Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice

Shirot `Olat ha-Shabbat

The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, also known as the "Angelic Liturgy," is a liturgical work composed of thirteen separate sections, one for each of the first thirteen Sabbaths of the year. The songs evoke angelic praise and elaborate on angelic priesthood, the heavenly temple, and the Sabbath worship in that temple.

The headings of the various songs may reflect the solar calendar. Although the songs bear no explicit indication of their source, the phraseology and terminology of the texts are very similar to those of other Qumran works.

Eight manuscripts of this work were found in Qumran Cave 4 (4Q400 through 407) and one in Cave 11, dating from the late Hasmonean and Herodian periods. One manuscript of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice was found at Masada, a Zealot fortress.

References


English Translation of Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (Shirot `Olat ha-Shabbat)

4Q403(ShirShabbd)
Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority (9)

30. By the instructor. Song of the sacrifice of the seventh Sabbath on the sixteenth of the month. Praise the God of the lofty heights, O you lofty ones among all the

31. elim of knowledge. Let the holiest of the godlike ones
sanctify the King of glory who sanctifies by holiness all His holy ones. O you chiefs of the praises of

32. all the godlike beings, praise the splendidly [pr]aiseworthy God. For in the splendor of praise is the glory of His realm. From it (comes) the praises of all

33. the godlike ones together with the splendor of all [His] maj[esty. And] exalt his exaltedness to exalted heaven, you most godlike ones of the lofty elim, and (exalt) His glorious divinity above

34. all the lofty heights. For He is God of gods] of all the chiefs of the heights of heaven and King of ki[ngs] of all the eternal councils. (by the intention of)

35. (His knowledge) At the words of His mouth come into being [all the lofty angels]; at the utterance of His lips all the eternal spirits; [by the in]tention of His knowledge all His creatures

36. in their undertakings. Sing with joy, you who rejoice [in His knowledge with] rejoicing among the wondrous godlike beings. And chant His glory with the tongue of all who chant with knowledge; and (chant) His wonderful songs of joy

37. with the mouth of all who chant [of Him. For He is] God of all who rejoice [in knowledge] forever and Judge in His power of all the spirits of understanding.

Transcription and translation by C. Newsom