


David as a Prophet in the Text of “David’s Compositions” (11Q5 xxvii 2–11) against the Background of the Qumran Literature

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ABSTRACT: The main aim of this paper is to analyse the biblical figure of King David as a prophet based on the apocryphal text of “David’s Compositions,” which is part of the Great Psalms Scroll from Cave 11 at Qumran (11Q5 xxvii 2–11). The paper consists of three parts. The first part is an analysis of the text of “David’s Compositions” itself. It includes the Hebrew text with its translation into English, the context, and the detailed exegesis of the composition with a strong emphasis on the interpretation of the ending of v. l.3 and the first half of vv. l.4 and l.11 (col. xxvii), relevant to the subject of the presentation. The objective of the second part is to look, in the context of “David’s Compositions,” at the terminology defining the function and figure of the prophet in the Qumran Caves Scrolls. This enables us to limit a huge number of manuscripts only to those in which this terminology occurs. Their content is further verified in terms of their connection to the figure of David. The final, third part concerns the interpretation of three fragments from 4QMMT.

KEYWORDS: David, prophet, Qumran, 11Q5, David’s Compositions

The texts from the period of Second Temple Judaism characterise the figure of King David in various ways. He is presented as the progenitor of the Messiah, a triumphant warrior, an ideal ruler and king, the author of psalms, the founder of worship in Jerusalem, a man distinguished by piety and righteousness, an exorcist, and a prophet. This paper will analyse the latter image, i.e. David as a prophet. The source text for the following analyses is the so-called “David’s Compositions” found in the Great Psalms Scroll from Cave 11 at Qumran. Interpreting this work in terms of the chosen objective will also allow us to look at those Dead Sea Scrolls that can provide more information about the functioning of such a perception of the figure of David in the Intertestamental period.

“David’s Compositions” form a part of the penultimate column (col. XXVII) of the Great Psalms Scroll from Cave 11, referred to as 11QPs^a or 11Q5¹. They are found

1 The whole 11QPs^a manuscript contains 49 compositions, seven of which were preserved on fragments that are separate from the scroll (A, B, C, D, E, F), while the rest was preserved in 11Q5, in columns I–XXVIII. Most of the texts, as many as 40, are the psalms known from the Masoretic Text; the remaining nine texts are apocryphal compositions, which were not included in the Masoretic Psalter or other biblical texts: Ps 154; “Plea for Deliverance”; Sir 51:13–20b, 30b; “Apostrophe to Zion”; Ps 155; “Hymn to

between the fragment 2 Sam 23:7 and Ps 140:1–5, covering 10 of the 15 lines of the entire column XXVII². When discussing the placement of this work in 11Q5 (the best-preserved Qumran scroll with psalms), it should be noted that before the fragment of 2 Sam 23:7, there is the text of the “Hymn to the Creator” (col. XXVI),³ while immediately after the fragment of Ps 140:1–5, there are texts of Psalms 134:1–3 and 151A and B (col. XXVIII).⁴

The position of the works preceding the text of “David’s Compositions,” placed in col. XXVII in l.2–11, and those immediately following it may suggest that the arrangement of “David’s Compositions” in the Great Psalm Scroll (11Q5) was not accidental,⁵ but was an attempt at selecting texts containing similar expressions and presenting similar themes. Furthermore, as Flint demonstrated in his structural analysis of 11Q5, the text of “David’s Compositions” opens the final group of the compositions in the Scroll (“David’s Compositions,” Ps 140, 134, 151A and B), in which references to the figure of David become more and more frequent and culminate in Ps 151A and B,⁶ where David himself speaks (this text is narrated in the 1st person singular).

