

Qoheleth's Impact on the Qumranic Presentation of the Eschatological Worldview (4QMysteries and 4QInstruction)

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Qoheleth is a theologian of despair. He entertains a deep skepticism that contrasts with traditional wisdom characteristic of optimism.¹⁾ For the sage, wisdom holds only limited value yet death ever pervades the thought of humans who know the grave that awaits them is to be their eternal home. Qoheleth's

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1) Leo G. Perdue, "Wisdom and Apocalyptic: The Case of Qoheleth", Florentino García Martínez, ed., *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, BETL 168 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 245; Qoheleth's doubts about the certainty of human knowledge might be comparable to the texts that are inscribed on Egyptian and Hellenistic tombstones and the philosophers of the New Academy that dominated Plato's old school for more than two centuries (see especially Arcesilaus and Carneades). For Egyptian grave autographies, see Olivier Perdu, "Ancient Egyptian Biographies", *CANE* 4 (1995), 2243-2254; Andrea M. Gnirs, "Die Ägyptische Autobiographie", Antonio Loprieno ed., *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 191-241; For Greek and Hellenistic Jewish grave inscriptions, see Imre Peres, *Griechische Grabinschriften und Neutestamentliche Eschatologie*, WUNT 157 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) and the earlier studies of Nikolaus Müller, *Die Inschriften der Jüdischen Katakomben am Monteverde zu Rom*, Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Wissenschaft des Judentums; Schriften (Leipzig: Gustav Fock, 1919); Jean-Baptiste Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum* 1-2 (Rome: Pontificio Instituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1936-1952); Pieter W. van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs. An Introductory Survey of a Millennium of Jewish Funerary Epigraphy (300 BCE-700 CE)* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1991).

radical thesis that death cancels everything²⁾ is rooted more in the more incisive acuity of his gifts of observation than in his loss of trust in the goodness of God.³⁾ In a sense, nevertheless, Qoheleth's skeptical overtones, which assume "religious and intellectual crisis,"⁴⁾ appear to penetrate into every conceivable sphere of human epistemology, from the knowledge of God and divine action and presence, to pragmatic knowledge of human behavior, to knowledge itself, and especially to the new ideas emerging in apocalyptic.⁵⁾

If Qoheleth reflects the crisis of the mythical *regressus ad initium* that is the threat of a return to the chaos prior to the creative world,⁶⁾ the sapiential texts from the Qumran community take a distinct stance toward the crisis in their own terms. 4QMysteries and 4QInstruction, for example, seem to seriously demur to Qoheleth's teachings, such as the futile death of the righteous, the concept of a distant God, and an understanding of human toil and pleasure. In developing various arguments against Qoheleth, both Qumran wisdom texts demonstrate that "a sapiential text can combine elements from both apocalypticism and traditional wisdom."⁷⁾

Moreover, the judicious adoption of Qoheleth's motifs and themes on the part of both Qumran texts generates competing tones with the sage, particularly in terms of the matter of death and retribution. The two manuscripts often design stylistic phrases to modify or take advantage of their original meaning in their earlier context of Qoheleth's discourse. In particular, the Qumran sapiential

2) James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 117, summarizes Qoheleth's five theses as follows: "(1) death cancels everything; (2) wisdom cannot achieve its goal; (3) God is unknowable; (4) the world is crooked; and (5) pleasure commends itself."

3) Pace Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, James D. Martin, trans. (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1972), 234.

4) James L. Crenshaw, "Ecclesiastes, the Book of (Qoheleth)", James L. Crenshaw, ed., *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions: Collected Writings on Old Testament Wisdom* (Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995), 509.

5) Leo G. Perdue, "Wisdom and Apocalyptic", 245-258, contends that the apocalyptic sages in the Hellenistic period were most likely the major opponents of Qoheleth. This view is interesting, but I would make sure that Qoheleth is not their contemporary but their predecessor.

6) James L. Crenshaw, "Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom: Prolegomenon", James L. Crenshaw, ed., *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions: Collected Writings on Old Testament Wisdom* (Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995), 118.

7) Matthew J. Goff, "Wisdom, Apocalypticism, and the Pedagogical Ethos of 4QInstruction", Benjamin G. Wright III, et al., eds., *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism*, SBL Symposium Series 35 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 58.

manuscripts forge an eschatological worldview of the theophanic judgment and blissful afterlife in the close relationship with Qoheleth's sayings. As a result, "an intertextual structure or networks of meaning in which the textual elements receive their meaning"⁸⁾ is built between Qoheleth's text and the Qumran manuscripts.⁹⁾ In finding and dealing with such intertextual relationship,¹⁰⁾ interpreters are invited to "direct their attention to the point of intersection of the unmerged voices"¹¹⁾ in order to describe a measure of dialogical truth between the Qumran compositions and the biblical wisdom.

From this standpoint, I will probe Qoheleth's impact on the eschatological presentation of the Qumran sapiential texts by appealing to sufficient repetitions as a basis for intertextual linkage.¹²⁾ Given that the language of the Qumran manuscripts actively enters into conversation with the language of Qoheleth,¹³⁾ the manuscripts

8) Ellen von Wolde, "Intertextuality: Ruth in Dialogue with Tamar", Athalya Brenner and Carole Fontaine, eds., *Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 432.

9) The significance of this intriguing connection is heightened by the existence and currency of 4QOheleth^{a, b} Scrolls at Qumran. 4QOheleth^a was first published by James Muilenburg, "A Qoheleth Scroll from Qumran", *BASOR* 135 (1954), 20-28. Recently, Eugene Ulrich, "Ezra and Qoheleth Manuscripts from Qumran (4QEZRA, 4QOHe^{A, B})", Eugene Ulrich, et al., eds., *Priests, Prophets and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp*, JSOTSup. 149 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 142-150, provides detailed comments on the scrolls' textual features of the preserved portions of the Qoheleth Scrolls (5:13-17; 6:1, 3-8, 12; 7:1-10, 19-20).

10) Antoon Schoors, "Preface", Antoon Schoors, ed., *Qoheleth in the Context of Wisdom*, BETL 136 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1998) suggests that, in the current state of the study of Qoheleth in relation to 4QMysteries and 4QInstruction, the issue is how to find persuasive connection between them. "Everybody agreed that there is some relationship between wisdom and Torah in Qoheleth and also in the non-Essene wisdom texts just referred to. The problem, however, remained that it seemed problematic to find a direct relationship between these texts and Qoheleth" (p. 4).

11) Carol A. Newsom, "Bakhtin, the Bible, and Dialogic Truth", *JR* 76:2 (1996), 298.

12) Ellen von Wolde, "Intertextuality", 433, rightly argues about repetition or similarities as evidence or possible intertextual signs in terms of the objectivity of interpretation. She states that "If sufficient *repetition* does not exist, then there is no basis for arguing for intertextuality. In case of considerable repetitions and similarities, a basis for intertextual linking is given and a reflection on these iconic features possible. This proves that intertextuality is not just the idea a reader has made up in his or her mind, but that the *markers in the text have made this linking possible*" (emphasis mine).

13) Leo G. Perdue, "Wisdom and Apocalyptic", 245, nicely points out the dialogical quality of Qoheleth's discourse with other sapiential texts, stating that "In the language of Qoheleth, it is clear that he is in conversation with traditional wisdom and takes a critical stance toward it. But he also engages in conflict with a type of wisdom that included apocalyptic themes." In this paper my focus is mainly on the conflict, or more probably disputation, of the Qumran sapiential texts with Qoheleth, not *vice versa*.

appear to perceive rather clearly Qoheleth's radical attitude,¹⁴⁾ albeit often allusive, of apocalypticism. To describe the dialogic meaning which fluidly moves between one text and the other, I will seek to capture in what manner a word or utterance responds in one form or another to language that precedes it.¹⁵⁾ In doing so, I will ground the legitimacy of the direct relationship between Qoheleth and 4QMysteries and between Qoheleth and 4QInstruction on such "logical relationships"¹⁶⁾ as "the relationship of agreement/disagreement, affirmation/supplementation, question/answer"¹⁷⁾ and, most of all, argument/counter-argument.

1. Qoheleth and 4QMysteries: Wisdom in Eclipse and Theophanic Knowledge

For Qoheleth, wisdom's superiority over folly, once at least, is indubitable. He thinks that "wisdom excels folly 'as' (כּ) light excels darkness" (2:13). Here the sage utilizes a notion of the polarity between "light" (אור) and "darkness" (חֹשֶׁךְ) with the view to underscoring how clearly that wisdom "has advantage" (... שׁ יתרון) over the folly." Elaborating on the polarity of the antithetical parallelism of the next stichos,¹⁸⁾ Qoheleth articulates the superiority of light to "the wise

14) Thomas Krüger, *Qoheleth*, O. C. Dean Jr., trans. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 25-27, rightly points out how some teachings of Qoheleth critically treat his preceding or contemporary eschatological movements, a comparing Qoheleth's argument with the selective texts of 1 Enoch, Isaiah and Psalms. Thus, Ecc 1:9-11 is, in his view, understood as an ironic rereading of the expectation of an eschatological new creation (p. 25). Ecc 3:19-21 and 9:4-6 criticize even more clearly hopes for a continued existence of the individual after death, that is, an individual eschatology (p. 26).

15) Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, Vern W. McGee, trans., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist eds., University of Texas Press Slavic Series 8 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 94, designates such an action of constructing an utterance in anticipation of possible responses as the "act of responsive understanding."

16) Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Problem of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, C. Emerson, ed., Theory and History of Literature 8 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 184. As L. Juliana M. Claassens nicely perceives, "these logical relationships are not only on the level of syntactic and lexical-semantic similarities, but also on a metalinguistic level, where language is used and embodied in the form of an utterance" ("Biblical Theology as Dialogue: Continuing the Conversation on Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Theology", *JBL* 122:1 [2003], 137).

17) Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Problem of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 188.

18) J. A. Loader, *Polar Structures in the Book of Qoheleth*, BZAW 152 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1979), 22.

whose eyes are in their head”, who are in contrast to “the foolish who walk in darkness” (2:14a). However, as soon as the sage highlights the prevailing nature of the wisdom and the wise, he cancels this view by adding a subversive observation that “one fate” (מִקְרָה אֶחָד) befalls both the wise and the foolish (2:14b).¹⁹⁾ The one fate, which they suffer in common, not only neutralizes the wisdom’s advantage over the folly (saying metaphorically, the light’s advantage over the darkness), but also spurs Qoheleth to sense the futility of his wisdom *par excellence* (“Why then have I been extremely [יִתְרָה] wise?”, 2:15a). The sage’s disillusionment with wisdom,²⁰⁾ finally, develops into a hatred for life (“Therefore I hated life” [וְשָׂנְאֵתִי אֶת־הַחַיִּים], 2:17a), and it immediately results in the recognition of death, “the great equalizer”²¹⁾ of everything.

The metaphor of the contrastive duality of light and darkness finds such equivalents in 4QMysteries as “light and darkness” (4Q299 6 ii 10) and, its rather extended phrase, “mysteries of light and ways of dark[ness...]” (רִזֵּי אוֹר [רִזֵּי חֹשֶׁךְ] (4Q299 5 2)).²²⁾ Particularly, the association in the phrase of “darkness” with “ways” evokes Qoheleth’s use of the similar image for the fool: “the fool walks in darkness” (הַכֹּסֵּל בַּחֹשֶׁךְ הוֹלֵךְ) (2:14). Yet, the sectarian teacher’s use of the metaphor is remarkably different from that of Qoheleth. Not only is the metaphor for “the wisdom and the ‘folly (סְכָלוּת)’” (2:13) remodeled as one for justice and evil, but also the canceled superiority of the light over the

19) Qoheleth’s way of teaching can be considered in light of the Skeptics’ mode of the pedagogic technique, which lists contradictory sayings about a particular subject to demonstrate the inaccessibility to the truth, wisdom, or proper behavior.

20) Edwin M. Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1981), 178, suggests the effect of death on wisdom: “When death enters the picture, the apparent advantage of wisdom over folly turns out to be an illusion.”

21) Roland Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, WBC 23A (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 22. Likewise, C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, AB 18C (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 304, adopts the term again, with slight modification, “the great leveler.”

22) Texts and translations of 4QMysteries and 4QInstruction appearing in this paper utilize L. H. Schiffman, “4QMysteries^{a-b, c}”, T. Elgvin, et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4. XV: Sapiential Texts, Part 1*, DJD 20 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997); J. Strugnell and D. J. Harrington, “4QInstruction”, J. Strugnell, D. J. Harrington, and T. Elgvin, eds., *Qumran Cave 4.XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2*, DJD 34 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 1-503; Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1997-1998); Michael Wise, Martin Abegg Jr., and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996). Yet, I provide at times my own different translations.

darkness is retrieved: “evil will disappear before justice ‘as’ (כּ) ‘[da]rkness’ disappears before ‘light’” (1Q27 1 i 5b-6a). Furthermore, while Qoheleth, as noted above, takes advantage of the metaphor only to subvert its connotation for the sake of his theme of one fate that comes to all, the restored status of the lightlike members in 4QMysteires seems immutable.²³⁾ The wisdom text depicts the darknesslike ones as doomed to be extinct:

As smoke vanishes and n[o] longer exist (אֵינְנִי עוֹד) so will evil vanish forever (לְעַד) ... And all those who curb the wonderful mysteries ‘will no longer exist’ (אֵינְמָה עוֹד).

(1Q27 1 i 6-7)

According to Qoheleth, it is death that annuls the excellence of the wise over the foolish and of the wisdom over the folly. Semantic parallelism between “the wise die with the fool” (2:16b) and “one fate befalls both of them” (2:14b) suggests that the one fate means death. Thus, the sage argues that the poor wise cannot help but to fail at the very point where the dark power of death is triumphant. He asks “what advantage the wise have over the fool” (מַה־יִּוְתֵר לְחָכָם מִן־הַכְּסִיל) (6:8a), distrusting the advantage of “a *poor* person ‘who knows’ (יֹדֵעַ) how to cope with life” (6:8b).²⁴⁾ The question arises from the previous observation that “yet the gullet is not filled” (וְגִם־הַנֶּפֶשׁ לֹא תִמְלֵא) (6:7).²⁵⁾ From the social perspective, the gullet denotes the rich oppressors, who assume a common metaphor of Prince Mot, and the term “gullet” can symbolize deified Death, which the Canaanite myth portrays as an insatiable monster with an opened

23) The same emphasis appears in the Treatise on the Two Spirits. The Treatise claims that the contrary human fates are made unchangeable by Heavenly beings: “The authority of the Prince of Light extends to the governance of all righteous people; therefore, ‘they walk in the paths of light’ (בְּדַרְכֵי אֹר יִתְהַלְכוּ). Correspondingly, the authority of the Angel of Darkness embraces the governance of all wicked people, so ‘they walk in the paths of darkness’ (בְּדַרְכֵי חוֹשֶׁךְ יִתְהַלְכוּ)” (1QS 3 20-21). Translation from Michael Wise, Martin Abegg Jr., and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 130.

24) Qoheleth’s lack of confidence in the advantage of the poor wise recurs in the book: The poor yet wise youth who is rejected by another generation (4:13, 16) and the poor wise man, who delivers a city by this wisdom, gains no remembrance from his descendants (9:13-16).

25) Translation after C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, 202. Since נֶפֶשׁ constantly refers to the insatiable people in the surrounding passages (6:2, 3, 9), it means here “the insatiable appetite of greedy people” (p. 213).

mouth.²⁶⁾ Qoheleth, therefore, endows the insatiable rich with the image of the mythological Death, thereby reinforcing his favorite theme of the final end of all human beings.

More fascinatingly, the sage's attention to the rich oppressors is shared by the teacher of 4QMysteries, but they are reviewed from quite a different outlook. As the oppressors lose their souls, there occurs demise of Death. This revisionary idea about the insatiable gullet becomes palpable through the following observations of the manuscript. First, the author of 4QMysteries asserts the view that 'knowledge and folly', which can be said to be a semblance of the Qoheleth's 'wisdom and folly', are not subjected to the same fate. Thus he highlights the evanishment of the folly only (1Q27 1 i 6). And surprisingly, it is not the fate of death but rather the advent of knowledge that makes the folly expire forever. For Qoheleth, the insatiable rich are like the gullet unable to be filled with anything, but 4QMysteries creates eschatological knowledge able to fill all the world: "And knowledge will 'fill' (תמלא) the world, and folly²⁷⁾ will no [longer] be present (וְאֵין שָׁם לְעֶנְדֵּר) (1Q27 1 i 7b).

Qoheleth declares that "everything is vapor (הַבָּל, ἀτμός/ἀτμός)" (1:2; 12:8),²⁸⁾ and comes to the judgment that "everything is the same for everyone: one fate 'to the righteous' (לְצַדִּיק) and 'the wicked' (לְרָשָׁע) (9:2).²⁹⁾ Such a pessimistic view concerning human fate, however, is unacceptable in the Qumran manuscript. Using the metaphorical image of "smoke" (עשן) that echoes

26) C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, 226-227, convincingly explains the background of Canaanite mythology about deified Death and its sociological implication in the verse. As he nicely put, the biblical writers frequently use the imagery of Death which waits to take the victim into its gullet (e.g., Isa 5:14; Pro 27:20; 30:16). Particularly, the prophet Habakkuk pictures a rich, arrogant oppressor with the imagery: "Moreover, wealth is treacherous; the arrogant do not endure. They open their throats wide as *Sheol* (כְּשֵׂאוֹל נִפְתּוּ) like Death they never have enough. They gather all nations for themselves, and collect all peoples as they their own" (NRS Hab 2:5).

27) A different Hebrew, אֵין as a synonym of Qoheleth's term, סְכֵלִית.

28) For the Greek translation of the Hebrew *hebel* as 'vapor,' see C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, 101. I here follow the readings of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in order to make the parallelism between "vapor" in Qoheleth and "smoke" in 4QMysteries. The translation is attested also in LXX^b (Ecc 9:9) as well as in some rabbinic texts. Seow states that "in Mishnaic Hebrew the word may refer to breadth, air, steam, vapor, gas and the like (*b. Šabb.* 88b, 119b; *Yebam.* 80b ... *Qoheleth Rabbah* takes the word to be 'like the steam from the oven')" (p. 101).

29) Note the short vowel *patah* under the inseparable preposition לְ. The vowel is a remnant of the article הַ. The article falls away, surrendering its vowel to the preposition which is attached to the phrases, "the righteous" and "the wicked." The article used twice for the Qoheleth's phrases reappears as unattached to the preposition in the Qumran text, "הַרְשָׁע וְהַצַּדִּיק".

