla (2011:27–30) and Beentjes (2006:35–48). Nevertheless, יתום can also refer to a child who has neither father nor mother (Renkema 1995:119–122; Sigismund 2009:86, 87 n. 14). Therefore, the English word 'orphan' can be used as a translation equivalent for יתום. With regard to rabbinic literature, the words יתום and יתומה can denote a fatherless boy and girl or a child who lacks both parents (cf. Jastrow 2005:603; Levy 1879:277–278; Sigismund 2009:87 n. 15). This usage of the word in the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic literature is important for an understanding of its semantic potential in early Jewish writings: 'While no one today would deny a mother's loss or absence is a matter of serious concern, the Hebrew points to the fact that in OT Judaism greater importance was attached to fatherlessness than motherlessness. Therefore, being an orphan was in almost all cases tantamount to being fatherless. This held true for the intertestamental and rabbinic eras as well, and thus certainly for the time of Jesus and the early Palestinian Christians' (Sigismund 2009:87).

2. A few well-known examples from ancient Near Eastern texts should suffice to illustrate this point. A hymn to Nanshe says of the Sumerian goddess that she knows the orphan and the widow (nu-siki mu-un-zu nu-mu-un-su mu-un-zu) and that she is the orphan's mother (nu-siki-ka ama-a-ni) (cf. Heimpel 1981:82). Furthermore, the hymn states that Nanshe's herald, the god Hendersağa, judges the lawsuit of the orphan: di-nu-siki-ka i-ni-in-ku-dè (cf. Heimpel 1981:94). According to the prologue of the laws of Ur-Namma (e.g., Nippur tablet iv, 162–165; Sippar tablet ii, 30–33), the king of Ur did not deliver the orphan to the rich or the widow to the mighty (nu-sig lu nig-tuku-ra ba-ra-[na]-jan-gar [nu-]mu-un-su lu á tuku-ra ba-ra-na-an-gar) (cf. Kramer & Falkenstein 1954:43–44, 51; Roth 1997:16; Yildiz 1981:89). See also similar claims made by the rulers of Lagash, Uruinimgina (e.g., Ukg 4, xii, 23–25) and Gudea (e.g., Cylinder B, xviii, 6–7). In the epilogue to his collection of laws, Hammurabi refers to himself as 'the king of justice' (LUGAL mi-ša-ri-im) and states that he set up his stele in Babylon, *inter alia*, so that the powerful do not wrong the powerless and to provide justice for orphans and widows (*dan-nu-um en-ša-am a-na la ḥa-ba-lim* NU.ŠIG NU.MU.SU šu-te-šu-ri-im) (cf. Driver & Miles 1955:96). Concerning the Sumerian and Akkadian words translated as 'orphans' and more passages from Mesopotamian sources that deal with such children, see Volk (2006:58–65). Amongst Ugaritic literature, the mention of orphans in the stories of Aqhat and Kirta is noteworthy. Before Kothar wa-Khasis brings him a bow as a gift, Aqhat's father, Daniel, sits by the gateway and 'Takes care of the case of the widow, Defends the need of the orphan': *ydn dn . almnt . ypr . qpr . ytm* (KTU<sup>3</sup> 1.17, v, 7–8; Parker 1997:58). In the Kirta epic, the king's older son, Yaššib, tries to oust his father and claim the throne for himself. He accuses Kirta of neglecting his royal duties: 'You don't feed the orphan who faces you, Nor the widow who stands at your back': *l pnk l tšihim . ytm . b'd ksk . almnt* (KTU<sup>3</sup> 1.16, vi, 48–50; Greenstein 1997:41). In the Middle Kingdom Egyptian tale of the *Eloquent Peasant*, the high steward, Rensi, is responsible for upholding Ma'at by establishing justice for the wronged peasant. In his first petition, the peasant says to Rensi: 'You are the father of the orphan, the husband of the widow, the brother of the repudiated, the loincloth of the motherless' (*ntk it n nmh hi n ḥsrt sn n wd't šndyt nt iwty mwt.f*) (P.Berlin 3023, 93–95; cf. David 2011:83; Parkinson 1991:18). According to Spell 125 of the *Book of the Dead*, the deceased declares his innocence before the tribunal of 42 gods in the Hall of Two Truths by claiming, *inter alia*, that 'I have not deprived the orphan of his assets' (cf. David 2011:85). Finally, the important sarcophagus inscription of Eshmunazar II, dating to the Achaemenid period, refers twice to the king of Sidon as 'an orphan, son of a widow' (*ytm bn 'lmt*) in the context of a royal genealogy and a notice that he died before his time (cf. KAI 14, 3 and 13).

3. Cf. Exod 22:21, 23; Deut 10:18; 14:29; 16:11, 14; 24:17, 19–21; 26:12, 13; 27:19; Isa 1:17, 23; 9:16; 10:2; Jer 5:28; 7:6; 22:3; 49:11; Ezek 22:7; Hos 14:4; Zech 7:10; Mal 3:5; Pss 10:14, 18; 68:6; 82:3; 94:6; 109:9, 12; 146:9; Job 6:27; 22:9; 24:3, 9; 29:12; 31:17, 21; Prov 23:10; Lam 5:3.

