



# Crucifixion at Qumran

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**Dates:**

Received: 27 June 2014

Accepted: 15 July 2014

Published: 20 Nov. 2014

**How to cite this article:**Geysler-Fouché, A., 2014, 'Crucifixion at Qumran', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 70(1), Art. #2775, 12 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i1.2775>**Copyright:**

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When the last texts of Qumran cave 4 were published, another text that refers to crucifixion came to the fore, namely 4Q524 14:1–6, part of which is verbatim the same as 11QT<sup>a</sup> 64:6–13. Both texts add to the Pentateuchal text by giving the reason why persons were hanged. Therefore I will compare these two texts with each other, but also with their Pentateuchal parallels Deuteronomy 21:18–23, 22:1–2 and 22:11. I will attempt to explain the differences against the social text, by studying the crucifixion and/or hanging practices of neighbouring cultures (social text) and by reading these two texts against the fragmented text of 4QpNahum 3–4 I:7–8, which is a Qumran text that deals with execution.

## Introduction

Over the past few decades it has become clear that texts cannot be studied in isolation. Impulses from the philosophical domain have led to concepts such as 'intertextuality' (Kristeva 1980, 1984), 'master narrative' and 'contra narrative' (see *inter alia* Breytenbach 1997), to name but a few. These concepts have begun to play a major role in literature studies and related discussions. One of the first persons who referred to the relation between texts was Mikhail Bakhtin (see Denthith 1995; Van Gorp 1990), who said that every word and every uttering was a reaction to, as well as an anticipation of a word or uttering of someone else. Texts should always be seen in relation to other texts or in reaction to them. Texts are socially determined; therefore no text can be studied without referring to texts that could serve as the source documents (or instigators) and determining why a text has its own selection of material and own nuance. Context is also text. Therefore text is not only the written form of text, but also the 'happened' form of text; habits and traditions (i.e. the social text) are also seen as text, and every text relates with or reacts to the texts (contexts) it encounters.

In this article I compare Deuteronomy 21:18–23 with 11Q Temple 64:6–15, as well as 4Q524 14:1–6 to see whether the Pentateuch served as an intertext or a source text for these texts from the *Temple Scroll*. I will also try to determine what role the social text, and therefore also the practices of hanging and crucifixion, played in the creation and/or alteration of this text. The texts in question deal mainly with the treatment of a defiant son, as well as with punishment by hanging. By comparing the Hebrew texts, I will determine the similarities, as well as the differences between them. In this regard, I do not want to redevelop or reinvent the wheel. I will not presume to improve on years of study done by scholars like Yigal Yadin, Lawrence Schiffman, Emmanuel Tov, Florentino García Martínez and Eibert Tichelaar (to mention but a few). They applied their expertise knowledge of the Qumran, Rabbinic and Second Temple literature, as well as other Jewish writings and carried out all the basic groundwork on the *Temple Scroll*. This study draws much from the work of these distinguished scholars. The main thrust of this article is rather to add to their research by examining the social text next to these texts. The texts will be compared and the similarities and differences identified. The differences will be read against the social text in order to find the reason for the differences. I will attempt to read the text in context and to relate the differences to the different contexts (social texts), each with its own ideological undertones. For the study of the social texts with regard to crucifixion at Qumran, I will refer specifically to the two lines from the very fragmented 4Q169 3–4 I:7–8 (4QpNah 3–4 I:7–8).

For many years, there seemed to be only one text (11QT<sup>a</sup> 64:6–13) from the Qumran corpus that referred to crucifixion. At a very early stage, Yadin (1985) and Baumgarten (1972) reconstructed 4Q169 3–4 I:7–8 (4QpNah 3–4 I:7–8) (see also Bernstein 1983; Ford 1976), which also refers to crucifixion, but the fragmented condition of this text did not make it very useful for the study of the theme of crucifixion. When the last texts of Qumran cave 4 were published, another text that refers to crucifixion came to the fore, namely 4Q524 14, which is partially verbatim the same

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comments on Stökl Ben Ezra's characterisation of cave 11 as a young cave as well as on Tov's (2004:187) statement that cave 11 presents a more homogeneous collection of a sectarian character. He says that if he studies cave 11 in comparison with cave 1, he is not sure that cave 11 presents a more homogeneous collection of a 'sectarian character', and that although he agrees that cave 11 is a young cave, its deposits are not younger than those of cave 1 and that the time and circumstances of the deposits of both caves are the same. He concludes: '... neither the "sectarian" character asserted by Tov nor the date of deposit postulated by Stökl Ben Ezra successfully accounts for the peculiar character of cave 11' (García Martínez 2010:205). García Martínez (2010) says that if we have a look at the Qumran collection as a whole in comparison with cave 11, it seems that cave 11 forms a perfect sample of the library as a whole:

In my view, a more likely scenario is to try to imagine that at the point of trying to save the library of the community, the inhabitant of cave 11 brought some of the holdings of the library of the Khirbeh to cave 11 for safe keeping. The location of cave 11 some considerable distance away from Kirbeh, the presence of some jars and linen attesting the same manner of preservation and transport of the manuscripts as in cave 1, and even the fact that the entrance to cave 11 was concealed in antiquity, would be consonant with this interpretation. (pp. 208–209)

Stökl Ben Ezra's (2010:211–223) response to García Martínez's article is that there is a possibility that cave 1 could have been revisited around 68 CE and that García Martínez's argument about the dating does not stand up to the 'hard fact foundation of statistic'. It seems that there is still no consensus on the exact dating.

The *Temple Scroll* cannot be identified simply as a Qumran sectarian document. It is still not clear who wrote the scroll or why, neither do we know how it made its way to the Qumran caves (García Martínez 2008:xxi). Brooke (1992) says:

[T]he *Temple Scroll* was not composed at Qumran. However, it is also clear that the *Temple Scroll* shares many orthographic and linguistic characteristics with those scrolls almost certainly written at Qumran; the *Temple Scroll* is thus a Qumran copy of a non-Qumran work. (p. 261)

Sanders (2000:34, 41) believes 11QT was as sectarian as 1QS, 1QH, 1QM and 1QpHab, and that he has a greater problem relating CD and Qumran than considering 11QT as Qumranian.