Qoheleth's "vapor", 4QMysteries presents the ultimate demonstration of the righteous' stroke to the wicked: "'the wicked' (הרשע) will disappear before 'the righteous' (הצדק) ... As smoke vanishes ... so 'the wicked' (הרשע) will vanish forever" (1Q27 1 i 5-6a). Qoheleth observes that "there is no one on earth so righteous" (אין צדיק בארץ) as to perform the good without ever sinning (7:20). However, 4QMysteries cannot abide the related notions of relative righteousness or unavoidable evil. Thus, an eschatological vision of the sectarian manuscript reflects Qoheleth's specific observation of the prevalence of evil. "The wickedness" (הרשע), which Qoheleth detects in the place of "righteousness" (הצדק) under the "sun" (שמש), will not exist any more in "the world" (תבל)³⁰ when "the righteousness" (הצדק) will be revealed like the "sun" (שמש) (Ecc 3:16; 1Q27 1 i 6b-7a).³¹ In this way, 4QMysteries does not consider the fate of death which equates the wisdom/wise with the folly/fool; there will be the theophanic, eschatological judgment of knowledge/righteousness which will come at the expense of the existence of the folly/wickedness.

Then, mythological Death, which Qoheleth personifies as the oppressive and insatiable rich, receives a poignant counterthrust.³² 4QMysteries declares that the theophanic judgment of knowledge triggers the "utopian transformation of the world,"³³ where the ultimate elimination of the wicked rich is inevitable. There is little doubt that the oppressive rich in Qoheleth are congruent with "the evildoer" (המרע) in 4QMysteries, who sinfully oppresses his neighbors and robs them of wealth (1Q27 1 i 11; ii 4). Moreover, the Qumran manuscript, adopting

30) Job 18:18 employs similar imagery for the obliteration of the wicked: "They (i.e. the wicked) are thrust from light into darkness, and driven out of the world" (NRS, insertion mine). The Qumranic imagery is attested even in a teaching attributed to Jesus about divine eschatological judgment: "Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (NRS Mat 13:43).

31) The image of the revealed justice as the judge on the wicked is also found in 4QInstruction. There, it is God who takes the role of the justice of 4QMysteries: "In heaven He 'will judge' (ישפט) the work of 'iniquity' (רשעה) ... [on the day of] its '[jud]gment' (משפט) ... all injustice will end" (4Q416 1 10, 12-13a). This scene, too, seems aware of Qoheleth's observation that "in the place of 'justice' (משפט) there 'wickedness' (רשע)" (Ecc 3:16a).

32) Contra Shannon Burkes, *God, Self, and Death: The Shape of Religious Transformation in the Second Temple Period* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003). Her analysis of the relation between death and God in the Book of Qoheleth is generally helpful, but sometimes too strained. For example, she states: "Death is never personified, even metaphorically, since the cosmos in which the author dwells is not populated by supernatural entities" (p. 79).

33) Matthew J. Goff, *Discerning Wisdom: The Sapiential Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 73.

the typical manner of Qoheleth,³⁴) forges a sarcastic question: “what advantage is there to ([...] לְמַה הוּא הַיּוֹתֵר [the evildoer])?”³⁵) When attention is paid to the rhetorical nature of the Qumranic question which emphatically refuses the advantage, the object of the question must be the rich evildoer on whose pillage fate is concentrated (1Q27 1 i 11-ii 11).³⁶) Moreover, reflecting Qoheleth's claim that wickedness “will not deliver” (לֹא יִמְלֵט) its practitioners because “no one knows what is going to happen” (אֵינָנוּ יָדְעַ מַה־שִּׁיְהִיָּה) (8:7-8), 4QMysteries changes the cause of disaster for the practitioners from the impotence of wickedness into the inevitable theophanic judgment: Those wicked people who “do not know what is going to happen to them” (לֹא יָדְעוּ מַה אֲשֶׁר יָבוֹא עֲלֵיהֶם) “will not save” (לֹא מִלְטוּ) their souls from the mystery that is to be (1Q27 1 i 3b-4).³⁷) In this way, the “gullet” (הַנֶּפֶשׁ) of the insatiable rich frustrating the *knowledge* of the poor (6:8) is rendered as doomed “souls” (נַפְשָׁם) of the rich evildoer that are to be destroyed in the eschatological future due to his or her *lack of knowledge* (1Q27 1 i 3a).

34) The Hebrew יוֹתֵר occurs only in Ecclesiastes, except in two cases: 1Sa 15:15 (as noun, “the rest”) and Est 6:6 (as adverbial, “more than”). Its cognate, יִתְרוֹן, with the economic meaning of “advantage” is found only in the list of Qoheleth's vocabulary (10 times). Syntactical pattern of the question, “לְמַה יוֹתֵר לְּ”, what is there advantage to?” is used in the Book of Qoheleth twice, that is, 6:8 (מַה־יּוֹתֵר לְחַכָּם) and 6:11 (מַה־יּוֹתֵר לְאָדָם). Both verses are extant in the Qoheleth Scroll^a, “מַה יוֹתֵר לְחַכָּם” (4QQoheleth^a 1 ii 6) and “מַה יוֹתֵר לְאָדָם” (4QQoheleth^a 1 ii 11). All of these enhance the possibility that the sectarian question is aware of Qoheleth's one. See the Qumran phrases cited from Eugene Ulrich, “Ezra and Qoheleth Manuscripts from Qumran (4QEZRA, 4QQOH^{A,B})”, 145.

35) Armin Lange, “In Diskussion mit dem Tempel: Zur Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kohelet und Weisheitlichen Kreisen am Jerusalemer Tempel”, Antoon Schoors, ed., *Qohelet in the Context of Wisdom*, BETL 136 (Leuven: Leuven University Press and Peeters, 1998), 125, connects the phrase to Ecc 6:8, 11, arguing for 4QMysteries' use of “die Konstruktion לְ יוֹתֵר.” He contends that the second redactor of the book of Qoheleth was a member of the sapiential circle behind the book, assuming that the manuscript quotes Ecc 6:8 or 6:11. For a critique for Lange, see Torleif Elgvin, “Priestly Sage? The Milieus of Origin of 4QMysteries and 4QInstruction”, John J. Collins, et al., eds., *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004), 68-87.

36) L. H. Schiffman, “4QMysteries^{a-b, c}”, 40.

37) In this context, the *raz nihyeh* is not simply an intellectual matter but “a real entity having control over the world” (Menahem Kister, “Wisdom Literature and its Relation to Other Genre”, John J. Collins, et al., eds., *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* [Leiden: Brill, 2004], 31).

2. Qoheleth and 4QInstruction: Disputation over Mortality and Afterlife

We find Qoheleth's argument of death more appreciably matched with its counter-argument located in 4QInstruction. The theme of knowledge, as investigated above, is prominent in 4QMysteries. This time, this theme serves as a link to facilitate an intertextual reading of Qoheleth's teaching with 4QInstruction's vision of the Hagu pericope (4Q417 1 i 13-18).³⁸⁾ Notably, the theme of one fate, which Qoheleth uses to invalidate the disparity between the righteous/wise and the wicked/foolish, is converted into a new kind of fate by which 4QInstruction predetermines the disparity and leaves it eternally irrevocable. Along with such thematic revision, Qoheleth's skeptical teaching of human mortality finds its dramatically shifted expression in 4QInstruction. While detecting some dynamic undercurrents moving between Qoheleth's wisdom text and the Qumran sapiential text, I will analyze several keywords of Qoheleth's teaching about death, such as 'reward' (שָׂכָר), 'reputation' (זָכָר), and 'portion' (חֵלֶק) that are all shared, literally and semantically, by 4QInstruction. The common keywords and themes not only constitute the main point that the biblical sage makes, but also establish an elaborate network of connections with the Hagu pericope.

In Qoheleth's view, death means, on the one hand, *present* catastrophe for the wise in the sense that it is final destination of the mundane life of both the wise and the foolish. What is worse, death means a calamity ongoing to their *future*, inasmuch as death entails "no remembrance of the wise forever just as the case with the fool" (אֵין זְכוֹן לְחָכָם עִם־הַכְּסִיל לְעוֹלָם) (2:16a). Alluding to the calamity the wise suffer after present life, Qoheleth's presentation of the living and the dead intensifies the point with quite a sardonic tone. Here the sage's favorite theme of knowledge recurs. Our special attention should be drawn to the manner of making its ironic force:³⁹⁾

38) For the Hagu pericope, see Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 83-94.

39) For Qoheleth's use of Irony in the passage, see Izak J. J. Spangenberg, "Irony in the Book of Qoheleth", *JSOT* 72 (1996), 57-69. He notes the ironic effect of Qoheleth's argument: "statements about death plays a crucial role in this skeptical world view ... Cosmic irony usually deals with the relationship between God and humans. Seen from the perspective of humans, this is negative; they are the victims of God's capriciousness. On account of this capriciousness (9:1) and since just retribution does not exist (9:2-3) and also because the place of the dead is so horrible (9:5b-6), Qoheleth recommends enjoyment of life (9:7-10)" (pp. 60, 68).

While the living “know” (יֹדְעִים) that they will die, the dead “do not know” (אֵינָם יוֹדְעִים) nothing and have no more “reward” (שָׂכָר) because their “reputation” (זָכָר) is forgotten ... (The dead) will “nevermore” (עוֹלָם) have a “portion” (חֶלֶק) in all that is done under the sun.

(Ecc 9:5-6).