Hebrew text and its translation⁷

“David’s Compositions” (11Q5, col. XXVII, 2–11) and its translation into English

Hebrew text	line
ויהי דויד בן ישי חכם ואור כאור השמש וסופר	2
ונבון ותמים בכל דרכיו לפני אל ואנשים ויתן	3

the Creator”; 2 Sam 23:7; “David’s Compositions”; Ps 151A and B. Three of them, Psalms 151, 154, 155, appeared in other versions of the Psalter. Until 1961, Ps 151 was known in the Greek version (Septuagint), the Syriac version (Peshitta) and the Latin version (Vulgate), while the other two apocryphal Psalms, 154 and 155, functioned in Syrian translations. The following two texts, 2 Sam 23:7 and Sir 51, could be found in other books of the Bible. The last four works: “Plea for Deliverance”, “Apostrophe to Zion”, “Hymn to the Creator” and “David’s Compositions” were previously unknown. According to the official edition by J. Sanders, the scroll is 4 m and 11.2 cm in length. U. Dahmen, in a later publication devoted to a new reconstruction of the scroll, thinks that, considering the compositions which could originally have been part of the scroll, and which have not been preserved due to the damaged beginning of the scroll, its length could have been between 5.30 and 5.60 m (J. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPsa)* [DJD 4; Oxford: Clarendon 1965] 4; U. Dahmen, *Psalmen- und Psalter-Rezeption im Frühjudentum. Rekonstruktion, Textbestand, Struktur und Pragmatik der Psalmenvrolle 11QPsa aus Qumran* [STDJ 49; Leiden: Brill 2003] 25).

2 Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll*, P1. XVI.

3 Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll*, P1. XVI.

4 Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll*, P1. XVII.

5 An in-depth analysis of the context of the text of “David’s Compositions” is presented by J. VanderKam in the second part of the paper (J. VanderKam, “Studies on ‘David’s Compositions’ (11QPsa 27: 2–11),” *ErIsr* 26 [1999] 212–213); some observations on the sequence in the ending of 11Q5 are made by U. Dahmen (“Davidisierung und Messianismus. Messianismus in der Psalmenüberlieferung von Qumran,” *Apokalyptik und Qumran* [eds. J. Frey – M. Becker] [Eniblicke 10; Paderborn: Bonifatius 2007] 181–188.)

6 P. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms* (STDJ 17; Leiden: Brill 1997) 192.

7 Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll*, 92; Dahmen, *Psalmen- und Psalter*, 97.

4	לו יהוה רוח נבונה ואורה ויכתוב תהלים
5	שלושת אלפים ושש מאות ושיר לשורר לפני המזבח על עולת
6	התמיד לכול יום ויום לכול ימי השנה ארבעה וששים ושלוש
7	מאות ולקורבן השבתות שנים וחמשים שיר ולקורבן ראשי
8	החדשים ולכול ימי המועדות וליום הכפורים שלושים שיר
9	ויהי כול השיר אשר דבר ששה ואבעים וארבע מאות ושיר
10	לנגן על הפגועים ארבעה והיה הכול ארבעת אלפים וחמשים
11	כול אלה דבר בנבואה אשר נתן לו מלפני העליון

Translation

2	There was David, son of Jesse, wise and enlightened like the light of the sun and (he was) a scribe
3	and a wise man and perfect in all his ways before God and men. The Lord gave
4	him a discerning and enlightened spirit. He wrote psalms
5	three thousand six hundred, and songs to sing before the altar over the perpetual
6	offering on every day for all the days of the year – three hundred and sixty-four;
7	and for the sabbath offerings – fifty-two songs; and for the offerings of the new
8	moon and for all the days of the appointed festivals and the Day of the Atonement – thirty songs.
9	All the songs which he spoke were four hundred and forty-six, and songs
10	to perform over the possessed – four. The total was four thousand and fifty.
11	And all of these he spoke thanks to the prophecy that had been given to him from before the Most High.