When all these arguments are taken into consideration, I would argue that the mere fact that the redactor went out of his way to reconstruct the text to have the same linguistic character as the rest of the Qumran corpus must be an indication that this text was important to the Qumran community. To add a Qumranian flavour and interpretation to a non-Qumranian work must surely indicate that the community used this specific text, and moreover that they used it with their own emphasis and nuances.

The author or redactor tried to compose a complete Torah embodying his views on the sanctity of the Temple, the land, the Jewish people and his ideal conception of government and society. This Torah never claims to be messianic. The author says specifically (11QT29:2–10) that the scroll describes the Temple in which Israel will worship before the End of Days. It is an ideal temple, built upon the principles of scripture interpretation and the beliefs of the author(s). The way the author or redactor will leave a section out if he has already used it is an indication of the wholeness of this scroll and of clever redacting. Levine (1978:5) emphasises the fact that the redactor is both organised and consistent. He says that the nature of his subtle polemic is such that it runs like a thread throughout the entire composition. It is clear that the scroll has been redacted from a number of sources to express the redactor's own message. The scroll as a whole must be seen as an exegetical work. Brooke (1992:282) mentions in this regard that scribal activity was not slavish copying, but rather a creative transmission of the tradition (Collins 2010). Zahn (2011:227) says that there is no way that the *Temple Scroll* could simply have 'evolved' from a form of Pentateuch (like 4QRP). At some point, she says, someone gave the scroll its distinct shape and decided to cast it as the direct speech of God. In this regard, García Martínez (2007) says:

The author presented his work as a written version of the revelation God gave to Moses, to the point of changing to direct speech in the first person and putting into God's mouth what in Deuteronomy is presented as words of Moses ... he presents his work as a new Torah coming directly from God (even if occasionally the author forgets this pseudographic fiction and keeps the third person of the biblical text). This new 'Deuteronomy' systematically integrates the different laws of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers concerning the Temple and its sacrifices, sometimes literally, at other times in a modified way and with many additions... (pp. 276–277)

In view of the parallels between the *Temple Scroll* and the Halakhic Letter, as well as a comparison between these two scriptures and the Sadducees in rabbinic literature, it is most likely that the sources of the *Temple Scroll* stem from the Sadducean heritage of those who founded the sect. García Martínez (2008) explains it as follows:

The scroll also informs us about the views of those Jews who objected strenuously to the conduct of the Hasmoneans in the religious, political, and military spheres. Opponents of the Hasmoneans were at the forefront of the movement represented by the Qumran sect. Among the texts they brought with them to Qumran were the sources of the *Temple Scroll*. (p. xxiv)

Although the author derives his laws through a type of midrashic interpretation of the canonical (and therefore, authoritative) Torah, he presents them as actually deriving directly from Sinaitic revelation (refer to 11QT 51:6–7). The author expects this Temple to be replaced in the End of Days with a divinely created sanctuary, as God promised Jacob at Bethel when he dreamed his vision of the ladder. He concludes it with a selection of laws from Deuteronomy. This part is known as the Deuteronomic Paraphrase

(11QT 51:11–56:21, 60:1–66:17) and is not simply a collection; it includes numerous halakhic, exegetical changes and full-blown midrashic interpretations.

### Deuteronomic Paraphrase with 11Q 19 64:6–13

The Deuteronomic Paraphrase (11QT 51:11–56:21, 60:1–66:17) consists of laws from Deuteronomy and is interrupted (11QT 57:1–59:21) by the section usually called the *Law of the King* (Schiffman 1992:444). Wise (1990:51–64) argues that this last part of the *Temple Scroll* comes from a second source, which he calls the *Midrash to Deuteronomy*. In his opinion this source contains 11QT 57:1–59:21 (the Law of the King), 11QT 60:2–11 and 64:6b–13a. Schiffman (1992:444) says that it is extremely important to note that Wise (1990:149) sees the Deuteronomic Paraphrase as drawn from a single, distinct source. Schiffman scrutinised this idea through his study<sup>3</sup> and could not agree that the whole Paraphrase was pre-existent.

Schiffman (1992:447) supports the view that the author or redactor of the *Temple Scroll* composed the Paraphrase. He supports his argument by referring to Yadin's research, which showed that the scroll had already dealt with Deuteronomy 14:1–21, 12:22f. and that 15 and 16 were skipped because entire sections of the scroll had been devoted to these topics. The author or redactor therefore included only aspects of Deuteronomy that had not been dealt with already. Schiffman argues that if the Paraphrase existed before, it would be hard to explain why it in no way overlaps with the rest of the scroll. He mentions (1992:451) that he tested the opposite hypothesis, namely that the canonical Deuteronomy could have been adapted from a version of Deuteronomy which would have looked something like the Paraphrase, and concludes that 'this test was an abject failure'. Schiffman (1992) says:

It is impossible to explain the development in any other sequence ... The canonical Deuteronomy with textual variations lay before our author/redactor when he composed the Paraphrase. It preceded the Temple Scroll chronologically beyond any shadow of a doubt. (p. 451)

Schiffman (1992:452–468) studied a few examples from the Paraphrase to see how the redactor edited or compiled this section. Some were verbatim paraphrases with a variation which, he says, can in some instances be as a result of the nature or physical quality of the text that the redactor had in front of him; but other examples it was clear that the author was expressing his own view by ordering the text. He explains the replacement of the third person for God with the first as harmonisation for exegetical reasons. He notes that some exegetical variations are linguistic variations, whilst others are genuine textual variants which in some cases share the same traditions as the LXX and the Samaritans. Then there are *halakhic* variations. In some cases, variations are as a result of modernising, synonymous variance, but in most cases these changes were introduced by the author, or the readings (from the LXX for example) were adapted

3. We will briefly look at this study in what follows.

by him to indicate specific Jewish legal rulings. There are also *midrashic* interpretations, where there are signs of secondary editorial activities which do not represent any biblical *Vorlage*. These testify to the operation of a purposeful editorial process to serve the author's *halakhic* purposes and not only textual variation.