One may perceive Qoheleth's subtle diction to be couched in a deliberate use of paronomasia (זָכָר/שָׂכָר, reputation/reward).⁴⁰⁾ The ironic effect of paronomasia serves to stress a futility of the advantage of the living over the dead. According to the sage, the single advantage that the living take over the dead resides in their knowledge of impending death. But the knowledge gives at the very best a minimal solace to the living, insofar as it constantly reminds them what will invariably happen to them. Every trace of the living (namely, “reputation”) will vanish, and beyond this world there will be no more “reward” available to them. The astounding message of the sage is that such theoretical knowledge of the living is hardly an advantage over the dead⁴¹⁾ who do not know “anything bad” (בְּאִימָה).⁴²⁾ Thus, the theme of one fate, in which Qoheleth disproves the superior position of the wise over the fool, is reused to obscure the advantage of the living over the dead.

Why is Qoheleth's perspective on death so depressing and, more probably, subversive? Another instruction of Qoheleth in 9:1-10 seems to suggest that his perspective flows from his frustrating observation on divine retribution for the living. The sage appears to repudiate any distinction among humankind after

40) James L. Crenshaw, “The Shadow of Death in Qoheleth”, James L. Crenshaw, ed., *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions: Collected Writings on Old Testament Wisdom* (Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995), 580, note 28.

41) Roland Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 92.

42) For my translation, “anything bad”, see Walter C. Kaiser, “בְּאִימָה”, R. Laird Harris, et al., eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 487-488. As Walter C. Kaiser neatly summarizes, the terms are normally used in negative sentences in the Hebrew Bible. The same is the case with Qoheleth's description of the rich who are vulnerable to the evil effect of wealth (5:13, 14 [Eng. 14, 15]). He uses it in the context of human fate under the control of God: The deity puts prosperity alongside adversity so that humans cannot discover anything, probably, which will come after their death (7:14). Most notably, this Hebrew sometimes functions as a euphemism for something obviously bad, such as the thing that Abraham was about to do to Isaac (“Do not do *anything* [בְּאִימָה] to the lad”, Gen 22:12) or the thing that Amnon wanted to do to Tamar (“He thought it difficult to do *anything* [בְּאִימָה] to her”, 2 Sa 13:2).

death so as to tackle the issue of eschatological expectation, which is to be firmly founded upon human confidence in divine retribution. Qoheleth appears to claim that there is no retribution for any action — and death to all!⁴³⁾ In the instruction, the term ‘reward’ (רָצוֹן) is the most helpful datum by which we may discern Qoheleth’s skepticism in the divine retribution. I will show that this point of Qoheleth resides in stark contrast to the eschatological backdrop of the Hagu pericope.⁴⁴⁾ Qoheleth asserts that death deprives humankind of the reward that issues from reputation and portion. One may assume that the Hebrew term bears the metaphorical meaning, as in the previous case of the phrase “a good ‘reward’ (רָצוֹן) for their toils” (4:9), of an economic term, whereby wages are recompense for work.⁴⁵⁾ Yet, this understanding makes it hard to explain the basis on which the sage attributes the loss of the reward for the dead who are forgotten by the living.⁴⁶⁾ Thus, the meaning of the reward, which the dead cannot possess, should be considered in light of their oblivion. It is important that Qoheleth adopts the term “reward” in the context within which he deals sarcastically with human *mortality*.⁴⁷⁾ The sage appropriates the term,

43) Cf. Rudi Kroeber, *Der Prediger*, Schriften und Quellen der Alten Welt 13 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1963), 151: “Keine Vergeltung nach der Tat — und der Tod für Alle.”

44) I am not saying that Qoheleth specifically bears in mind the Qumran sectarians’ theological position. For example, Diethelm Michel, *Untersuchungen zur Eigenart des Buches Qohelet*, BZAW 183 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 166-183, points out that 9:1-10 is the sage’s polemic against the eschatological hope that good deeds will be rewarded after death. Although I am not totally in line with Michel’s argument, it may be safer to say that the theological tension between Qoheleth’s skeptical position toward divine retribution and the Qumranic eschatological confidence of it can be a good instance to prove the fact that, as Crenshaw (*Old Testament Wisdom*, 1998) states, “frail humans acknowledge a need for contact with the universal Lord, particularly as the idea of exact reward and retribution for good and evil gradually eroded” (p. 80).

45) C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, 301.

46) The pronominal suffix of רָצוֹן (LXX, ἡ μνήμη αὐτῶν) is an objective genitive. That is, those who continue to live forget the dead. To the contrary, the *Wisdom of Solomon* forges an image of eternal reputation associated with virtue or wisdom: “Better than this is childlessness with virtue, for in the memory (μνήμη) of virtue is immortality” (Wis 4:1). “Because of her I shall have immortality, and leave an everlasting remembrance (μνήμη) to those who come after me” (Wis 8:13). John J. Collins, “The Root of Immortality. Death in the Context of Jewish Wisdom”, John J. Collins, ed., *Seers, Sybils and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 366, considers the idea of immortality in the Wisdom of Solomon as tinged with a “Platonizing tendency to disregard the reality”.

47) Thus, James L. Crenshaw, *Ecclesiastes: a Commentary*, OTL (London: SCM, 1988), 161, argues that “Qoheleth’s words appear ironic. No comfort derives from knowing that the dead have already received their rewards and are completely forgotten, for the living will experience the same oblivion.”

which includes the idea of an afterlife,⁴⁸⁾ so that he might advocate his own agnostic position toward some idea of *immortality*. Perhaps Qoheleth is aware of some of his contemporaries' belief that dead persons who have done good things during their worldly life will be rewarded according to how long they are remembered by the living.⁴⁹⁾

More significantly, however, the term in question seems to present not so much a common Hellenistic view on the finality of death, but rather the Jewish concept of the divine retribution, which presumes, particularly in the late period (e.g., Wis 3:1-4:6), the continuity of human existence beyond the limit of this life.⁵⁰⁾ Therefore, the sage voices his doubt about the feasibility of posthumous recompense, which God would grant to the dead. Significantly, Qoheleth's doubt is triggered by his witness to the unstable relationship between the righteous and God. According to the sage's examination, even "the righteous" (הַצְדִּיקִים) cannot secure God's constant "affection" (אַהֲבָה) and consequentially, they are helplessly vulnerable to the divine "hatred" (שִׂנְאָה) which, in a just reality, only the wicked deserve (9:1).⁵¹⁾

48) Thomas Krüger, *Qoheleth*, 167, perceives the point: "Now, vv. 4-6 do indeed exclude the expectation of a recompense of good deeds after death."

49) Norbert Lohfink, *Qoheleth: A Continental Commentary*, Sean McEvenue, trans. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 112-113, deals with this difficult matter from the perspective of the Hellenistic socio-cultural context. He explains that "[i]nsofar as the dead are thought about on earth, they go on receiving some force of life and consciousness in their diminished underworld existence. One will take all the more thought for a dead person as he or she has done good things during their earthly life. Thus will they, in fact, be 'rewarded' for their life even after death" (p. 112-113). However, his interpretation is not completely satisfactory, as long as he fails to offer specific evidence to substantiate that Qoheleth's audience entertains such a popular view.

50) This view is already present a 6th century prophecy in Dan 12:3: "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." John J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology as the Transcendence of Death", John J. Collins, ed., *Seers, Sybils and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism*, 88, comments on the passage, writing that "[i]n Dan this elevation is the result at once of a *final judgment* and a final battle. It is, therefore, a *vindication* of the righteous" (emphases mine).

51) It has been a matter of debate whether the phrase "both love and hate" (גַּם־אַהֲבָה גַּם־שִׂנְאָה) refer to human or divine. Some attribute "love and hate" to the character of the "righteous and wise" (Walther Zimmerli; Heinrich Ewald; F. Hitzig; Franz Delitzsch; Hans W. Hertzberg); while others do so in regard to the attitude of God toward the "righteous and wise" (Michael V. Fox; George A. Barton; Robert Gordis; Kurt Galling; David Russell Scott; Norbert Lohfink). For the debate, see Diethelm Michel, *Untersuchungen*, 172-173. Roland Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 90, rightly states: "it is difficult to refer the love and hatred to human beings as

The sage's recognition of the precarious relation between God and the righteous immediately paves the way to evaluate the issue of human mortality in light of retribution. Qoheleth infuses God's contradictory retribution for the righteous with a subtle tone, and then links it with the next lament over the death of the righteous: "Everything is just the same for everyone: one fate 'to the righteous' (לְצַדִּיק) and to the wicked!" (9:2a). Consequently, the unreasonable death of the righteous is implicitly attributed to the God who unfathomably reacts to them. At this very moment, Qoheleth boldly widens the domain of his "one fate-judgment", which previously finds its counteraction in 4QMysteries, to cover a diverse class of people: "the good and the bad,⁵²⁾ the clean and the unclean, the one who sacrifices and the one who does not sacrifice, the good and the sinner, and finally, the one who swears and the one who fears to swear" (9:2). By doing so, Qoheleth contends that ethical consideration of ethical behavior, which is motivated by humans' anticipation of their divine future retribution, in fact, has nothing to do with the way things turn out for them.⁵³⁾

agents. They would seem to know when they love and hate." James L. Crenshaw, *Ecclesiastes*, 159, cites a passage of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* as a thematic parallel to the phrase: "He whom God loves is a hearer, (but) he whom God hates cannot hear." One trenchant view, in my opinion, is to take the phrase to be a reference to the divine attitude resides in the thematic echoes of the character of Job. This verse evokes the plight of Job, who is "torn by the disparity between present reality and past memory" and between "cherished recollection of divine favor and ... the present fury" (James L. Crenshaw, "In Search of Divine Presence", James L. Crenshaw, ed., *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions: Collected Writings on Old Testament Wisdom* [Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995], 491-492). Furthermore, Qoheleth's portrait of death also definitely reflects that of Job. Qoheleth's statement — "It is the same for all. There is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked" (Ecc 9:2) — is in parallel with Job's one: "It is all one; therefore I say, he destroys both the blameless and the wicked" (Job 9:22). And Job's presentation of the dead in *Sheol*, "they are no longer remembered" (עוֹד לֹא־יִזְכָּר) (Job 10:22), is compatible with Qoheleth's remark, "they have 'no more' (אֵין־עוֹד) reward, because 'their reputation' (זְכוּרָם) is forgotten" (Ecc 9:5). Among others, the issue of the divine justice raised by the book of Job is well matched with the sage's concern of the retribution in Ecc 9:1-6.