In terms of structure, considering both syntax and content, the above text can be divided into two parts.⁸ The first part forms the content of the entire lines l.2 and l.3, except for the last word, which is the syntagma ויתן, indicating, from the point of view of syntax, the beginning of a new sentence. This part (lines l.2–3) includes a sequence of words enumerating the characteristics of David, his attributes, and a description of his genealogy. David is presented as the perfect figure. This is primarily evidenced by the use of the adjective הזכם, meaning a wise, skilful, clever, experienced man. Later in the text, we encounter the expression כאור השמש – “enlightened like the light of the sun.” Further, the classical participle in the conjugation Qal – טופר – was used, which denotes not only a scribe, a literate man, but also indicates an expert in the Law, a scholar who can explain Scripture.⁹ Another characteristic of David is defined by the first word in line l.3: נבון, describing him as a reasonable and prudent man. The last word referring to David in the first part of “David’s Compositions” is the adjective תמים, usually meaning: “perfect,” “complete,” “ideal,” “impeccable,” “devoid of defect,” “without blemish.” What is more, this adjective is linked to

8 For more information on the division and structure of “David’s Compositions,” see an earlier paper written by the author, M. Biegas, “The Division and Structure of ‘David’s Compositions’ (11Q5),” *BibAn* 13/32 (2023) 326–332.

9 *HALOT*, 767.

the following content of line l.3, in which the expression occurs: בכול דרכיו לפני אל ואנשים – “in all his ways before God and men,” which may refer both to the adjective תמים on its own, as well as combined with all previous expressions characterising David in lines l.2 and l.3. The association of this expression with the person of David presents him as an idealised figure, which is also characteristic of post-exile literature. Such an interpretation is in line with the general interpretive tendency after the Babylonian Exile, when all rulers¹⁰ were compared to David and evaluated on that basis.

Immediately after the sequence containing the presentation of David’s positive attributes at the ending of line l.2, the second part of “David’s Compositions” begins, which includes all the remaining lines of the text, i.e. l.4–11, in which the author enumerates David’s supernatural gifts received from God.¹¹ These can be divided into three subsections:

II.1 v. 2 (l.4) – David received a discerning and enlightened spirit;

II.2 vv. 3–5 (l.4–10) – enumeration of David’s psalms and songs;¹²

II.3 v. 6 (l.11) – David possesses the gift of prophecy.¹³

In l.4 we can speak of the first, though not explicit, allusion to David’s prophetic function. We can formulate such a position by looking at the text in terms of its literary form and structure, which enables us to notice the inclusion of words לן נתן in lines l.3–4 (last and first word) and in line l.11. The last word of v. l.3 and more than half of l.4 form a verbal sentence ויתן לו יהוה רוח נבונה ואורה “the Lord gave him a discerning and enlightened spirit.” The author of the composition makes God (יהוה), the subject of this sentence, from whom the gift of the spirit (ויתן) also comes, and presents David as the recipient of God’s gift. This is evidenced by the expression לו used here as the dative of benefits (*dativus commodi*), of purpose.¹⁴ It is therefore clear that David receives the gift of the spirit from God, and the use of the above expression is an allusion to his prophetic function; this is evident even when the text is read cursorily. A problem arises, however, in relation to the reading of the historical books in which David’s story is described. According to these books, he performs the role of the king – first in Hebron, and then in Jerusalem. Moreover, before he begins to perform it, he is given the gift of the spirit by God, as indicated in the text of 1 Sam 16:13. This verse (1 Sam 16:13) is part of the narrative about David and Saul (1 Sam 16–31)¹⁵ accounting for the gradual fall of the rule of Saul and his descendants,

¹⁰ F.V. Reiterer – R. Unfried, “David,” *NLB*, 140.

¹¹ Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll*, 92.

¹² P. Porzig, “David in the Judean Desert: Beobachtungen an ausgewählten Qumrantexten,” *David in the Desert: Tradition and Redaction in the “History of David’s Rise”* (eds. H. Bezzel – R.G. Kratz) (BZAW 514; Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter 2021) 15–22.