Schiffman (1992:468) concludes that the additional material the editor includes is not in fact based on Deuteronomy, but has other Pentateuchal material as its main text.

According to Schiffman's research, it is clear that the Deuteronomic Paraphrase did not exist as a whole distinct source prior to the *Temple Scroll*. The Law of the King, however, Schiffman (1992) indicates, was pre-existent:

The entire section we have investigated is based on an adaption of the canonical Deuteronomy with the addition of the material in the Law of the King, apparently a pre-existent source, and other smaller pieces of original composition, written either by the author or a source. Further, most of the variants from MT in the Paraphrase result from intentional activity, harmonistic, exegetical, halakhic or midrashic, and most of these variations are the result of the efforts of the author/redactor....It is not simply a selection of biblical quotations. Rather, it is carefully undertaken reworking of the biblical text through which the author/redactor seeks to express his own unique message. 'The scroll as a whole must be seen as an exegetical work'. (p. 468)

The author of the *Temple Scroll* tried to compile his own new complete Torah, and therefore the Deuteronomic Paraphrase is an exegesis that has much more in common with the *Temple Scroll* than is often recognised. It all forms part of the purposeful exegetical activity that took place throughout the period of the Second Temple.

Schiffman (1992:448) says that 'Deuteronomy 21:22–23 is extensively reworked and interpreted in 11QT 64:6–13'.

Schiffman (2000:143) compares the Zadokite fragment 4Q279 2 ii:12–15 with 11QT 64:10 pertaining to informing against or cursing one's people. Although the passage from the *Temple Scroll* prescribes the punishment for it as crucifixion, '... the Zadokite Fragments make no mention of this rather uncharacteristic penalty'.

### 4Q524

In the footsteps of Peuch, García Martínez (2007:271, 282) and Tigchelaar (García Martínez & Tigchelaar 1998:1051) identify 4Q524 as the 'third copy' of the *Temple Scroll*. The first four lines of fragment 14 overlap, without major problems, with 11QT<sup>a</sup>LXIV 6–10, but the presumptive quotation of Deuteronomy 21:23<sup>4</sup>, which concludes 11QT<sup>a</sup>, is absent from 4Q425. It seems that fragment 14 has a shorter text without quoting Deuteronomy 21:23 and probably with a different sequence of the Deuteronomic material. Apparently, Deuteronomy 21:22 is followed by Deuteronomy 22:11 and not by Deuteronomy 22:1. García Martínez (2007:272) says

4. For those hanged on the tree are accursed by God and men; you shall not defile the land which I give you for an inheritance.



that, in spite of this difference, he thinks it is reasonable to read this fragment also as part of a copy of the *Temple Scroll*. He says that the insertion of Deuteronomy 21:23 in 11QT<sup>a</sup> is most likely a secondary development, inserted to underline the biblical basis of the capital punishment imposed.

García Martínez (2007:282) points out some interesting features of 4Q425:

- The hand of 4Q425 is clearly a semi-cursive of the old Hasmonaean period, related to the hands of 4QQoh<sup>a</sup>, 4Q504 and 4QXII<sup>a</sup>, and has been reasonably dated by É. Peuch to around 150–125 BCE.
- The divine name is substituted by four dots on frag. 6.4, a well-known practice of some Qumran non-biblical manuscripts.
- The orthography of the manuscript is clearly of the type recognised by Emmanuel Tov as characteristic of the 'Qumran scribal system', with its long pronominal suffixes and the full writing of  $\lambda\omega\kappa$  and  $\omega\lambda$ , although it is not completely consistent ...

## Text and translation

Table 1 and Table 2 provide the translation of Deuteronomy 21:18–23 and Deuteronomy 22:1–2.

### Discussion on the comparison of the texts

The first thing that is evident when the texts are compared is the fact that although 11QT 64:6–13 and 4Q524 14:1–6 are in some places verbatim the same, their placing of certain parts differ. The differences between the two Qumran texts can be as a result of the use of different source texts, and there is also a slight possibility that they can be scribal errors. 4Q524 14:1–6 also has Deuteronomy 22:11 in a different place.

Another obvious difference is the fact that both Deuteronomy (21:18–19) and 11QT 64 have the part about the rebellious son in the beginning, whilst it forms the bottom part of 4Q524 14.

It is also evident that 4Q524 14 does not contain Deuteronomy 21:23, which refers to the curse.

11QT 64:12 adds to the Pentateuchal text by saying that such a person is not only cursed by God, but also by 'man'. The typical practice of the *Temple Scroll* to replace YHWH as the third person with the first person is also found in 11QT 64:12, where YHWH is replaced with אֱנוֹכִי. Another difference is the addition that both Qumran texts make to the Pentateuchal text. This part (11QT 64:7–8, 10 and 4Q524 14:2–3, 3b–4a), which is the same for both Qumran texts and also differs from the Pentateuchal text, is the one that gives the reason for or explains the circumstances in which a person was hanged.

The Qumran texts give a reason why crucifixion was done, and this is the part that I would like to discuss specifically in relation to the community's social text (context).

## Social text

### Political circumstances

Politically, the Palestine Jews experienced many crises and political uncertainties.<sup>5</sup> The Qumran community was one of the apocalyptic movements that developed out of these unstable circumstances (Vermes 1994:124).