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comprises questions, such as do the different wordings of the Hebrew Bible writings' textual representatives affect the content of the passages in which orphans are mentioned? If so, were these differences in wording and content deliberately introduced or are they simply scribal errors? This question is relevant to the study of the reception of the Hebrew Bible writings, the text-critical investigation of their manuscripts' transmission and the creation of variant readings, as well as the analyses of these writings as potential sources of knowledge about the historical contexts in which they were copied and translated. The second set of questions pertains to the literary references to orphans in early Jewish compositions (apart from those in the Hebrew Bible): How are orphans portrayed in this literature? Do these texts quote, allude to or adapt the wordings of passages from authoritative scriptures that refer to orphans?<sup>4</sup> How are orphans characterised and in what rhetorical contexts are they mentioned? What information do the literary references provide about the status and perception of orphans within the various Jewish communities of the Second Temple period? In view of the complicated issues related to the dating, composition and development of early Jewish writings; the various languages of their composition, transmission and extant textual representatives; their genres and other literary features; as well as the differences in ideological perspectives they represent, simple answers to these sets of questions are not forthcoming. A first step in tackling these questions would be to analyse the passages where references to orphans are found in the textual representatives of early Jewish writings. Given the fact that dates and contexts of these writings' composition and textual development; the methods of scribal transmission (copying and translation); their literary types, tropes and *topoi* and particular theological perspectives contribute to the communication of their contents, such analyses should take the historical, literary and religious dimensions of the passages into consideration.

This study focuses on a subset of the second group of questions regarding orphans in early Jewish literature. It singles out for investigation the literary references to orphans in the writings that are written in Hebrew and closely associated with the sectarian Qumran movement.<sup>5</sup> There are only a handful of manuscripts of such writings that preserve an intact example of יתום or יתומים: 1QH<sup>a</sup> col. XIII l. 22; 1Q69 frg. 7; 4Q434 frg. 1 col. I l. 2 and 4Q487 frg. 47. יתומים also appears in the *Damascus Document*. The relevant passage has, unfortunately, not survived on any of the 4QD manuscripts,

4. 'Authoritative scriptures' here refer to the various compositions that were considered binding for beliefs and conduct by groups in the Second Temple period. For a discussion of terminological issues in connection with such writings, see Ulrich (2002:21–35). See also Lim (2010:303–322) and VanderKam (2002:91–109) on questions relating to the Dead Sea scrolls and authoritative scriptures.

5. For the purposes of this study, I follow Jokiranta's use of the designation 'Qumran movement': 'The 'Qumran movement' stands for those groups that are responsible for preserving, composing, transmitting, and interpreting the Qumran corpus and other traditions not preserved to us. The designation is not meant to convey the idea that the groups were restricted to the settlement at Qumran, but it is assumed that this location played some important role in the wider movement. 'Movement' allows the idea of development and continuity over time; it is not restricted to a certain moment' (2013:50 n. 140; cf. also 2008:85 n. 1). This movement can justifiably be referred to as 'sectarian'. Collins (2010:7) defines 'sect' in the following terms: 'A sect is first of all a voluntary association, and as such presupposes a deliberate choice and a high level of intentionality on the part of its members. More specifically, it is a voluntary association that is in tension to a greater or lesser degree with the wider society of which it is a part'.

but it is found in CD ms A 6:17. The word יתום appears on two individual fragments of 1Q69 and 4Q487, respectively (cf. Baillet 1982:10; Milik 1955:148). Seeing as these texts are therefore too fragmentary for analysis, this study will only examine the passages in 1QH<sup>a</sup>, 4Q434 and CD. The goal of the study is to analyse the wordings of passages in these writings where orphans are mentioned in order to determine how יתום features in the three writings as rhetorical acts.<sup>6</sup> The results of the analyses are presented as interpretative comments on the portrayal of orphans in CD 6:17 (within its larger literary context), followed by a brief comparison with the passages in the *Hodayot* and *Barkhi Nafshi*<sup>7</sup> that refer to orphans.

## Orphans in the Damascus Document

The *Damascus Document* mentions orphans at least once in a passage (CD 6:11–7:6) from the Admonitions part, which deals with the desired conduct of the people 'who have entered into the new covenant in the land of Damascus' (CD 6:19).<sup>7</sup> The text of the passage in question reads as follows<sup>8</sup>:

vacat	וכל אשר הובאו בבית	6:11
	לבלתי בוא אל המקדש להאיר מזבחו חנם ויהיו מסגירי	6:12
	הדלת אשר אמר אל מי בכם יסגור דלתי vacat ולא תאירו מזבחי	6:13
	חנם אם לא ישמרו לעשות כפרושה התורה לקץ הרשע ולהבדל	6:14
	מבני השחת ולהנור מהון הרשעה הטמא בנדר ובהרם	6:15
	ובהון המקדש ולגזול את עניי עמו להיות אלמנ[ו]ת שללם	6:16
	ואת יתומים ירצחו ולהבדיל בין הטמא לטהור ולהודיע בין	6:17
	הקודש לחול ולשמור את יום השבת כפרושה ואת המועדות	6:18
	ואת יום התענית כמצאת באי הברית החדשה בארץ דמשק	6:19
	להרים את הקדשים כפירושיהם לאהוב איש את אחיו	6:20
	כמהו ולהחזיק ביד עני ואביון וגר vacat ולדרוש איש את שלום	6:21
	אחיו ולא ימעל איש בשאר בשרו להזיר מן הזנות	7:1
	כמשפט להוכיח איש את אחיו כמצוה ולא לנטור	7:2
	מיום ליום ולהבדל מכל הטמאות כמשפטם ולא ישקץ	7:3
	איש את רוח קדשו כאשר הבדיל אל להם כל המתהלכים	7:4
	באלה בתמים קדש על פי כל יסורו ברית אל נאמנות להם	7:5
	לחיותם אלף דור vacat	7:6

(6:11) And all who have been brought into the covenant, (6:12) not to come to the sanctuary in order to kindle his altar in vain, should be closers of (6:13) the door, of whom God said: 'O that there was someone amongst you who would

6. Rhetoric, the persuasive and/or eloquent use of language in speaking or writing, involves a symbolic act (i.e., the wording of the speech or writing), an acting person or people, an audience to whom the act is addressed, a setting in which the act takes place and a rhetorical purpose (cf. Lawrie 2006:142). Seeing as it is not possible to treat all of these dimensions of rhetoric within the limited space of a short study such as this, the analysis only focuses on the wordings of 1QH<sup>a</sup>, 4Q434 and CD where יתום appears and discusses a number of historical, literary and religious aspects of these wordings.

7. Some editions have the reading יתומים in the text of CD 14:14. Cf., for example, Baumgarten and Schwartz (1995:56) and Lohse (1964:96). According to such a reconstruction of the broken text, CD 14:14 also refers to orphans. However, Abegg (2014:104) reconstructs the word in question as יתום and not יתומים. The edition of García Martínez and Tigchelaar (1997:574) has יתום. I prefer the reading of Abegg, based on the photograph of the manuscript in Broshi (1992:36). This reading finds support from the wording of the parallel text in 4Q266 frg. 10 col. I line 7: יתומי: ממנו: ית. Cf. Baumgarten (1996:72) and Baumgarten et al. (2006:62). Accordingly, this study's discussion of orphans in CD will be limited to the occurrence of יתומים in CD 6:17.

8. The Hebrew text is quoted from the edition prepared by Abegg (2014:90, 92).



to characterise the words which CD 6:13 shares with Mal 1:10 as a 'quotation', if by 'quotation' is meant a *verbatim* citation from the wording of a known textual representative. Nevertheless, the text of CD 6:13–14 undoubtedly alludes to the passage from Malachi. This means that the wording of the *Damascus Document* deliberately, albeit implicitly, calls to mind the Malachi passage and the meaning of the latter affects the content of the former.

In Malachi 1:6–14, YHWH Šbā'ôt accuses the priests of dishonouring him and despising his name by defiling his altar through the sacrifice of blind, lame, sick or blemished animals. Since the deity is not pleased with these inferior and unacceptable offerings, he utters the wish (v. 10)<sup>20</sup> that someone would close the doors to the temple courtyard so that the priests can no longer bring sacrifices in vain.<sup>21</sup> If YHWH Šbā'ôt does not accept the sacrifices, they are useless and the text can be taken to suggest that no sacrifice is more desirable than the ones that are brought by priests who execute their office wickedly.<sup>22</sup> The allusion to Mal 1:10 in CD 6:13–14 recalls these words of YHWH Šbā'ôt and his negative evaluation of the priests' offerings. In the *Damascus Document*, this prophetic passage is applied to the circumstances of the members of the new covenant. The purpose of establishing the covenant relationship was not for them to come to the sanctuary in order to participate in making unacceptable offerings on God's altar (cf. the purpose infinitive construct clauses in CD 6:12: לבלתי בוא אל המקדש להאיר מבוחר הנם). On the contrary, by invoking the terminology of the Malachi passage, the text of CD 6:12–14 obliges the members of the new covenant to fulfil God's wish for people who will not perpetuate the pollution of his altar in a time when the sacrificial cult in the sanctuary is performed in a manner that is unacceptable to the deity.<sup>23</sup> The defilement of the sanctuary is an important theme that reappears, together with concepts such as purity and impurity, holy and profane, in the clauses that follow in CD 6:14–7:6. It is in connection with the defilement of the sanctuary through wealth that the text of the *Damascus Document* mentions orphans.

(footnote continues...)