52) Reading of LXX ("to the good and to the bad, τῷ ἀγαθῷ καὶ τῷ κακῷ"), together with Syriac ("לְטוֹבִים וְלְרָעִים") (and to the wicked) and Vulgate ("et malo"). As Michael V. Fox rightly suggests (*Qoheleth and His Contradiction*, JSOT Sup. 71 [Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1989], 257), the LXX of Ecclesiastes is too literalistic to have added a word simply for balance. See also, C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, 299.

53) Roland Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 91, rightly points out that "Qoheleth presents the evidence for the claim made in v 1 ... now Qoheleth approaches it (מִקְרָה) from the point of view of retribution" (Hebrew insertion mine).

Therefore, the “one fate”, leveling all religious life styles with their polarized ones, functions as a strong evidence for the sage’s argument for the untrustworthiness of divine retribution.

Moreover, sometimes Qoheleth seems to doubt divine punishment on the wicked as well. First, based on his favorite principle — “everything is just the same for everyone” (הַכֹּל כַּאֲשֶׁר לְכֹל) — he describes the futile death of the righteous by reporting “the same fate” (מִקְרָה אֶחָד) of the righteous with that of “the wicked” (רָשָׁע) (9:2). Repeating the theme of one fate (“one fate comes to everyone, מִקְרָה אֶחָד לְכֹל”), the sage, in this time, depicts the death of human beings whose “hearts are full of ‘evil’ (רָע) and ‘madness’ (הוֹלָלוֹת) while they live” (9:3). Surely, the vocabularies such as “evil” and “madness”⁵⁴⁾ used by the sage for the description of the death suggest that he is speaking of the death of the wicked. Put another way, after Qoheleth passes the one fate-judgment on the righteous, he immediately does it again on the wicked. What does the sage mean by juxtaposing the death of the righteous with that of the wicked? Given the context of divine retribution, the sage’s application of the one fate-judgment to morally contrary human parties denotes that death not only cancels out any divine reward for the righteous, but also exempts the wicked from divine punishment. Everyone “goes to the dead” after present life, irrespective of its nature, namely, the righteous and the wicked (9:3b).

Qoheleth’s radical claim is further demonstrated by the fact that the language of the sage’s devaluation of the relationship between the righteous and their God is intentionally repeated in his denial of the reward for the dead. The suggestive repetition heightens the impression that the sage deals with the matter of divine retribution in a manner that undercuts an eschatological hope for fortunate afterlife, which should be reserved for the righteous. First, Qoheleth portrays God as a deity whose “affection or hatred” (גַּם־אַהֲבָה) toward “the righteous” (הַצְדִּיקִים) and “their deeds” (עֲבֹדֵיהֶם) can be by no means defined (9:1). Next, he affirms that the one fate does not

54) Elsewhere in the book of Qoheleth, the Hebrew ‘madness’ appears in parallel with “wickedness”: “I turned my mind ... to know that wickedness is folly and that foolishness is madness” (NRS 7:25). Thus, Qoheleth seems to reach the conclusion that wickedness is madness.

discriminate between “the righteous” and “the wicked” (9:2a). Both the image of God and the description of the great equalizer, finally, are sealed with the sage’s conviction: the righteous are, together with all other dead persons, going to the place for nonexistence, that is *Sheol* where they are bereft of “their love, hatred” (גַּם אֶהְבֵּתָם גַּם־שִׂנְאָתָם) and “deeds”,⁵⁵⁾ as well as the essential part of their consciousness such as “thought” (חֲשִׁבוֹן) and “knowledge” (דַּעַת) (9:6, 9).

As in the case of the undeserved death of the righteous, Qoheleth sharpens his point concerning the tragic fate of the wise. His portrait of their death catches another irony of human mortality. On the one hand, the phrase “their love and hatred” (9:6) creates its allusive meaning by carrying into the present context an unfavorable sentiment about God, while the same phrase in the previous context describes God’s enigmatic relationship with “the wise” (9:1). The connotation of the recurring phrase is that “the wise” shift the existential locus from a precarious relationship with God into, more sadly, “the dead” who neither know anything nor preserve their reputation (9:1, 5). That is, the wise go to *Sheol* where their “wisdom” and “knowledge” have gone forever (9:10). They lose their source of intellectual competence and sense of perception. As a result, the wise will have no chance to restore any relation to the deity. In this way, Qoheleth’s emphasis on the unconsciousness of the dead in *Sheol* is weighted toward the notion of a complete severance between God and the wise. He obliterates any possibility of a continuing relationship of the dead with God.

55) A different Hebrew, מַעֲשֵׂה, in parallel with an Aramaic word, עֲבָרֵיהֶם (9:1). Here Qoheleth uses the Aramaic as a substitute for the Hebrew. Similarly, we find another case of the same patterned repetition in the present chapter: the Aramaic form “קָרַב, battle” (9:18) and its Hebrew counterpart, “מִלְחָמָה” (9:11). For the two Aramaic loanwords, see Antoon Schoors, *The Preacher Sought to Find Pleasing Words* (Leuven: Peeters Press, 1992), 60-61. Seow (*Ecclesiastes*, 297-298) seems unnecessarily to simplify the meaning of Qoheleth’s use of Aramaism, ascribing it to the sage’s penchant for “variety for variety’s sake.” He seems to fail to catch its literary implication given through the intentional parallelism made in the context. The pair, מַעֲשֵׂה and עֲבָרֵיהֶם, forms a parallelism that implies the impotence of “the wise” under the control of “one fate” (מִקְרָה אֶחָד). In a similar fashion, the other pair, קָרַב and מִלְחָמָה, stresses the power of one fate. Namely, the fate governs the wise as well: “battle does not belong to the strong, nor bread to ‘the wise,’ because time and chance “happen (יִקְרָה) to everyone.” Then, the wisdom’s inefficacy finds another expression: the wisdom prevails over weapons of ‘battle’ (9:18), but wisdom is overpowered by one sinner who destroys it together with honor (10:1).

Qoheleth takes one step more to curtail any divinely provided benefits for humankind. The term “portion” (חֵלֶק) that the sage sees as unavailable to the dead functions to accentuate the ephemeral nature of the benefits for the living. Indeed, it is the sage’s inculcated point that the portion has both temporal and spatial limitations.⁵⁶⁾ Qoheleth articulates the “portion” in light of enjoyment, as follows: “they find enjoyment in the toil with which they toil under the sun during their few days of the life” (5:17 [Eng. 18]). Later, both sorts of limitations are repeated, at this time, in terms of death: The “portion” vanishes outside of the area “under the sun” — the area such as “Sheol” to which the dead will go as soon as “all the days of their [lit. your] vain life” “under the sun” reach to the end (9:6, 9, 10).

As Qoheleth’s stress on the unconsciousness of the dead conveys his cynically nuanced negation of the future divine judgment, so does the present-oriented nature of the portion express his disapproval of a divine allocation. Hence, the divine allocation of well being and materials blessings in this life disappears as does the blessing of the righteous distributed by God during the judgment that accompanies eschatological theophany. In other words, claiming that the divine retribution is simply meaningless to the dead, Qoheleth appears virtually to doubt a possibility of the divine judgment in the next world.⁵⁷⁾ To be sure, the Qumran community, who eagerly desires theophanic judgment and its accompanying utopian world, feel discomfort with this radical connotation of Qoheleth’s discourse on issues of the retribution and fate of the dead. According to Qoheleth, even if there comes the day of final judgment by which divine reward and retribitional punishment would be manifested, the righteous and the wise who have gone into Sheol have nothing

56) C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, 223. He provides a keen explanation for the manner of Qoheleth’s using the term: “The portion may refer concretely to a given plot of land, an assigned share (Jos 19:9; 18:5), or simply a field (Hos 5:7; Mic 2:4) ... it is something that one has only in life ... The imagery of an assigned lot conveys both the possibilities and the limitations that one has in life” (pp. 132-133).

57) What is worse, in the sage’s view, even the living are not totally authorized to have the portion, because it is only a gift of God — the deity with whom human beings cannot make any stable relationship. So it becomes necessary that God empowers them to accept their “portion” and to enjoy in their toil (5:18 [Eng. 19]). Significantly, the “portion” in association with so-called *carpe diem* (3:22; 5:17-18; 9:9), therefore renders the message somewhat hollow (James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 126).

to do with it. Inasmuch as they are merely nonexistent, totally insensible of what externally happens, all is invalid for them. Perhaps, the sectarian community perceived such a line of Qoheleth's thought to be blasphemous. 4QInstruction shows how actively the sectarian community respond to the matters that Qoheleth provocatively presents. The vision of Hagu pericope is an appropriate text to use in identifying apocalyptic worldview of the Qumran wisdom text in response to Qoheleth's skepticism:

(13) And then you will experience et[ernal] ([עולם]⁵⁸) (תדע) glory together [wi]th his wonderful mysteries and his mighty deeds. And you, (14) understanding one, inherit your reward (פעלתכה) by the remembrance (בוכרון) of the mi[ght]. Indeed,] he comes. Engraved is your statute (חוקכה)⁵⁹

58) The reconstruction of the Hebrew and its translation comes from Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 859. For the other options, see Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 35-36, no.18.