### The social text on crucifixion

The origin of crucifixion as a form of execution is normally traced back to the Persians. This viewpoint can be accepted, as there are ample references to crucifixion under the

5. In 332 BCE Alexander the Great took over the Holy Land. After an initial uncertainty after his death, the country became part of the Greek kingdom of Egypt, the Ptolemaic Kingdom. During the 3rd century the Ptolemies did not interfere much with the life of the Jews. Although they were liable to tax, they were ruled by a government consisting of the High Priest and his council (Vermes 1994:120). Yet there were important changes. Hellenistic cities were founded along the Mediterranean coast and Greek names were given to the existing Jewish cities in the process of Hellenisation. This process involved that all cultural, social, political and religious beliefs were filled with Greek content. Greeks, Macedonians and Hellenised Phoenicians settled on Palestinian soil and the spread of Greek civilization and culture were only a matter of time (Vermes 1994:122; see also Perdue 1994:243–246). In 200 BCE, when the Seleucids (Syrian Greeks) invaded the country, there were clear signs of this strange influence, amongst the Jews. The real problems began when Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BCE) began an official Hellenising program in Judea that was accepted with open arms by the Jewish elite. The leader of the modernist programme was the brother of the High Priest Onias III, named Jesus, who changed his name to the Greek version, Jason. He considered it as his duty to make Jerusalem a Hellenistic city. He established a gymnasium there, *inter alia*, and encouraged the youth to participate in athletics (Di Lella 1976:402). Jason was succeeded as high priest by two other high priests (Menelaus and Alcimus). These two also revealed a soft spot for the Greek way of life. Antiochus IV visited Jerusalem in 169 BCE and robbed the temple. In 167 BCE he prohibited the practice of the Judaic religion and dedicated the Jerusalem temple to Olympus Zeus. This policy of Hellenising and the actions of Antiochus IV led to a violent uprising. An armed uprising followed, fuelled by Mattathias and his sons (the Maccabaeus brothers) and supported by the traditional Jews. First led by Judas Maccabeus (until his death on the battlefield) and then by his brothers Jonathan and Simon, it was possible for the fiery Jewish fighters to restore Jewish worship in Jerusalem and to get rid of the Seleucids's dominance (Vermes 1994:122). The Maccabaeus triumph was not a pure triumph of religion and justice over tyranny and idolatry; it was also characterised by a number of serious social and religious changes. First there was a change in the High Priestly succession. In 171 BCE Onias III was murdered, his brother Jason was dethroned and thus the Zadokite family lost the monopoly (on the high priesthood) that they had had for centuries (Vermes 1994:122). Onias IV, who was prevented from becoming high priest, emigrated to Egypt and acted directly against the biblical precepts (which prescribe only one sanctuary, and that is in Jerusalem) when he erected a Jewish temple in Leontopolis. It was done with the blessing of King Ptolemy Philometor. He disgraced all the Jews with this disobedience to the biblical precepts. Secondly, there were problems in the Maccabaeus party. A portion of the Hassidim became disloyal when Alcimus (whom they trusted) became high priest in 162 BCE and his Syrian allies killed 60 Hassidim in one day. Finally, a major change occurred when Jonathan Maccabeus (who was a priest, but not of Zadokite descent) was accepted into the high priesthood by Alexander Balas (king of the Seleucids) in 153–2 BCE. Alexander wanted Jewish support, and knew that high priesthood would be irresistible. For the conservative Jews it was an illegal abuse of power. Another bigger shame was the appointment of Jonathan's brother Simon as High Priest and hereditary leader of the nation through a decree by the Jewish national assembly (140 BCE) (Vermes 1994:123). The fact that the holy position of high priest and the position of governor were intertwined stabbed any conservative Jew in the pit. This created the precedent that the people in power could bend everything to their will because they had religious and political power. Since 140 BCE (when Simon accepted the post as high priest), up to Pompey's reform of the independent Jewish state into a Roman province (63 BCE), Judea was ruled by a new house of high priests. This house of high priests was known as the Hasmonaeans (named after the grandfather of the Maccabaeus—Hasmon). All Simon's successors, especially John Hyrcanus (134–104 BCE) and Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE) (for whom their political role was more important than their loyalty to the high priesthood) defeated the Hellenistic cities in Palestine one by one. They also conquered the adjacent areas: Idumea, Samaria and Iturea (Vermes 1994:123). During this period of territorial expansion, the Hasmonaean rulers enjoyed the support of the Sadducees. The high priest played more of a political role and the divine post faded away. The Pharisees were strongly opposed to this abuse of the high priesthood. In 88 BCE, the Pharisees were accused of treason against Alexander Jannaeus and he executed eight hundred of them, on the cross (Vermes 1994:124). After Pompey's victory over Jerusalem, the Hasmonaean high priesthood existed for three more decades. The political power that once belonged to them moved to Herod the Great when he took over the Jerusalem throne in 37 BCE. His successor Herod Archelaus (4–39 CE) was known for his mismanagement of the Jews and Samaritans. Judea was under the direct government of the Romans. In 6 CE, the first Roman prefect, Coponius, arrived in Judea to take over his duties. This prefectship, of which Pontius Pilate was the most famous incumbent, went on for 35 years until 41 CE, when the Roman Emperor Claudius appointed Agrippa as the king. However, Agrippa died in 44 CE and Judea again fell under Roman rule, this time by a procurator. The Roman corrupt and unwise handling of Jewish affairs was one of the main reasons for the war in 66 CE, which led to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE (Vermes 1994:124).





Crucifixion is the most barbaric form of execution. It is considered as cruel, banal and the ultimate form of embarrassment. Ford (1997:61) says that its purpose was to inflict the maximum physical pain and utmost extremity of shame; sometimes it was used as a sacrifice for gods or goddesses; or to prevent the victim's ghost from bothering people, as the body was devoured by vultures and other wild animals and vital organs, such as the heart, liver or intestines, were impaled.

Writers from antiquity do not distinguish between someone being crucified alive or being hanged after he or she was dead as a display. In both cases it was considered the worst form of embarrassment (see also Van Aarde 2001:168).

There were no fixed rules for carrying out a crucifixion (see Van der Watt & Joubert 1996). This is confirmed by Seneca's (*Dialogi* 6) testimony: '*Video istic cruces, non unius quidem generis, sed aliter ab aliis fabricatas: capite quidam conuersos in terram suspendere, alii per obscena stipitem egerunt, alii brachia patibulo explicuerunt*'<sup>6</sup> (see Hengel 1977:25).