¹³ C.A. Evans, “The Reputation of Jesus in Light of Qumran’s Tradition of David as Prophet,” *Reading the Bible in Ancient Traditions and Modern Editions: Studies in Memory of Peter W. Flint* (eds. A.B. Perrin – K.S. Baek – D. Falk) (EJL 47; Atlanta, GA: SBL Press 2017) 643.

¹⁴ T. Muraoka, *A Syntax of Qumran Hebrew* (Leuven – Paris – Bristol: Peeters 2020) 140–141.

¹⁵ R.P. Gordon, *I and II Samuel. A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Regency 1986) 67–68; O. Sergi, “Saul, David und die Entstehung der Monarchie in Israel. Neubewertung des historischen und literarischen Kontexts von 1Sam 9–2Sam 5,” *David in the Desert: Tradition and Redaction in the “History of David’s Rise”* (eds. H. Bezzel – R.G. Kratz) (BZAW 514; Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter 2021) 35–56.

while highlighting the political and religious qualities of the new pretender to the throne – David.¹⁶ The pericope of 1 Sam 16:1–13,¹⁷ which ends the aforementioned v. 13, contains an account of the mission that God entrusted to Samuel, which involved anointing a new king from among the sons of Jesse of Bethlehem. In the text of 1 Sam 16:6–10, the Deuteronomist indicates that Samuel did not choose a new king among David's older brothers, despite their physical qualities, because, according to v. 7, the ultimate criterion for evaluating the candidates was their internal quality, which is confirmed by the final part of v. 7: ויהוה יראה ללבב – “the Lord looks on the heart.”¹⁸ This course of events gives the author the opportunity to introduce the figure of David into the content of the narrative. He describes the function (v. 11), appearance (v. 12), and the moment of anointing the youngest son of Jesse (v. 13) in just three verses (vv. 11–13).¹⁹ Grace is indicated as directly linked with the rite of anointing. The author of the book defines it as רוּחַ יְהוָה “the spirit of God” which תִּצְלַח “came” upon the newly anointed king, i.e. David.²⁰ The text makes it clear that the gift of the “spirit of God” is not linked to the prophetic role, but to the royal function. It is also important to note a certain chronological order. “The Spirit of the Lord” came upon David, and earlier upon Saul (1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6). However, in the case of the first king of Israel, the gift of the spirit (1 Sam 11:6) is not directly related to his anointing. His charismatic endowment described in 1 Sam 10:6, 10, considering the chronology of events, is separated from the anointing itself. In David's case, the gift of the “Spirit of the Lord” is a natural consequence of his anointing; the duration of the gift is permanent (1 Sam 30:25), and its transfer was not associated with the spasmodic behaviour that occurred in similar situations with Saul. When comparing the account of Saul's anointing with the narrative of David's anointing, one can conclude that the Deuteronomist thus demonstrates the superiority of the gift of the “spirit” given to David over the same gift enjoyed by Saul, both in its close association with the anointing rite and in its permanence.²¹

Therefore, when considering the information provided in v. 1.4 of the text of “David's Compositions” about David receiving the gift of “a discerning and enlightened spirit,” in the light of the aforementioned biblical narrative depicting the moment in which the gift is bestowed upon the protagonist, one can come to a general (albeit early) conclusion that the author of “David's Compositions” does not want to define David as a prophet, but refers to his royal function. In that case, this gift of a discerning and enlightened spirit

16 J. Lemański, “Opowiadanie o Arce przymierza (1 Sm 4,1–7,1; 2 Sm 6) jako klucz do teologii Księg Samuela,” *SC* 11 (2007) 25.

17 The precise division of the pericope is presented in: A. Campbell (ed.), *1 Samuel* (FOTL 7; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2003) 161–162.

18 P.K. McCarter, *1 Samuel. A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary* (AB 8; Garden City, NY: Doubleday 1980) 277; M.J. Evans, *1 and 2 Samuel* (NIBC OT 6; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson 2000) 80.