59) I prefer the uncorrected form, חוקכה to the corrected one, חוק. Perhaps, a certain copyist removed a second personal suffix, 'כה' from the substantive חוק. The expression “engraved is *your* statute (or decree) concerning you” (חרות חוקכה), I would suggest, rephrases “*your* reward” (פעלתכה) of the antecedent clause in the current line, thus investing “your reward” with the divinely predetermined nature. That is to say, 4QInstruction theologically guarantees “your reward” by declaring that its grantee “you” has been determined already to receive it by God. Scholars normally adopts the corrected form, however. For the discussion about the form of the Hebrew, see J. Strugnell and D. J. Harrington, *Qumran Cave 4.XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2*, 162. In spite of merits of the corrected form of this Hebrew it fails to capture the thematic contrast of the pericope. The lines in question seems to imply that the phrase “engraved is your statute,” together with its rephrase “your reward,” stands in contrast to “all the punishment.” It is clear that there is the parallelism between “engraved is your statute” and “ordained is all the in[iquities of] the sons of Sheth.” Therefore, the issue should be the character of the parallelism. It is synonymous or antithetic? In my view, the “statute” appears to be another expression of positive divine judgment on the addressee, which is polarized by the ensuing phrase about divine negative judgment on the sons of Sheth. For the phrase “sons of Sheth,” see Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 89-92. In other words, it is more plausible that the parallelism signifies antithetic relation between destiny of “understanding son (בן מביין)” (1 i 18) and that of “sons of Sheth (בני שיח)” (1 i 15) and between “people of spirit (עם רוח)” (1 i 16) and “the spirit of flesh (רוח בשר)” (1 i 17). Such a differentiation between one favored by God and the other unfavored is characteristic through the pericope. Among other reasons, it is noteworthy that the way of the differentiation creates a thematic connection between Qoheleth's indiscriminating fate of death and 4QInstruction's differently predetermined destinies of the deceased's afterlife. The wisdom text consciously presents two kinds of destinies with a view to polemicizing against the sage's monolithic fate.

and ordained is all the punishment. (15) Surely, it is engraved (and) it is ordained by God against all the in[iquities of] the sons of Sheth, and a book of remembrance (זכרון) is written in his presence (16) for those who keep his path. And that is the vision of Hagu for the book of remembrance. And he gave it as an inheritance to Enosh together with a spiritual people because (17) he fashioned it according to the likeness of the holy ones. But he did not give Hagu to the fleshly spirit because it did not distinguish (ידע בין) between (18) [go]od and evil according to the judgment of its [sp]irit.

(4Q417 1 i 13-18)

Special attention needs to be paid to several motifs which diverge, perhaps deliberately, from those of Qoheleth. The sage's lament over undeserved death of "the wise" is in stark contrast to the Qumran text's encouraging announcement to the "understanding one" (מבין, *mebin*). The former speaks of death of the wise, while the latter refers to the salvation of the *mebin*. Qoheleth regretfully questions how the wise *die* "like" (עם) the fool (2:16b). On the contrary, 4Q417 1 i 13-14 notifies that the understanding one will be *saved*, presumably his or her death, by knowledge of God's "et[ernal]" (עולם) glory together "wi[th]" (עם) his wonderful mysteries. The term "glory" coupled with "mystery", presents a salvific idea, as in 4Q417 2 i 10-11 which relates "who will receive eschatological salvation":⁶⁰ "[Gaze upon the 'mystery'] that is to be and grasp the birth-times of salvation, and know who will inherit 'glory.'" If Qoheleth claims that in *Sheol*, the wise and the righteous will "know" (ידע) nothing on account of their "lack of knowledge and wisdom" (9:5), the Qumran text demurs the claimed insensibility of the dead by forecasting the future when the addressee will "experience" (ידע) blessed afterlife.⁶¹

Particularly, the sage's advocacy of the epistemological impotence of the dead finds another strong objection in the Hagu pericope, which presents the theme of "reward" (פעלה) in a way to affirm the dead's awareness. From the standpoint of Qoheleth, human beings do not "call to mind" (זכר) their fleeting life that must finish in death, since God distracts them with pleasure of their heart (5:19

60) Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 60.

61) On this, see Matthew J. Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 23-24.

[Eng. 20]).⁶²⁾ After they die, their handicap against memory-activities hopelessly degenerates to the extent of its complete extinction: They come to have no “lasting” (עוֹלָם) “remembrance” (זְכוֹרֹון) “as the case with” (עִם) the fool (2:16a). In one sense, Qoheleth’s way of using the motif of remembrance reflects how he understands God’s association with human death. By depicting God as a deity who hinders the living from considering their mortality, Qoheleth implies that the deity is deeply involved in consigning the dead to the sphere of oblivion and unconsciousness. In maintaining this concept of God, the sage cannot be assured of a possibility of divine retribution for the dead — that is, reward for the righteous and punishment on the wicked.

4QInstruction appears to contradict Qoheleth’s view of God and revise the sage’s conclusion on the matter of the divine justice. In the sapiential text, remembering is a decisive tool for *mēbin*, not only to attain the blessed afterlife but also to inherit the eschatological recompense. 4Q417 1 i 14 exhorts the understanding one to inherit “your recompense by means of remembering” (פִּעֲלַתְכָּה בְּזִכְרוֹן) of divine “mi[ght]” ([עֹז]).⁶³⁾ Responding to Qoheleth who holds fast to the eternal oblivion and rewardless future of the dead, the Qumran text gives voice to soteriological vision: If the understanding one lives in a righteous way, he will obtain the recompense that God will bring to him, which is probably eternal life after death. Here “mi[ght]” seems to be a reference to God’s judgment, since the ensuing part of the line (1 i 14) phrases both divinely engraved “statute” (חֹק) for the spiritual people and divinely ordained “punishment” (פְּקוּדָה) on the fleshly spirit.

4QInstruction’s argument for God’s reward is bolstered all the more by the divine activities of remembrance. Just as the addressee remembers God who comes with might, the deity constantly remembers the addressee by having a

62) My translation, “distracts”, reflects the readings of LXX (περισπαῖ) and Vulgate (*occupet*). *BDAG* has one of passive meanings of the Greek: “to have one’s attention directed from one thing to another, *become or be distracted, quite busy, overburdened.*” Indeed, the interpretation of the 5:17-19 [Eng. 18-20] hinges on the meaning of מְעַנֶּה. Commentators usually translate the Hebrew into “to occupy, keep busy (עָנָה III)”, “to answer, reveal (עָנָה I)”, and “to oppress (עָנָה II).” See Roland Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 47, 53, 56.

63) For the reconstruction of the phrase, see Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 85-86, and J. Strugnell and D. J. Harrington, *Qumran Cave 4.XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2*, 154, 162.

book of “remembrance” written in divine presence (1 i 15). For the sectarian community, therefore, the eschatological salvation is an event to be galvanized through the act of remembrance by both the righteous people and God. Particularly, the act of remembrance on the part of the deity effectively endorses the divine recompense for them. Therefore, the notion of post-mortem reward, which Qoheleth doubts, is rigorously verified by 4QInstruction. Likewise, the theme of oblivion of the dead, by which the sage asserts the unawareness of the righteous and the wise in *Sheol*, is cautiously replaced by the wisdom text’s anticipation of divine epiphanies on behalf of their salvation through the action of remembrance.

Not only the image of the book of remembrance but also the motif of the “statute concerning the addressee (lit. your statute)” heightens the certainty of the divine reward. As the “statute” (חוקכה) concerning the understanding son is engraved, so is all the punishment on the Sheth’s son ordained as well. The line 1 i 15a is written clearly with a deterministic slant. The phrase “חֲרוּת חֻקְכָּה” has been often understood as an allusive designation to some specific things involving Moses, such as tablets of the commandment⁶⁴) and the Sinai event.⁶⁵) In the immediate context of the phrase, however, it may be the vision of Hagu.⁶⁶) Goff suggests that “(divine) statute” emphasizes the ordained judgment of the wicked.⁶⁷) Yet, as noted in my translation of the pericope, it is also highly probable that those densely deterministic words of the line speak of two kinds of opposite fates by way of reacting to Qoheleth’s claim of inflexible fate. Hence, the phrase “engraved is your statute” can be taken as a supporting datum for the reward to be given to the righteous. Consequentially, its juxtaposed phrase “ordained is all the punishment” means divine judgment. Both phrases serve as counter evidence in order to undercut Qoheleth’s skeptical view of God’s retribution.

Furthermore, the term “statute” brings another meaning into mind, that is

64) J. Strugnell and D. J. Harrington, *Qumran Cave 4.XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2*, 162; Torleif Elgvin, “An Analysis of 4QInstruction”, Ph.D. Dissertation (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997), 263.

65) Armin Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran*, STDJ 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 83.

66) Torleif Elgvin, “An Analysis of 4QInstruction”, 86.

67) Matthew J. Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 89.