### Crucifixion by the Romans

References to crucifixion by Latin writers are relatively scarce. It seems that writers such as Lucretius, Virgilius, Statius and Aulus Gellius did not want to write anything about it because it was too barbaric. Other writers, such as Valerius, Maximus, Petronius and Apuleius, were not that sensitive. Hengel (1977:38) believes that the reason why not so many references to crucifixion are found in the ancient writings is less historical than aesthetic. He says that it was a custom that was often used, especially in Roman times, but the sophisticated literary critics would have nothing to do with it. The Jewish writer Flavius Josephus writes in his *Bellum Judaicum* that Alexandra Salome, headed by the Pharisees, had Diogenes killed. He was accused of advising the king (Alexander Jannaeus) to have his 800 victims crucified (see Neusner 1987; *BJ* I, 107–114 and also Chapman's [2008:52] reference to this event).

Hengel (1977:38) says that people assume that Roman citizens were not crucified, but this is only partially true; it was an ancient punishment that was meted out even to Roman citizens in case of high treason. This punishment was to hang a person on a tree. Although it was very rarely used, some instances are known. For example, Scipio had deserters crucified (Hengel 1977:39; Valerius Maximus 2.7, 12), and Verres crucified P Gavius, the spy (Hengel 1977: Cicero, *In Ve'em*). There is even an example of someone from the Roman aristocracy, a senator, C Rabirius, who was convicted of treason, condemned and executed by Caesar in 63 BCE (Hengel 1977:41).

Despite these examples, this punishment was mostly used to punish slaves and lower-class people. Chapman (2008:81) says that 'some people were beheaded rather than being

6. I see crosses there, not just one kind but made in different ways: some victims (hanging) with their heads down, some impaled through their genitals, others had their arms stretched out onto the gallows.

crucified because of their higher class standing'. Hengel (1977:41) says that Cicero made a clear distinction between *carnifex*, *obductio capitis* and the actual penalty, the *crux*. Even the mention of the latter was unbearable for a Roman citizen. Crucifixion was a religious-political-criminal punishment, with emphasis on the political aspect. It was the punishment for rebellious foreigners, violent criminals and robbers. Crucifixion was a way to prevent war, to control rebels and rebellious cities or provinces. It was a way to ensure peace and to keep a ruler in control. There was no distinction between the authority of the military force, the police and the power of the legal world; any of these powers could impose this punishment. In general, the rural population was very grateful if robbers were executed. Crucifixion was seen as a tool to protect people against criminals and tyrants, but also as a deterrent to other offenders.

According to Hengel (1977:51), crucifixion was seen by most of the Roman writers as a typical punishment for slaves. He also points out that the term *supplicium seruire* (slave punishment) was used to speak of crucifixion by, *inter alia*, Valerius Maximus, Tiberius and Tacitus. Hengel refers to the case of Plautus, who wrote to the slave *Crysalus* (gold carrier), who had cheated his owner and was afraid that his owner would change his (the slave's) name to *Crucisalus* (cross carrier). This refers to the custom that the person to be executed carried the crossbar of his own cross to the place of crucifixion (see Van der Watt & Joubert [1996] for the question whether only the crossbar or the entire cross was carried). Ford (1997:64) says that there was an ancient Roman law according to which all the slaves of an entire household were crucified if one of them had killed their owner. Ford (1997:65) also refers to the case that Tacitus recorded (*Ann* 14:43). Tacitus wrote about the crucifixion of Pedanius Secundus's entire household, which included 400 slaves, after he was killed by his slave.

A slave thus had very little, if any, protection against his or her owner. As a slave was seen as part of the master's property, he could do with his slave whatever he wanted to. It is clear from the dialogue between a Roman noble lady and her husband whom Hengel (1977) quotes from *Controversiae*:

Pone crucem servo! – Meruitquo crimene servus supplicium? quis testis adest? quis detulit? audi; nulla unquam de morte hominis crunctatio longa est. – Odemens, itaservus homo est? nil fecerit esto; Hoc volo, sic iubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas!<sup>7</sup> (p. 58)

From these instances, it is clear that despite the fact that the Romans considered crucifixion a cruel form of execution, it was still performed. It was especially applied to slaves, and mostly in case of disloyalty to their owners, though Roman citizens were not always spared. Crucifixion was used as a punishment for treason, espionage, rebellion against the

7. Woman: Crucify the slave!

Man: What offense worthy of death, he committed? Where are the witnesses against him? Who reports to him? Listen (at least) to him, no delay can be long as a man's life is at stake.

Woman: Oh, you idiot, do you call a slave a man? Are you saying that he is innocent? This is my wish and command. Take it as proof of the act.



state and desertion or defection to the enemy, to suppress rebellion, to prevent war and to maintain peace.

### Crucifixion by the Greeks

So far, the Greek world (Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt and Syria) have been left out of the discussion. Although most written sources about crucifixion are in Latin, this does not prove the Greeks' innocence. Hengel (1977:69) points out that it would be wrong to distinguish between the Latin 'West' and the Greek 'East' or even the Persian 'East' and the Greek 'West'. The circumstances surrounding Pheretime, the mother of the murdered Arcesilaus, the tyrant of Barca in Cyrenaica, confirms Hengel's conviction. Pheretime had those who were involved in her son's death crucified outside the city wall; and Pheretime was as Greek as her victims (see Hengel 1977:69; Herodotes 4202.1).

Another example is the crucifixion of Agathocles's concubines (Ford 1997:66). Ford (1997:66) refers to Justinus *'Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum* in this regard. The background against which it happened was the enmity between Antiochus, king of Syria, and Ptolemy, king of Egypt. Ptolemy had opposed Antiochus, but he was satisfied for the conquered cities to be recovered. This led him to become involved with the dissolute life of the illicit mistresses of Agathocles. He (Agathocles) got control over the state and found no one was less powerful than the king himself. When the events became known to the populace, Agathocles was killed and in revenge the king's wife had all his wives crucified.