19 R.W. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC 10; Waco, TX: Word Books 1983) 160–162; Gordon, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 151; A.G. Auld, *1 & 2 Samuel. A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox 2011) 186–187.

20 W. Dietrich, *Samuel. 1Sam 13–26* (BKAT 8/2; Göttingen: Neukirchener Theologie 2015) 238–245.

21 Klein, *1 Samuel*, 162.

would refer to his intelligence, which is necessary for such a responsible function. But is this the author's intention?

To answer this question, it is necessary at this point to pay attention first to the semantic field of the noun רוּחַ, and then to the context of its occurrence in "David's Compositions." As far as the meaning range of this noun is concerned, it is most often associated with God – "the spirit of the Lord"; it occurs in the description of the creation of the world (Gen 1:2), interaction with man (Gen 6:2), power and transference (1 Kings 18:12), the will of God (Isa 30:1; Ps 51:14) and his presence (Isa 34:16; 63:10–14; Ps 51:13; 106:33; 139:7; 143:10).²² The second, not uncommon use of this noun is contained in the fragments where it was introduced in reference to a man. In this case, the biblical authors use it to express life-force (Num 16:22; 27:16), vitality (Gen 45:27; Judg 15:19; 1 Sam 30:12), courage, inner strength (Josh 2:11; 5:1; Isa 61:3; Ezek 21:12; Ps 76:13; 77:4), reason, intellect (Ex 28:3; Deut 34:9; Isa 19:3, 14; 29:10, 24; Ezek 20:32; Ps 77:7), disposition, feeling (Isa 57:15), will, inclination towards something (Ex 35:21; Deut 2:30; Ezek 13:3), desire, longing (2 Sam 13:39), temper, anger (Judg 83; 9:23; Job 15:13), gift of prophecy (Num 11:17, 25, 26), morality, or inner nature (Ezek 11:19, 18, 31; Ps 51:12).²³

If the closest context in which the noun רוּחַ occurs in "David's Compositions" is to be determined, it is worth noting that it occurs immediately after the sequence of adjectives and nouns characterising David as an idealised figure (l.2–3), and before the enumeration of psalms and songs composed by him (l.4–10). In line l.4 itself, immediately after the noun רוּחַ, the author placed two directly related adjectives נְבוֹנָה and אֹרֵרָה; meaning "discerning and enlightened," that form, from the syntactic point of view, the apposition of trait and character.²⁴

Therefore, taking into account both the semantic field of the noun רוּחַ presented above in relation to a man, as well as the closest context of the entire expression רוּחַ נְבוֹנָה וְאֹרֵרָה, it can be concluded that the author of "David's Compositions," introducing the noun רוּחַ into the text in the lexical context presented above, aimed to describe the sphere related to the mind, rather than the gift associated with the performance of the royal function. As far as the prophetic role is concerned, the author signalled it in an indirect way. Thus, the entire expression רוּחַ נְבוֹנָה וְאֹרֵרָה metaphorically portrays David as one who was equipped by God with the gift of an acute and enlightened mind, in addition to his above-average intelligence. Once again, it should be noted that such an interpretation follows from the closest context of the work and is in line with the ideal image of David presented at the beginning of "David's Compositions." Moreover, it directly refers to David's writing activity, presenting him as a person who composes psalms and songs thanks to God's gift of an enlightened and discerning mind.

22 DCHVII, 431–432.

23 DCHVII, 432–433.

24 Muraoka, *A Syntax of Qumran Hebrew*, 176, 297; B. Waltke – M. O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 1990) 230.

However, it cannot be said that the end of line l.3 and the beginning of line l.4 of “David’s Compositions” are not presenting David as a prophet. This is confirmed by the aforementioned analysis of literary form and structure, which allows us to notice that the words נתן לו are included in this part of the text. This expression serves to emphasise the importance of God as the giver and David as the recipient of gifts coming from on high; in terms of the structure, it indicates the beginning and end of the core literary section of the work.