“portion”⁶⁸⁾ which is appointed by God for a particular purpose.⁶⁹⁾ The deterministic nature of the term “חוק, statute *or* portion,” therefore, is based on the authoritative action of God. It deserves our attention that the nuanced meaning of the Hebrew “חוק” is nicely matched with Qoheleth’s term “חֶלֶק”. The sage similarly utilizes the word “portion” in a sense that he emphasizes divine exclusive authority. As observed above, the term “portion” is used to convey the sage’s temporality-oriented definition of it. God distributes the portion to the living (בְּתוֹךְ הַחַיִּים, 5:17, 18). But God allows them to enjoy during their present life only, because it turns out to be invalid as soon as they die (“there will nevermore be a portion for them ... under the sun” [... חֶלֶק אִין־לָהֶם עוֹד לְעוֹלָם [9:6]). For this reason, the sage poses a sardonic question in his favorite way: “Who can enable him to see what will happen ‘after him’ (אַחֲרָיו)?” (3:12). The question underscores Qoheleth’s position that no one can guarantee “what will happen to the individual after death.”⁷⁰⁾ By so doing, the sage doubts the idea that expresses hope for the continued portion given by God beyond the limit of this life.

Contrary to Qoheleth who circumscribes the portion within the boundaries of this world, 4QInstruction recognizes its existence beyond death. Not only during this world but also in the world to come does God continuously execute the engraved portion or statute according to the deity’s authority. And the Qumranic theme of the portion becomes more clear as it is associated with the preordained punishment, inasmuch as the emphasis on God’s prearrangement of the wicked reinforces the inevitability of divine retribution. Most of all, the deterministic nature of divine portion and punishment evokes Qoheleth’s use of one fate from which no one may evade. That is to say, there occurs a birth of another kind of fate through the sapiential text. Qoheleth

68) Reading of Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 859.

69) *HALOT* lists the following cases: portion for food (Pro 30:8), appropriate portion for priest (Lev 6:15; 7:34; 10:15), and allotted portion (Eze 16:27). These cases attest divine action to determine the portion.

70) Michael V. Fox, *Qoheleth and His Contradiction*, 199. The phrase is also attested in Akkadian *arkīšu* which means “after him” (C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, 168). Lohfink (*Qoheleth*, 2003) similarly interprets the Hebrew, but from the more social perspective, stating that “this seems to be directed at some of Qoheleth’s contemporaries whose hope were for a ‘portion’ that awaited them ‘later’ beyond death” (p. 68).

credits death with the event that annihilates all human status,⁷¹⁾ and proclaims that humankind is wholly governed by mortality. For Qoheleth, even God's presence finds no place in the world of the dead, whose consciousness is made totally inactive, and therefore, the divine presence appears to fade in death's umbra.⁷²⁾ By contrast, mentioning "engraved statute" and "ordained punishment" (4Q417 1 i 14), 4QInstruction invests the deity with absolute power to decide antithetically different fates of the dead. In consequence, God appears as the Lord of all the fate beyond the grave, who assumes the command of a post-mortem plane of existence. The wisdom text strengthens the notion of divine portion, which is expressed by the term "your statute" (חוקכה) to the degree that it calls the Lord the portion and inheritance for the righteous: "he is 'your portion' (חלקכה) and your inheritance" (4Q418 81 3).

Both Qoheleth's theme of portion and his discourse of spirit can explain the theme of different fates of the dead in the sectarian text. Intensifying the leveling effect of death in a shocking manner, the sage develops the previous comparison of various human parties into one between humankind and beasts. Just as the wise share the same fate with the foolish, there is only "one fate" (מקרה אחד) which dominates both humankind and beasts with equal relentlessness (3:19a). The sage finds that the humans "have no advantage" (מופתר ... אין) over the beasts. (3:19b). Qoheleth's challenging observation of the death of human *body*, which shows no difference from that of the beasts, paves the way to his caustic statement about human *spirit*. The sage concludes that the "spirit" (רוח) of "the humankind" (האדם) is essentially equivalent to "life-breath" (רוח) of the beasts. The conclusion boldly negates, indeed defies, the sublime idea of the presence of divine spirit breathed into "the adam" (האדם) who features in the creation accounts (Ecc 3:19b; Gen 2:7).⁷³⁾ Then, the sage profiles the view that it is epistemologically

71) Shannon Burkes, *God, Self, and Death*, 1.

72) *Ibid.*, 2. Later, she points out again the prevalence of death, writing that "the space between humanity and deity is filled not by angels or Wisdom but by death's omnipresence" (p. 251).

73) Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom and Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 219, rightly points out the character of Qoheleth's language of the verse in question, writing that "Alluding to Genesis 2-3, Qoheleth argues that humans and animals have the same vital spirit." For Qoheleth's language of evoking the creation

impossible to prove the ultimate destiny of human *rûah* after physical death: “who knows if⁷⁴) the ‘spirit’ of humans goes upwards and if the ‘life-breath’ goes down into the earth” (3:21). As one scholar mentions, Qoheleth probably demurs the view that there is a distinction in the final destiny of humans and animals — the view that is presumably popular in Qoheleth’s milieu.⁷⁵) More importantly, however, the essence of the agnostic questioning lies in the sage’s strong refutation of the possibility of realizing the desire for afterlife.

While Qoheleth gives much attention to the similar destiny of human spirit to that of another creature, the sapiential manuscript chooses to accentuate markedly different origins of human spirits themselves. The sage asserts that fate of death equally dominates the human spirit together with animals’ life-breath. In 4QInstruction, however, God is in control of the human spirit. Qoheleth shapes his discourse on the human spirit in a manner that makes his term “הָאָדָם” humankind” resonate the biblical “Adam הָאָדָם”. Similarly, the sapiential text grounds the formation of two types of spirit-related personalities on the creation account.⁷⁶) The Hagu pericope associates the “spiritual people” with the Hebrew “אָנוּשׁ”, which seems a reference to the biblical Adam, as in 1QS 3:17-18: “He created ‘אָנוּשׁ’ to rule the world.” The epithet “fleshly people” (רוּחַ בָּשָׂר) presumably paraphrases “נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה” in Genesis 2:7. The phrase is reused by God, meaning “creature”: “I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and ‘every living creature of all flesh’ (כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה בְּכָל־בָּשָׂר)” (Gen 9:16). In short, if the god-like Adam who is divinely authorized to rule

accounts of Genesis, see Hans Wilhelm Hertzberg, *Der Prediger*, KAT 17/4 (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1963), 227-230; Robert Gordis, *Koheleth-The Man and His World*, 3rd ed. (New York: Schocken, 1968), 43; and C. C. Forman, “Koheleth’s use of Genesis”, *JSS* 5 (1960) 256-263.

74) Reading interrogative הָ, rather than the definite particle הַ in the Masoretic text. For the vocalization, James L. Crenshaw, “The Expression מִי יִדְרֶעַ in the Hebrew Bible”, James L. Crenshaw, ed., *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions: Collected Writings on Old Testament Wisdom* (Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995), 284, no. 18.

75) Roland Murphy, *Ecclesiastes*, 37. Similarly, Norbert Lohfink, *Qoheleth*, 67, mentions “a Platonizing belief.”

76) For the implied context of Genesis 1-3 in relation to 4QInstruction, see John J. Collins, “In the Likeness of the Holy Ones; The Creation of Humankind in a Wisdom Text from Qumran”, D. W. Parry, et al., eds., *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Technological Innovations, New Texts, and Reformulated Issues* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 609-618; Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 95-99.

the world in Genesis 1 corresponds to the “spiritual people”, the Adam as mortal creature accords with the “fleshly spirit”. Linking both types with two contrary images of Adam, the wisdom text implies that their intrinsic nature is already determined by God who creates Adam. From the primitive time, therefore, the Creator invests the “spiritual people” with godhood but the “fleshly spirit” with mortality.

The different origins decisively influence their destinies. The Hagu pericope formulates two distinct types of destinies, which both characters suffer. Just God engraves statute (or portion) for the understanding son and ordains punishment on Sheth's son, so does the deity decide which kind of spirit will receive the vision of Hagu.⁷⁷⁾ While God will bequeath the vision of Hagu to the “spiritual people” (עם רוח) whom he fashions “*according to the likeness of the holy ones*” (כתבנית קדושים) the deity did not give it to the “fleshly spirit” (רוח בשר) who does not distinguish [go]od from evil “*according to the judgment of its [sp]irit*” (כמשפט [רוח]). In addition to God's prejudicial attitude toward the two spiritual entities, the verbal tense of the deity's action strengthens their opposite fates. God promises the bequeathal of Hagu will be realized in the future (“he will bequeath”). However, the fleshly spirit cannot entertain hope for the bequest, inasmuch as God already “did not give” it. In other words, the fate of the spiritual people is expressed in the typically eschatological manner of redemption and future life, while the fate of the fleshly spirit echoes with deterministic resonance. The predestination of human spirit is best attested in the Treatise on the Two Spirits. The Qumran text similarly voices the fate of humankind: “Before things come to be, He has ordered all their designs ... ‘they fulfill their destiny, and it is impossible to change’ (ימלאו פעולתם ואין להשנות). He controls the laws governing all things ... And ‘he appoints for them two spirits’ (וישם לו שתי רוחות) in which to walk until the time ordained for His visitation. These are the spirits of truth and falsehood” (1QS 3:15b-19a).

77) The vision of Hagu is the matter of debate. Perhaps, it is equated with the book of remembrance. See John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 125; Armin Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 51; Torleif Elgvin, “An Analysis of 4QInstruction”, 258; Matthew J. Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 92.