'(because also amongst you, doors will be closed'). Cf. Ziegler (1967:329–330). The rendering διούτι was probably based on a misreading of כִּי אֲנִי (Gelston 2010:149\*). The translator of LXX Malachi might have been responsible for this error, but it is also possible that כִּי was already written in the Hebrew manuscript he used for the translation. There is some evidence in various textual representatives of the Hebrew Bible writings that the letters *beth* and *mem* were sometimes confused. See Tov (2012:230–231). In the LXX translation, ἄν is represented by καὶ and the translator adjusted the syntax to make θύραι, the equivalent of דלתים, the subject of a future passive verb, συγγεγραμμένων. The latter does not have an equivalent for the conjunction of its Hebrew counterpart, וַיִּסְגֵּר. Apart from this, there are no distinctive correspondences between the LXX text (and its *Vorlage*, as far as its wording can be ascertained) and the text of CD 6:13.

20.The interrogative and *yiqtol* clauses in the first colon of Malachi 1:10 can be understood optatively. Cf. GKC, 476–477 and Waltke and O'Connor (1990:321). In the wording of CD 6:13, the wish is introduced by the interrogative כִּי.

21.With regard to דלתים in the MT, Petersen (1995:183) argues that the 'doors are probably those of the gates to the temple courtyard and the priests responsible for opening and closing those doors are the Levitical gatekeepers'. Cf. also Smith (1984:312) and Rudolph (1976:262 n. 5).

22.See the comments of Hill (1998:185) and Elliger (1975:196).

23.It is debated whether this passage implies that the members of the Qumran movement were expected to separate completely from the temple cult as it was practiced during the time of the text's transmission by the sect. Cf. the comments of, for example, Goodman (2010:81–91); Collins (2010:23); Regev (2003:258–260); and Murphy O'Connor (1985:234–238). In keeping with the rhetoric of the Malachi passage, the 'closers of the door' image does not imply a blanket condemnation of the temple cult as such.

After the allusion to Mal 1:10, the text of CD 6:14 continues by presenting the second obligation in the passage as the opposite of kindling God's altar in vain. In contrast to making useless sacrifices, the members of the new covenant should take care to perform certain prescribed duties.<sup>24</sup> The duties are indicated by a number of infinitives construct that function as the complements of the *yiqtol* verb, ישמר. The subjects of this verb should carefully adhere to the exact interpretation (פרוש) of the Torah during the 'era of wickedness' (קץ הרשע),<sup>25</sup> the observance of festivals (המועדות) and the day of the fast (יום התענית),<sup>26</sup> the Sabbath day (יום השבת),<sup>27</sup> as well as the offerings of 'holy things' (הקדשים).<sup>28</sup> Each person should carefully preserve good interpersonal relationships by loving his brother as himself, seeking the peace of his brother and not acting unfaithfully towards a blood relation, rebuking his brother without keeping a grudge, and supporting (lit. 'taking the hand of' [להחזיק ביד]) the vulnerable members of society, namely people in need (עני), the poor (ואביון) and the sojourner (גר). This last obligation is noteworthy in view of the clauses that mention the negative treatment of the widows and orphans in CD 6:16–17. These clauses form part of a group of prescriptions that oblige the members of the new covenant to make a distinction between what is pure and impure and what is holy and profane, to separate themselves from all impurities, according to their precept, and not to defile the holy spirits which God has apportioned for them.<sup>29</sup> They should also abstain from fornication,<sup>30</sup> in accordance with the precept, keep apart from 'the sons of the pit' (בני השחת) and refrain from 'impure wealth of wickedness' (הון הרשע הטמא). The obligation to steer clear of the 'impure wealth of wickedness' is motivated by a subordinate clause that refers to the unfortunate fates of widows and orphans (CD 6:16–17):

והצרי סימותי תאו מללש ת[ן]מלא תויהל ומע יינע תא לזוגלו

for by robbing the needy of his people, widows become their booty and they murder orphans.

24.The combination of the conjunction and negative particle, אֵם לֹא, in CD 6:14 has an adversative sense. It introduces a clause that expresses an antithesis to the action of the verb in the preceding clause. אֵם לֹא is used in a similar way in passages from the Hebrew Bible. Cf. Gen 24:37–38 and Ps 131:1–2. For a different interpretation of אֵם לֹא, see Murphy O'Connor (1969–1971:555).

25.With regard to the idea of obedience to a particular interpretation of Torah during the 'era of wickedness', see also CD 6:8–10.

26.The 'day of the fast' refers to the Day of Atonement (Baumgarten 1999:184–191).

27.The prescriptions regarding the observance of festivals call to mind issues related to the festival calendar and the importance of calendar differences for the formation of sects. The Qumran movement adhered to a 364-day solar calendar for the dating of festivals, whereas a 354-day lunar calendar was followed at the Jerusalem temple (cf. Collins 2010:18; Talmon 2006:25–58). In this regard, Talmon (2006:38) quotes CD 6:11–19 and points out that '[t]he difference of ten days between the Jewish 354-day lunar year and the *yahad's* 364-day solar year caused the Covenanters to abstain from participation in the temple cult, because according to their timetable the sacrifices were offered there on profane days (cf. *Jub.* 6:32–38), and therefore were sacrilegious'.

