Mr D. S. Barrett makes an interesting and valuable suggestion (this journal, 119, 1976, 366) when he cites the Hodayot, the Hymns of Thanksgiving, as the text in the Dead Sea Scrolls which may have been the source of the prophecy referred to by Tacitus in Hist. 5. 13. 2. In my discussion (this journal, 113, 1970, 363-8) I had cited Yadin's quotation from this text (my p. 366) of the phrase 'congregation of the sons of heaven' which Yadin saw as a parallel to the theme of The Scroll of the War.

One possible objection to the relevance of the Hodayot in the Tacitean context is that these hymns are not predominantly Messianic in theme. Mr Barrett quotes the translation of Menahem Mansoor, but in general this scholar is 'inclined toward a non-Messianic interpretation' of the hymns; he states that 'there are no clear references to the Messiah in these hymns'.

According to Mansoor 'the battle of the mighty ones of heaven' refers to angels, and he also says (p. 121 n. 12) that 'the eternal destruction probably constitutes the goal of the global battle of the hosts of heaven, eschatologically speaking'. On the other hand, there is one highly probable allusion to a Messiah in the Hodayot. In 3. 3-18 we are told that a woman will give birth in anguish to a son who will prove to be a 'wonderful counselor'.

A. Dupont-Sommer urged that the 'Teacher of Righteousness' of the scrolls is to be identified with the 'Messiah-Saviour'. Otto Betz has made a good case for believing that the idea is probably collective, in the sense that the people of Israel are given the Messianic role. The passage quoted by Barrett (3. 35-6) occurs in a section not far removed from this prophecy.

It must be admitted that the non-Messianic character, for the most part, of these hymns is not a serious objection in view of the possibility that the intermediary exponent envisaged by Tacitus could easily have given a Messianic interpretation to a theme that was originally eschatological and collective. A military context, as Mr Barrett urges, could have been readily

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4) Le Livre des Hymnes découvert près de la mer Morte (1QH), Paris, 1957, 18. That a personal Messiah is referred to is the view also of J. Licht, Megillat baHodayot, Jerusalem, 1957, 76, as reported by Otto Betz, New Testament Studies 5 (1959), 68.
assigned to a conflict in heaven; and the reference of *visae per caelum concurren ad eaelum" corresponds very well.

The objection that remains is that whereas such a theme is central to *The Scroll of the War*, it is marginal to the *Hodayot* and presented much more briefly. In *The Scroll of the War* is envisaged a holy crusade in which the world is conquered in the name of the God of Israel*. In my earlier discussion I had tended to favour the Book of Daniel as a more likely source, especially as it is not patently anti-Roman. I pointed out, at the same time, that *The Scroll of the War* is not explicitly anti-Roman either, in spite of the likely equation of the Kittim and the Romans; clearly it could have been tactfully handled by a pro-Roman exponent. I now realize that the Book of Daniel does not suit the Tacitean description in one respect: it does not refer to a war in heaven. It is true that it describes God as wielding sovereign sway over the powers of heaven and earth (4. 35) and that it portrays the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven (7. 13). But a clash of forces in heaven is not presented. Such a clash is referred to in the *Hodayot*, but it is prominent in *The Scroll of the War* and in the picture conveyed by Tacitus. I now believe that *The Scroll of the War* is the most likely source.

Tübingen

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