The wisdom text's wording of the fleshly spirit gives an impression that the Qumranic theme of distinct fate is forged as a counter theme to Qoheleth's one fate. "The fleshly spirit who does not distinguish 'the good from evil' (טוֹב לַרַע)" corresponds to the character of the sage who cynically equalizes "the good person" (הַטוֹב) with "the sinner" (הַחַטָּא) (4Q417 1 i 17; Ecc 9:2). Presumably, the wisdom text depicts in an allusive way Qoheleth as a person who belongs to the fleshly people. The caveat concerning the way of thinking that Qoheleth represents is discernible in another fragment of the Qumran sapiential writings. 4QSapiential Work B (4Q419) appears to reject Qoheleth's conclusion about human spirit, which is reflected from his observation of bodily death. Qoheleth intones that "everything originated from dust, and everything will return to dust" (הַכֹּל הָיָה מִן־הָעֶפֶר וְהַכֹּל שָׁב אֶל־הָעֶפֶר) (3:20b). Reverberating God's curse at Adam in the story of the Fall ("for you are dust and you shall return to dust" [כִּי־עֶפֶר אַתָּה וְאֶל־עֶפֶר תָּשׁוּב] [Gen 3:19b]),⁷⁸⁾ Qoheleth quotes it in the way that fortifies his own position. Unlike the sage's claim, 4Q419 8 ii 7-8, albeit fragmentary, contradicts the view of the total extinction of every human, which is occasioned by the divine curse. This wisdom text ascribes the cursed dissolution of the body into dust only to the fleshly spirit. That is, it is not everything but "all the [fleshly] spirit" (רוּחַ כּוֹל [בִּשְׂרָר]) that will "return [to] the soil" ([אֶל] אֲדָמָתָם יָשׁוּבוּן). This means that it is only the spirits of flesh that dies.

In the end, 4QInstruction's theological response to Qoheleth reaches a climax as it criticizes the sage's thought. Seeing painfully the reality over which oppression reigns, the sage congratulates "the dead" (הַמֵּתִים) who have already died more than the living who are still living (4:2). His sharply worded devaluation of life takes an ironic turn: "'better' (טוֹב) than both is the one who 'has not yet existed' (עֵדֶן לֹא הָיָה)" (4:3a). Later, Qoheleth comes to a similar conclusion that the stillborn has more "rest" (נַחַת) than unfortunate rich man who does not "enjoy life's good things, or has no burial" (6:5). 4QInstruction levels charges against Qoheleth's view of the bliss of death. Calling the pessimistic thinker a "foolish heart" (אִוִּילֵי לֵב), the author of 4QInstruction

78) The curse echoes throughout many biblical passages, e.g., Job 10:9; 34:15; Psa 103:14; Ecc 12:7, etc. Thus, the original curse is repeatedly endorsed.

reproves the one who holds to the position of valuing the unborn: “‘what is good’ (מה טוב) to the one who was not created? [And what is] rest⁷⁹⁾ to one who ‘has not existed’ (לוא היה)?” (4Q418 69 ii 4-5).

The next lines are more provocative. Qoheleth assumes that the stillborn, vainly yet peacefully, goes into the “darkness” (חשך) (6:4). 4QInstruction attempts to convince the sage of his error, subtly resonating the sage’s language: “‘the dead’ (מתים) groan over ... Your return will be to the eternal ‘pit’ (שחת)⁸⁰⁾ ... ‘Its dark regions’ (מחשכיה) will shriek against your pleadings ... Those who seek truth will arise to judge y[ou ...]” (4Q418 69 ii 6-7).⁸¹⁾ Then, Qoheleth, previously alleged to be a ‘foolish heart’, is ultimately subsumed under “all the foolish heart” (כול איילי לב) who will be annihilated in the darkness (ii 8a). Qoheleth prefers those already beyond the grip of violence⁸²⁾ by appealing to the circumstances in which death is preferable to life. However, such dangerous relativism cannot be legitimized in the Qumranic eschatological worldview, which constantly maintains divine judgment⁸³⁾ which entails the eternal life and the annihilation of violence.

3. Conclusion

Qoheleth reflects on death and its resultant oblivion. His skepticism goes so far as to cancel the advantage of life and divine retribution. The sage’s “journey to this vantage point was a lonely one”, while “those who traveled the main road

79) שקט, a synonym of Qoheleth’s rest, נחת.

80) Note the audial pun of שחת with נחת and שקט. The Qumran text’s implication is that there is no ‘rest’ but ‘pit’ in the dark place.

81) With regard to the theme of Judgment on the wicked, it is also noteworthy that 4QInstruction translates Qoheleth’s image of general death into the death of the foolish only. For Qoheleth, as every luminary “become dark” (חשך), humans go “to their eternal home” (אל־בית עולם) (12:2, 5). By comparison, in the Qumran text, the foolish are pictured as returning “to the eternal pit” (לשחת עולם) where the “dark place” (מחשכיה) shrieks against them.

82) James L. Crenshaw, *Ecclesiastes*, 106.

83) As Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 175, nicely points out, “the paring of the ‘foolish of heart’ and the ‘truly chosen ones’ in 4Q418 69 ii is compatible with the ‘fleshy spirit’ and the ‘spiritual people’ of 4Q417 1 i.” It means that 4Q418 69 ii, too, “a key text for assessing 4QInstruction’s eschatology.”

identified life with the good”.⁸⁴⁾ But the solitary sage has his devoted readers at Qumran who cannot ignore such provocative thinker. Thus, the sapiential texts of the sectarian community directly reacts to Qoheleth’s thoughts in order to resist and transform them. In other words, Qoheleth is responsible for giving rise to the counter arguments of 4QMysteries and 4QInstruction.

Qoheleth’s formative impact on the discourse of the Qumran sapiential texts finds its various traces in the points where those texts adopt, in noticeably different manner, the motifs which the sage formulates for his own radical position. The sage painstakingly bears witness to the problem of death — “the ultimately dehumanizing power”,⁸⁵⁾ which unrelentingly conquers wisdom and justice. 4QMysteries, however, translates the destroying power of death into the theophanic knowledge which executes an inevitable elimination of folly and evil. Most remarkably, the sectarian wisdom corpus eagerly anticipates that the eschatological embodiment of the knowledge will fill all the world at the expense of the personification of deified Death, which Qoheleth identifies with the insatiable rich.

4QInstruction’s version of eschatological future is a powerful reaction to Qoheleth’s daring implication that God does not treat benevolently the wise and the righteous. The author of the Qumran wisdom text modifies, with apocalyptic way of thinking, such motifs as reward, reputation and portion all of which are in the service of Qoheleth’s description of death. Consequently, the sage’s judgment of a single fate that levels the wise/righteous with the fool/wicked is born again as the theme of divine predestination, which determines the inherent disparity of the human spirits as well as their distinct destinies.

On one level, these points of analogy between Qoheleth and the sapiential texts demonstrate that the sage’s words about death “carry sharp barbs that prick those who dare to think radically like him.”⁸⁶⁾ Some evidence for the literary dependence of both Qumran sapiential compositions on Qoheleth, on the other level, throws a precious light on the stimulating debate about the relationship of

84) James L. Crenshaw, “The Shadow of Death”, 575.

85) Shannon Burkes, *Death in Qoheleth and Egyptian Biographies of the Late Period*, SBL Dissertation Series 170 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 71.

86) James L. Crenshaw, *Defending God: Biblical Response to the Problem of Evil* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 162.

the apocalyptic tradition with biblical wisdom at an earlier stage. 4QInstruction, a venerable missing link in the development of Israelite wisdom from Proverbs and Sirach,⁸⁷⁾ manifests dynamics of its “new, eschatological oriented, perspective”⁸⁸⁾ which interacts with Qoheleth who is “strongly against the major themes of apocalyptic.”⁸⁹⁾

<Keywords>

Qoheleth, 4QMysteries, 4QInstruction, Skepticism, Eschatology, Intertextuality.

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87) J. Strugnell and D. J. Harrington, “4QInstruction”, 36.

88) John J. Collins, “The Eschatologizing of Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls”, John J. Collins, et al., eds., *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004), 61.

89) Leo G. Perdue, “Wisdom and Apocalyptic”, 251.

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<Abstract>

**Qoheleth's Impact on the Qumranic Presentation of
the Eschatological Worldview (4QMysteries and 4QInstruction)**

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This article examines the critical reception of Qoheleth's skepticism by two Qumran documents (4QMysteries and 4QInstruction). Both Qumran wisdom texts demonstrate that a sapiential text can combine elements from apocalypticism and traditional wisdom. Qoheleth's skepticism goes so far as to cancel the advantage of life and divine retribution. The sapiential texts of the sectarian community directly reacts to Qoheleth's thoughts in order to resist and transform them. Qoheleth bears witness to the problem of death, which is the ultimately dehumanizing power. 4QMysteries, however, translates the destroying power of death into the theophanic knowledge which executes an inevitable elimination of folly and evil. The community behind 4QMysteries eagerly anticipates that the eschatological embodiment of the knowledge will fill all the world at the expense of the personification of deified Death, which Qoheleth identifies with the insatiable rich.

4QInstruction's version of eschatological future is a powerful reaction to Qoheleth's daring implication that God does not treat benevolently the wise and the righteous. 4QInstruction modifies, with apocalyptic way of thinking, such motifs as reward, reputation and portion, all of which are in the service of Qoheleth's description of death. Qoheleth's judgment of a single fate that levels the wise/righteous with the fool/wicked is born again as the theme of divine predestination, which determines the inherent disparity of the human spirits as well as their distinct destinies. These points of analogy between Qoheleth and the sapiential texts demonstrate that the sage's words about death carry sharp barbs that prick those who dare to think radically like him. Thus, some evidence for the literary dependence of both Qumran sapiential compositions on Qoheleth throws a precious light on the stimulating debate about the relationship of the apocalyptic tradition with biblical wisdom at an earlier stage.