28.Campbell (1995:142) notes that 'the holy things' in CD 6:20 denote the portions of sacrifices that were set apart for priests (cf. Num 18:8–19). See also Murphy O'Connor (1971:215).

29.For the Qumran movement, clear distinctions between pure and/or holy and impure and/or profane were important. Such distinctions mark the border between the members of the new covenant and other people. Purity and holiness have to do with right cultic and moral conduct, that is, proper religious practices and moral behaviour in accordance with their interpretation of the Torah. Wrong ritual practices and immoral behaviour defile the sanctuary and the people who take part in them. On the important topic of purity in the Dead Sea scrolls, see, for example, Klawans (2010:377–402).

30.Fornication (נות) is one of the three 'nets of Belial' (שלושת מצודות בליעל) mentioned in CD 4:15–18. The other two nets are arrogance (הון) [or wealth (הון), if the text of CD is emended] and defilement of the temple (טמא המקדש).

These clauses present a combination of words from Isa 10:2 and Ps 94:6.<sup>31</sup> The text adapts the wording of Isa 10:2 by dropping the word *משפט*, the *nomen regens* of a construct phrase and the direct object of the initial verb of the clause, and replacing it with an object marker. It also changes the number of the suffix of *עם* from a first-person singular to a third-person masculine singular, and substitutes the *yiqtol* verb *יבחו* for *ירצחו* from Ps 94:6. Although the introduction of another verb from a different passage means that CD 6:16–17 does not exhibit the same semantic parallelism as the bicolon in Isa 10:2, the text of the *Damascus Document* retains the idea, communicated by the imagery in both the Isaiah and Psalm passages, that the subsistence of widows and orphans is placed in jeopardy by the unscrupulous deeds of unjust people.<sup>32</sup> The ‘sons of the pit’ mentioned in CD 6:15 assume this role in the *Damascus Document*, seeing as they are the only candidates for the subjects of the verb *ירצחו* and the referents of the third-person masculine plural suffix of *שללם*.<sup>33</sup> The threat they pose to the subsistence of the widows and orphans is described by the infinitive construct *גזול* (‘to tear away, seize, rob’).<sup>34</sup> This verb elaborates on the manner in which the wealth is acquired through wickedness (and thereby becomes impure). If widows and orphans trusted the temple treasury to safeguard their money, as the legendary story in 2 Macc 3 indicates, the wording of CD 6:16–17 could be taken to suggest that the ‘sons of the pit’ misappropriate the monetary deposits of the needy people.<sup>35</sup> This exploitation puts the widows and the orphans at risk and contradicts the command in the Torah not to mistreat these needy members of society (cf., e.g., Exod 22:22–23). The ‘sons of the pit’ are therefore implicitly accused of transgressing the Torah. By obtaining wealth through the violation of the Torah, the money is contaminated by moral impurity. This ‘impure wealth of wickedness’ is associated with vows, dedications and the temple treasury (בגדר ובהרם ובהון המקדש). It could refer

to the donations that were earmarked to cover the expenses involved in the sacrificial cult (cf. Regev 2003:258). In this regard, the story in 2 Macc 3 makes clear that the money in the temple treasury that was used to pay for the sacrifices should not be confused with the deposits of the widows, orphans and other individuals. Furthermore, the allusion to Mal 1:10 in CD 6:13–14 implies that the *Damascus Document* communicates a negative appraisal of the way in which the sacrificial cult was performed. Bringing these data to bear on the interpretation of CD 6:16–17, the adapted wording from Isa 10:2 and Ps 94:6 might be understood as an indictment against the ‘sons of the pit’ for using the money of the temple treasury, including that which belongs to the needy people such as widows and orphans, to finance what was perceived to be an impure sacrificial cult. The contamination of the money in the temple treasury through the wrong done to widows and orphans probably pollutes the sanctuary itself.<sup>36</sup> On this interpretation, CD 6:15–17 complements the earlier allusion in CD 6:13–14 to the defilement of the sanctuary by wicked priestly practices.

## Orphans in the Hodayot and Barkhi Nafshi<sup>a</sup>

The foregoing comments on the passage of the *Damascus Document*, in which orphans appear, show that the text borrows clauses from authoritative scriptures to portray fatherless/parentless children and widows as victims of wrongdoing. This picture of orphans in the *Damascus Document* is different from the references to such children in the texts of 1QH<sup>a</sup> and 4Q434. In these two compositions, the word *יתום* occurs in the contexts of songs of praise to the Lord.

The relevant passage in 1QH<sup>a</sup> is found in col. XIII ll. 22–23 (cf. Stegemann & Schuller 2009:168):

ברוך אתה אדוני כי לא עזבתה יתום ולא בייתה רש כי גבורתכה לא [ן ק] וְכבודכה לאין מדה

Blessed are you, O Lord, because you have not abandoned an orphan and you have not despised a poor person; because your strength is witho[ut end] and your glory without measure.