Hengel (1977:71) also points out that Creon in Sophocles *'Antigone* was not only threatening to kill those familiar with the funeral of Polinisis if they did not talk, but to hang them alive. He also says that according to Cratinus (in his *Thesmophoriazousai*) slaves were regularly crucified and that Plato and Demosthenes were aware of this form of execution. Ford (1997:67) refers to the writings of Diodorus of Siculus, who wrote about the events in Asia at the time of the Assyrians. He described how Ninus, the king of the Assyrians, defeated Pharnus, the king of Media. He arrested the king (Pharnus), his seven sons and his wife and had them crucified<sup>8</sup>.

In the same book, Diodorus writes about the life of Semiramis, the wife of King Ninus (Ford 1997:68). She was a very dynamic woman and ascended the throne after her husband's death. According to Diodorus, she founded Babylon, had the hanging gardens constructed and marched against Egypt, Ethiopia and India. Diodorus mentions a letter that the king of India, Stabrobates, wrote to her wherein he called her an aggressor and a strumpet. He called the gods to witness that he would crucify her when he defeated her (Diodorus 2.18.1). Ford (1997:68) believes that Semiramis was threatened like that because she performed scandalous deeds in society's eyes by interpreting the role of a man, especially in war and leadership. She usurped

8. καὶ αὐτόχρομα τέκνονέπτα καιρωναῖκος αἰχμάλωτος ἀνεσταυρωθῆμ (Diodorus Sic, 2.1.10).

the military privileges of a man for herself. Ford (1997:68) also refers to the eighteenth book of Diodorus of Siculus, in which he describes how Perdiccas came to power. Perdiccas defeated king Ariarathes and captured; tortured and hanged or impaled him and his supporters<sup>9</sup>. Hengel (1977:73) also refers to this event, as well as to the crucifixion that took place whilst Antiochus III reigned (1977:74). Josephus states in his *Antiquitates* that the law-abiding citizens of Judea were crucified during the reign of Antiochus IV in 167 BCE and that even in the pre-Roman, Hellenistic period crucifixion was known as a form of execution for political criminals, also in the Greek-speaking East. He pointed out that Plutarch was aware that every offender who was sentenced to death had to carry his cross on his back (Hengel 1977:77; *Moralia* 554A).

In the Greek world crucifixion was known just as well as in other areas. The punishment was also administered by the community. Hengel refers in this regard *inter alia* to Amyssos of Caria, who reported that the citizens hanged the slave who had killed his owner, leaving him for wild animals to eat (Hengel 1977:76; Marshall 1916). Unlike the Romans, it was not only the authorities who applied crucifixion practices, but also ordinary citizens. Greek society did not know such strict class distinctions regarding who was crucified and who was not. The reasons for the crucifixion were the same everywhere. The Greeks also put to death (by crucifixion) for treason and war-oriented actions, the victims including rebellious slaves, agitators and murderers. They also used crucifixion to quell unrest, maintain peace and to protect ordinary citizens against criminal wrongdoing.

### Crucifixion by the Jews

The question whether the Jews crucified has been debated at length. That they were crucified is an accepted fact. Hengel (1977:85) refers especially to the Talmudic material in this regard: 'We have a whole series of references to the crucifixion of Jews during the later empire.' According to 1 Corinthians 1:23 and Galatians 5:11, the cross was a scandal in Israel's eyes. This belief has a religious background that can be traced back to Deuteronomy 21:22, 23<sup>10</sup>:

<sup>22</sup>And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, <sup>23</sup>his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance. (English Standard Version)

According to *Sanh* VII.1, the ways in which executions were carried out in post-exilic Israel were: stoning, burning, decapitation and strangulation. It is this text that contributes to the idea that crucifixion was not a Judean form of execution; it was regarded as a pagan custom that had originated with the Romans and that was practised only by Roman authorities. Bammel (1970:77) draws attention to *Sanh* VII.3, which says that decapitation by the sword, 'as the government makes', was also an acceptable method (also

9. τοῦτον μὲν οὖν καὶ τοὺς συγγενεῖς αὐτοῦ πάτας αἰκισαμένους ἐνέσταυρωε (Diodorus Sic, 18.16).

10. See the next section for a discussion of the interpretation of this verse.

recognised by the Mishnah). The Roman practice of beating someone with a stick is echoed in *Makkoth* III.12 referring to regulations to hit someone with reams. It seems that the Jews did not strictly confine themselves to *Sanh* VII.1 and that they were also influenced by social juridical 'text'.

Bammel (1970:78) asserts that it is not impossible that the post-exilic Israel did indeed use crucifixion: '... the practice of this form of execution was not an alien possibility even to Jewish judges.' Bammel also refers to Stauffer (1957), who claimed that crucifixion was used in Israel since the 2nd century BCE, particularly in cases of political crimes.

Contrary to Bammel, Rosenblatt claims (1956) that according to the Pharisee law, crucifixion was intolerable. He points to the previously mentioned argument that it was not an acceptable form of execution. He admits that persons guilty of the death penalty, '... such as the blasphemer and idolater were impaled ...' (Rosenblatt 1956:318). Tzaferis (1985) says that although crucifixion was a *ἀνάθεμα* to Israel, it was nevertheless used by Judean tyrants in the Hasmonaean period. He also refers to the mass crucifixion of 800 Pharisees in one day by the High Priest Alexander Jannaeus during the revolt against the census of 7 CE, as recorded by Josephus in his *Antiquitates* 13 (see also Hengel 1977; Feldman & Hata 1987). Hengel (1977:84) and Ford (1997:64) refer to the time when Rabbi Simeon b Shetah hanged seventy witches in Ashkelon (see also Chapman 2008:66). It is not clear whether this was a case of 'hanging to die' or 'hang after death'. According to Ford's (1997:64) quote from *Sanh* 43b, it was not unusual for the Israelites to hang a body after execution.