These clauses are the opening cola of a Teacher Hymn that continues until col. XV l. 8 (Stegemann & Schuller 2009:169, 184, 200). After the incipit, ברוך אתה אדוני,<sup>37</sup> there are two sets of bicola that are each introduced with the conjunction *כי*. These conjunctions present the reasons why the speaker considers *אדוני* to be praiseworthy. Both sets of bicola exhibit syntactic and semantic parallelism. In the first bicolon, the verbal phrase *לא עזבתה לא* corresponds with *לא בייתה*, while *יתום* and *רש*, the direct objects of the two *qatal* verbs, also correspond with one another. The second bicolon comprises

36. On the defilement of the temple and its cult through the impure money, see Regev (2003:258, 2004:395).

37. The original opening word of the hymn in this manuscript was *אודכה*, but it has been deleted with cancellation dots. This is a good example of cancellation dots that were placed above and below the letters of the word that the scribe wanted to correct. Cf. Tov (2004:187–188). The phrase *ברוך אתה אדוני* was added in the interlinear space above the corrected word by a different scribe (scribe B) from the one who first wrote the text of the column (scribe A). According to Stegemann and Schuller (2009:173–174), col. XVII l. 38 is another example of a passage where the words *ברוך אתה אדוני* begin a new hymn.

31. Cf. Campbell (1995:145). The wording of the relevant clause in MT Isa 10:2 is *גזול* and *משפט עניי נמי להיות אלמנות שללם* ואת יתומים יבחו. Apart from the *plene* spelling of the verbs *גזול* and *יבחו*, the text of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is the same as the MT. Only traces of the last word, [יב], are preserved in 4QIsa<sup>a</sup>. The bicolon of MT Ps 94:6 reads *ואלמנה וגר ירצחו*. The texts are quoted from the following editions: Elliger and Rudolph (1977:690); Ulrich and Flint (2010:18); and Skehan and Ulrich (1997:94).

32. In Isa 10, they are the ones who ‘enact unjust policies’ (ההקקים חקקי און). The psalm refers to the culprits as the proud (גאים), the wicked (רשעים) and those who do injustice (און יפעלי און).

33. On the meaning of the phrase ‘sons of the pit’, see the comments of Murphy (2002:76–77).

34. Cf. HALOT, 186; BDB, 159. From a grammatical point of view, the *yiqtol* verb *ירצחו* continues the sense of the infinitive construct phrase *גזול*. On this function of the *yiqtol*, see GKC, 352 and Joüon and Muraoka (2005:438). The infinitive construct *להיות* indicates the outcome of the preceding verbal phrase.

35. The episode of 2 Macc 3 deals with Heliodorus, the top official in the Seleucid kingdom, and the divine protection of the treasury (γαζοφυλάκιον) at the temple. When king Seleucus IV (185–175 BCE) hears about incredible sums of money, supposedly held in the Jerusalem temple, that were not reserved for expenses connected with the sacrificial cult, he charges Heliodorus to obtain these funds for the royal coffers (2 Macc 3:7–8). Upon Heliodorus’ arrival in Jerusalem, the pious high priest, Onias III, points out that there are deposits belonging to widows and orphans (παρκαταθηκάς εἶναι γνηρῶν τε καὶ ὀρφανῶν) and money of an important person, Hircanus the Tobiad (2 Macc 3:10). The sum total amounts to 400 talents of silver and 200 of gold. Simon, the ‘steward of the temple’ (ἡγεμὸν τοῦ ἱεροῦ), opponent of Onias, and source of the rumour of untold wealth in the temple, has misrepresented the facts, according to the high priest (2 Macc 3:11). Furthermore, removing the money is completely out of the question. Doing so would wrong the people who have put their trust in the sanctity, augustness and inviolability of the temple where their funds were deposited (2 Macc 3:12). Heliodorus, however, remains resolved to carry out the orders of the king and to confiscate the deposited money. It is only through divine intervention that the money is kept safe in the temple treasury (2 Macc 3:24–40). The Greek text is quoted from the edition of 2 Maccabees prepared by Kappler and Hanhart (1976:56).

two parallel nominal clauses with the nouns גבורתה and כבודה as the two subjects and the prepositional phrases ללא [ין ק] and לאין מדה as the predicates. These bicola describe the Lord's praiseworthy deeds and character by highlighting the deity's acceptance of people in need (exemplified by an orphan and a poor person), on the one hand, and his vast power and immeasurable glory, on the other hand.

With regard to 4Q434, יתומים appears in the second line of the first column of this manuscript's first fragment (Weinfeld & Seely 1999a:270):

ברכי נפשי את אדוני מעל כול נפלאותיו עד עולם וברוך שמו כי הציל נפש אביון ואת  
ענו לא בזא ולא שכח צרת דלים פקה עיניו אל דל ושועת יתומים שמע ויש אוזניו אל  
שועקתם

Bless my soul the Lord because of all his marvellous deeds forever. Blessed is his name, because he saved the life of the poor and the needy, he did not despise and he did not forget the distress of the helpless. He opened his eyes to the helpless and the cry of the orphans he heard and he extended his ear to their cry for help.

The first clause in line 1, ברכי נפשי את אדוני מעל כול נפלאותיו עד עולם, appears to be a general introduction to the hymn. The phrase ברכי נפשי is known from Psalms 103:1, 2, 22 and 104:1, 35 and indicates that an individual speaker praises the Lord. The speaker identifies all the Lord's marvellous deeds as the cause for the praise.<sup>39</sup> These deeds are probably the ones enumerated in the next sections of the hymn. The *qatal* and *wayyiqtol* verbal forms in these sections point to actions performed by the Lord in the past. Nevertheless, the temporal adjunct עד עולם in the first clause implies that these deeds are worthy of praise into the furthest imaginable future. The following clause repeats the blessing and like the second colon of Psalm 103:1, the Lord's name is the object of the verb ברוך שמו. The conjunction כי then introduces the reasons why the name of the Lord is praiseworthy. These reasons are listed in short stanzas that specify what the Lord has done and what the Lord has not done.<sup>40</sup> In the first stanza (ll. 1–3), the objects of these actions are called poor (אביון), needy (ענו), helpless (דלים) and orphans (יתומים). In the following stanzas (ll. 3–4, 4–6), the objects of the Lord's deeds are the needy (עניים). All the third-person masculine plural suffixes attached to verbs, nouns and prepositions in lines 3–6 refer to the עניים.

The stanza in which יתומים appears consists of six clauses. The first one is a monocolon: the Lord saved the life of the poor (הציל נפש אביון). The next two clauses form a bicolon and exhibit a chiasitic structure:

38. With regard to the reconstruction of this phrase, see the arguments of Stegemann and Schuller (2009:174) against other proposed possibilities.

39. The preposition על has a causal sense in this clause. The reading in the manuscript is לעל, but the *mem* has been deleted with a cancellation dot. The correct reading is found in the parallel text in 4Q437 frg. 1 col. 1. 1 (cf. Weinfeld & Seely 1999b:310).

40. The term stanza is used here to refer to a unit of a poem that is made up of a combination of one or more strophes. A strophe is understood as 'a verse-unit made up of one or more cola, and is a general term for monocolon, bicolon, tricolon and so forth' (Watson 1994:333).

ואת ענו לא בזא  
ולא שכח צרת דלים

According to these cola, the Lord did not reject the needy and helpless by despising the former and forgetting the distress of the latter. The remainder of the clauses in this stanza constitute a tricolon. The first and third of these cola follow the same word order:

prepositional phrase	direct object	verbal form
אל דל	עיניו	פקח
אל שועקתם	אוזניו	ויש

These cola also match in terms of content. The Lord employs his visual and auditory senses to pay attention to the helpless and orphans. The middle clause of the tricolon, ושועת יתומים שמע, introduces the topic of the orphans<sup>41</sup> and is semantically parallel to the third colon: The Lord has heard the fatherless/parentless children's cry for help.<sup>42</sup> The tricolon stresses that the Lord is favourably disposed towards the helpless and orphans and that he responds positively to the plight of this pair.

In the following stanza, ll. 3–4, the speaker continues the song of praise by elaborating on how the Lord has endeavoured to enable the needy to know his will: 'In the abundance of his compassion, he has been gracious to the needy (ברוב רחמיו חנן עניים), and he has opened their eyes to see his ways (ויפקח עיניהם לראות את דרכיו) and their ears to hear his teaching (ואזנן [הם] לשמוע למודו). And he has circumcised the foreskin of their heart (וימול עורלות לבם) and he has delivered them on account of his lovingkindness (ויצילם למען חסדו) and he has set their feet firm on the way (ויכן לדרך גלגל)'. The use of figurative language, especially the body part imagery, in these cola is noteworthy: Weinfeld and Seely (1999a:261) suggest that '(t)hrough this series of images the *Barkhi Nafshi* hymns eloquently teach God's total conversion of his people and his ability to transform them by implanting in them pious qualities'. From this perspective, the adjective עניים in this stanza need not be understood literally. If this is true of עניים in line 3, the designations דלים, ענו, אביון, and יתומים in the previous stanza can be treated in the same way, since they form part of the same larger sense unit (frg. 1 col. 1 ll. 1–6).<sup>43</sup> These words can be interpreted as labels the speaker uses to refer to those people whom he represents and the Lord allowed to know the divine will. This interpretation is of some importance for the study of literary references to orphans in early Jewish writings, seeing as it is not common

41. The word order of the clause (the placement of the direct object, יתומים, in front of the verb, שמע), indicates a change of topic from the Lord's open eyes to the orphans' call for help.

42. With regard to the final word of the tricolon, זעקתם, the scribe originally wrote שועתם. This word was then transformed into זעקתם by deleting the *shin* with a cancellation dot, reshaping the *waw* into a *zayin* and adding a *qoph* between the *ayin* and the *taw*' (cf. Tov 2004:229). Some scholars refer to these changes as corrections. In other words, they assume that the scribe who copied the manuscript erroneously wrote שועתם and then corrected it to read זעקתם. (cf. the comments of Weinfeld & Seely 1999a:271 and Raymond 2014:31). However, another possibility is that a copyist wanted to add variety to the cola. Instead of merely repeating the same word in two consecutive clauses, he changed the original reading, שועתם, into a synonym, זעקתם.