### Crucifixion in the Qumran community

In the Qumran corpus, there are the two texts that were discussed and compared earlier as well as 4Q169/ *Nahum* Peshar<sup>11</sup> 3–4 I:7–8 that refer to crucifixion and/or hanging<sup>12</sup>. This text refers explicitly to crucifixion as a form of execution. Chapman (2008:57) refers specifically to 4Q169 3–4 and says that this specific text has been much debated, in the first place because it is one of the first few sectarian texts that referred to specific historical names and also because it refers to crucifixion as a form of execution. This text is very fragmentary and has been constructed and interpreted differently by different scholars since it was first published (see *inter alia* Baumgarten (1972); Yadin (1971, 1973); as well as Chapman's (2008:60) referral to the 'Wieder and Zeitlin

11.4Q169 (4QpNah) Text and Translation according to García Martínez and Tigchelaar (1997:336–337)  
Figs. 3–4 Col. I, PAM 43.351  
top margin, line 1-6 not printed here

מִשְׁפָּרוֹ עַל כְּפִיר הַחֲרוֹן

7 [אשר ימלא חוריה רוב פגרי לעשות נק]מות בדורשי החלוקת אשר יתלה אנשים חיים  
8 [על הזל לפעול תועבה אשר לוא יעשה]בישראל מלפנים כי לתלוי חי על העץ [ז]יקרא הגני אלי[כה]  
Line 9–12 not printed here, bottom margin

#### Translation:

Blank Its interpretation concerns the Angry Lion 7 [who filled his cave with a mass of corpses, carrying out revenge against those looking for easy interpretations, who hanged living men 8 [from the tree, committing an atrocity which had not been committed] in Israel since ancient times, for it is [hor]rible for the one hanged alive from the tree *Nah* 2:14 See, I am against [you]!

12.Van der Watt and Joubert (1996) make it clear that there was no distinction between hanging and crucifixion. Both concepts referred to a humiliated form of execution.

debate'). Chapman (2008:65) refers to the tendency of earlier scholars to reconstruct this text with too short lines and warns that any reconstruction of this text 'must be viewed as somewhat tenuous, since the decision about whether the author of the Peshar thought this punishment was appropriate almost necessarily precedes the actual process of reconstruction'. Although this text has been interpreted differently by different scholars, most scholars in Qumran studies are now of the opinion that this text does refer to crucifixion. For this study, the significance of this text is only that it demonstrates that the Qumran community was familiar with the practice of crucifixion.

Baumgarten (2005) did a study on the possible avoidance of the death penalty by the Qumran community. Although the death penalty and crucifixion do not fall in the same category, it can give an indication of the community's practices and conduct.

Baumgarten (2005:31–38) asks whether the death penalty was actually carried out within the community. A number of capital offences according to biblical law are mentioned in Qumran legal texts (see 4Q159 2–4, 8–9; CD12:3–4; 4Q266 6 ii9–10; CD9:1; 4Q270 2 ii 13) but other texts (4Q271 3 12–15; CD 12:3–4; CD 9:16–21; 4Q266 11 14–16) seem to point to an avoidance and/or limitation of the death penalty in Qumran law. Baumgarten argues that such avoidance harmonises with Qumran theology, which firmly believed in an ultimate divine judgement; this could have led the community to avoid taking a human life as far as possible (see 1QS 10:17–18 in this regard). By comparing Qumran criminal law with that of the Essenes, he established the following commonalities between the two groups:

- In principle both groups accepted the biblical death penalties, yet they had moral scruples about taking life.
- The most severe penalty imposed in practice appears to have been expulsion.
- The sentence of expulsion required the approval of a large gathering.

### Summarised remarks on the Social text

Hengel (1977:38) is of the opinion that the fact that not much is written about crucifixion does not prove that it did not happen. He sees the absence of such references in the writings from antiquity as an aesthetic rather than a historical problem. The practice of crucifixion was widely used, but the sophisticated literary community did not want to know anything about it. Still, it cannot be ignored that the practice was known in the context of the Jews and the Qumran community.

The examples of crucifixion amongst Israel's neighbours boil down to one commonality. At the time that the Qumran community existed, almost all the cultures were familiar with crucifixion as a form of execution. In most of the cultures, crucifixion was the punishment for political criminals or persons guilty of high treason, espionage, rebellion against the state and desertion or defection to the enemy. It was used

to suppress rebellion, to prevent war and to maintain peace. This specific aspect seems to be the social text (context, general conduct). In most cultures it was seen as a very severe penalty. It was also seen as a punishment for slaves. It is clear that the Qumran community was not unfamiliar with this practice; it was even used vigorously in this period. Chapman (2008:53) refers to *Ant.* xiii.380, where it is written that Alexander had eight hundred Jews crucified and their wives and children slaughtered whilst he was feasting with his concubines. Van Aarde (2000; 1 Macc. 1:60–61) refers to the shameful practices of Antiochus Epiphanes IV:

... he ordered parents whose children were circumcised, to be seriously maltreated physically, then crucified alive. The children were to be strangled and hung over the necks of their crucified parents....The motif of shame is important here; not only do parents suffer the public shame of crucifixion, but mockery is made of the very mark of the covenant, namely circumcision (cf. Gen 17). (p. 168)

It is clear that the practice of hanging and/or crucifixion was well known and even used later on in the Jewish communities. Chapman (2008) states it as follows:

Jewish people had long been acquainted with crucifixion and other bodily suspension penalties. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods crucifixion is evidenced in the Diaspora and frequently attested in Palestine, even occasionally at the hands of Jewish leaders. However, the lasting memory of the post-Second Temple generations would have especially been of their comrades who were hung from the cross before and after the destruction of the Temple. (p. 94)

## Concluding remarks

In this study a few things have become apparent, which must be taken into consideration:

11QT 19 64:6–13 is part of the *Temple Scroll* and specifically part of the Deuteronomic Paraphrase. This text is presented as a written version of YHWH's revelation to Moses, to such an extent that the name of YHWH is replaced with the first person. What Deuteronomy presents as Moses' words becomes, in the Qumrantext, God's own words, thereby claiming that this 'new' Torah is coming directly from YHWH and legitimating the text theologically. The text integrates the Pentateuchal laws concerning the Temple and its sacrifices, sometimes literally but also with many additions. When comparing the text with the Zadokite fragments and the Halakhic Letter, it is clear that although there are similarities, the differences are too many to say that they are the same. Opponents of the Hasmoneans were leading the apocalyptic movement that was embodied by the Qumran sect. It seems that amongst the texts they brought with them were the sources of the *Temple Scroll*. Two questions remain with regard to these documents: (1) Which Pentateuchal text did they use – was it the Masoretic one as represented currently in the Hebrew Bible, or was it another copy of the Pentateuch? (see Collins's [2010:22] view on the possibility of a common corpus of authoritative scriptures). That leads to the second question: (2) Did the Pentateuch text serve as an intertext or as a source text?

Collins (2010:11) also refers to the fact that the *Temple Scroll* is presented as being God's words, but sees it as in essence a harmonisation of the Priestly and Deuteronomic laws. The process of harmonisation and rewriting the source texts is well known in Qumran texts.

Collins (2010) examines tradition and innovation in the development and the interpretation of texts (specifically Qumran texts) and concludes by saying:

The Dead Sea Scrolls provide some of our earliest examples of explicit interpretation of authoritative scriptures... they shed some interesting light on the workings of tradition... In fact tradition is never a matter of simply passing on a *traditum*. While it provides continuity with the past in various ways, not least in the language it provides, it also gives us something upon which we can operate, which we can adapt, criticize, and change, even while maintaining the illusion of stability and the assurance it provides. (pp. 22–33)

Crawford (2005:131) also refers to harmonisations of texts<sup>13</sup>. We saw that the *Temple Scroll* and specifically the Deuteronomic Paraphrase is a Qumranian copy of a non-Qumranian work, meaning that the original document was harmonised (creative transmission of tradition) to fit the community's circumstances, their rules and their ideology. In this process of harmonisation I want to ask: Where does the text (11QT 64:7–11), part of which corresponds verbatim with 4Q524 14:2–4, originate from? There is enough evidence to say that it was a pre-existent text, and influenced by the social text (all cultures crucified in cases of high treason or action against the people). The Qumran redactor either added it to Deuteronomy 21:18–13 (in which case the Pentateuchal text will be the source for 11QT 64:6–13) or the redactor added Deuteronomy 21:18–13 to the pre-existent text to empower or legitimise this text as well as the social text; in which case the Pentateuchal text would have been the intertext. It seems more possible that the redactor had a copy of the Pentateuchal text in front of him<sup>14</sup> (whether it was the Masoretic text<sup>15</sup>, 4QRT<sup>16</sup> or an earlier source for both is debatable), to which he made additions in order to align it with the community's own perspectives and ideology. That could also explain why both of the Qumran texts (even though their sequences of the verses differ) have that inclusion verbatim the same. The reason for hanging someone was given; when that person had trespassed against the community; leaked information or cursed his

13. We have noted that several of these liturgical or special-use manuscripts that include passages from Deuteronomy contain harmonistic or expanded texts. This phenomenon also occurs in the so-called "proto-Samaritan" group of texts, named as such because they exhibit the type of scribal intervention most fully evident in the Samaritan Pentateuch. The history of the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch has become clearer since the discoveries in the Judean Desert. It is now accepted that the Samaritan community selected as their canonical scripture a text of the Pentateuch that was in general circulation in Palestine in the Second Temple period. They then subjected this text to a thin veneer of sectarian editing. Once we remove this veneer of sectarian editing a text of the Pentateuch characterized by harmonizations remains'.

14. Refer to Shiffman's (1992) attempt to 'reverse the process' as discussed earlier.

15. Crawford (2005:128) refers to the different sources of the Pentateuch that was used at Qumran: 'The major witnesses to the text of Deuteronomy in the Second Temple period are the proto-Masoretic text, the proto-Samaritan text, and the Septuagint text. Some of the Qumran manuscripts align with one of these major witnesses ...'

16. Refer to Brook (2001) and Crawford and Colledge (1994) for the discussion on 4QRT.

people. The reason was to protect the community and to preserve their ideology. Admission to the community was quite a process, as Collins (2010) indicates:

On admission, the new member had to swear an oath to abide not only by the Torah of Moses but also by 'all that has been revealed from it to the Sons of Zadok, the priests, who are the keepers of the covenant ... According to the *Damascus Document*, a person whose deeds did not conform to the 'explanation of the law in which the men of perfect holiness walked' should be shunned by the community, 'for all the holy ones of the Most High have cursed him'. (p. 15)

The importance of the community is clear in texts such as 1QS 5<sup>17</sup>, 1QS6 and 1QS 8:20–27. The process of becoming part of the community is also described in the *Damascus Document*, especially in CD 15.

The Qumran community was an exclusive community. Not everyone was admitted, and persons who did not keep to the regulations were expelled. Being a sect and an apocalyptic movement with a unique symbolic universum, they had to keep their community 'pure' at all times and costs. To that end they would hang someone who betrayed the community; treason against the community was unacceptable and intolerable. They would impose a penalty that is quite harsh to serve their ideology<sup>18</sup>. The social text of the community (importance of loyalty towards the community) was the motive for adding the prerequisite for crucifixion to the pre-existent Pentateuchal text.

## Acknowledgements

### Competing interests

The author declares that she has no financial or personal relationship(s) that may have inappropriately influenced her in writing this article.

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17. See especially 1QS 5 7–13 where the process and conditions of becoming a member of the community are spelled out.
18. Earlier we saw that Schiffman (2000) pointed out the difference between the *Temple scroll* and the Zadokite fragments with regard to the punishment for informing against one's people: the passage from the *Temple Scroll* prescribes the punishment for it as crucifixion, whilst the Zadokite fragments make no mention of what he calls 'this rather uncharacteristic penalty'.
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