43. Lines 1–6 of the first column on fragment 1 of 4Q434 can be interpreted as a unit of content on the basis of the space in the manuscript after the last word in l. 6 that extends until the end of the column. Such a space marks a major division in content (cf. an 'open section' or פרישה פתוחה in the Masoretic tradition) (Tov 2004:145–146). The large indentation at the beginning of l. 12 of the same manuscript indicates another big division in the column.

in these texts to use יתום (or its equivalents in other languages) rhetorically as a self-designation in positive contexts.<sup>44</sup>

In contrast to this use of יתומים in 4Q434, the orphan and poor person in 1QH<sup>a</sup> col. XIII l. 22 seem to function simply as exemplars of needy people whom the text claims the deity accepts. Nevertheless, there are some striking similarities between the literary contexts of 1QH<sup>a</sup> and 4Q434, where יתום occurs. In both texts, יתום appears near the beginning of a hymn in which an individual (a first-person singular speaker) addresses the Lord (in the second-person) and blesses the deity. The speakers in these hymns identify the Lord's treatment of orphans as one of the reasons why the deity is praiseworthy. They mention orphans together with other people in need (but, interestingly, not widows). Furthermore, the formulations of the clauses in which יתום are used in 1QH<sup>a</sup> and 4Q434 do not seem to be dependent on passages from authoritative scriptures. Unlike the *Damascus Document*, the hymns of 1QH<sup>a</sup> XIII 22–XV 8 and 4Q434 do not present the orphans as victims of wrongdoing; rather, they communicate the Lord's commitment to and favourable disposition towards such vulnerable members of society.

## Conclusion

The study has taken historical, literary and religious elements of the wordings in three Hebrew texts associated with the Qumran movement into consideration in its examination of their references to orphans. Although the study does not present exhaustive treatments of the rhetorical acts, it shows that orphans do not feature in exactly the same way in the *Damascus Document*, *Hodayot* and *Barkhi Nafshi*. There are some similarities between the hymns of 1QH<sup>a</sup> and 4Q434 in this regard but also a noteworthy difference. In contrast to the deity's positive treatment of orphans lauded in these songs of praise, the *Damascus Document* adapts passages from authoritative scriptures and utilises their references to the wrongdoing against orphans and widows to accuse the 'sons of the pit' of disobeying the Torah, contaminating the temple treasury with moral impurity and thereby defiling the sanctuary.

These findings contribute to a better understanding of the ways in which orphans are portrayed in writings that are closely associated with the Qumran movement. These writings are important, but they are, of course, not the only sources that yield information regarding fatherless and/or parentless children in the Second Temple period. The literary

44. Concerning the Qumran movement, the study of Keck (1966:54–78) shows that the sectarian infrequently refer to themselves with designations such as 'the poor' or 'the needy' in their writings. A well-known example is the phrase רדק יתומים, 'the congregation of the poor ones' in 4QpPs<sup>a</sup> frgs. 1–10 col. II l. 10 (cf. Horgan 2014:462). See the discussion of this designation in Jokiranta (2008:98–101, 2013:138–142). One of the debated issues in the study of the *Barkhi Nafshi* texts is their provenance (Pajunen 2012:357). Weinfeld and Seely (1999a:258), for example, are of the opinion that the hymns in the *Barkhi Nafshi* manuscripts are sectarian compositions, while Brooke (2000:79) argues that these texts probably did not have a sectarian origin. The provenance of the texts is important for the interpretation of their wordings, but this issue cannot be definitively decided within the limited scope of this study. Nevertheless, even if the Qumran movement did not compose these hymns, they were still probably read by members of the sect. It stands to reason that such readers could have appropriated the designations in the first stanzas of 4Q434 ('poor', 'needy', 'helpless' and 'orphans') to themselves.

references to orphans in the textual representatives of Hebrew Bible writings that were transmitted during this time and those in other early Jewish literature deserve closer investigation. The results of such investigations can be complimented and refined by data on the status of children provided by other sources such as archaeological and epigraphic evidence, as well as by studies on the material culture of early Jewish communities.<sup>45</sup>

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45. Such studies on orphans in Jewish communities of the Second Temple period need to analyse not only the perspectives on orphans and the situation of these children as evidenced by the available sources but also treat topics such as the concept of childhood in antiquity, children's roles in families and the economy, societal welfare mechanisms for people in need, possibilities of adoption or guardianship, abandonment, slavery and violence against children, the differences in the situation of boys and girls, the circumstances of children in Jewish communities located in different geographical areas, and so on. On the social and economic situation of children in Second Temple Judea, see Adams (2014:58–80). Regarding methodological issues in the study of childhood in antiquity, see, for example, Steinberg (2009:251–269) and Lux and Kunz-Lübcke (2006:11–17).

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