In the second part of the core section of “David’s Compositions” [II.2 vv. 3–5 (l. 4–10)], the author presents the reader with a list of the psalms and songs written by David,²⁵ devoting the whole of lines l.9 and l.10 to a summary of these psalms and songs. Initially, in line l.9 there is the first conclusion indicating that David דבר “spoke” 446 ששה וארבעים וארבע “songs”; then, at the end of line l.9 and at the beginning of line l.10, the author mentions four more specific songs that were composed in order to be performed over a group of people, referred to as הפגועים “possessed,” or “being under the influence of demonic spirits.”²⁶ Placing this reference at this point in the text is important because it presents David in the role of an exorcist.²⁷ Then, in the second part of line l.10, the text of “David’s Compositions” contains the final conclusion, which provides the reader with information about the total number of David’s songs and psalms: ויהי הכול ארבעת אלפים וחמשים “the total was four thousand and fifty.”

With the beginning of line l.11, the author introduces an explanation of the reason for the creation of these psalms and songs. The text is unambiguous about it: כול אלה דבר “All these he spoke in prophecy which had been given to him before the Most High.”

The words נתן לו, found in line l.11, refer to God’s gift to David (as in lines l.3–4). In this case, the subject, i.e. God, is defined by the noun עליון “the Most High,” who gives David the gift of נבואה “prophecy.”²⁸ Furthermore, the phrase linked to the text about the gift of prophecy, contains additional information, which is not provided at the beginning of “David’s Compositions.” In lines l.3–4 the expression, referring to David’s spiritual gifts, his discerning and enlightened spirit (רוח נבונה ואורה), indicates intelligence, and implicitly,

25 Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll*, 92; W.H. Brownlee, “The Significance of David’s Compositions,” *RevQ* 20 (1966) 569–574; VanderKam, “Studies on ‘David’s Compositions,’” 214–220; N. Vered, “The Origin of the List of David’s Songs in David’s Compositions,” *DSD* 13 (2006) 134–149.

26 J.P.M. van der Ploeg identifies four songs of David with the content of scroll 11Q11, which contains three songs of an exorcistic nature, and Ps 91, which in the Qumran community and in the period of late antiquity was regarded as a song providing protection against demons and evil spirits (“Un petit rouleau de psaumes apocryphes (11QPsApa),” *Tradition und Glaube: Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt; Festgabe für Karl Georg Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag* [eds. J. Gert – H.W. Kuhn – H. Stegeman] [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1971] 129; F. Garcia-Martinez et al. [eds.], *Qumran Cave 11 – II: 11Q2–18 & 11Q20–31* [DJD] 23; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998] 181–205).

27 Evans, “The reputation of Jesus,” 643–645; K.E. Pomykala, “Images of David in Early Judaism,” *Of Scribes and Sages: Early Jewish Interpretation and Transmission of Scripture* (ed. C.A. Evans) (JSPSup 50; London: Clark 2004) I, 45.

28 *DCHV*, 582–583; *HALOT* II, 660.

prophecy. Line 1.11 makes it clear that David has a much greater gift than intelligence, i.e. the gift of prophecy.

The noun נְבוּאָה used in the text, associating this gift with the person of David, is a novelty compared to other manuscripts belonging to the Qumran literature and the entire HB. The word נְבוּאָה occurs only in a few places in the HB, in late post-exilic texts, i.e. 2 Chron 9:29; 15:8; Ezra 6:14; Ne 6:12,²⁹ but none of them expresses the essence of David's mission. The same is true of the Qumran manuscripts, where it is used in only two places (except for "David's Compositions" of 11Q5). The first is 4QIsa^c (4Q165) 1–2: 1³⁰ (*pesher* to the Book of Isaiah), where this noun (appearing in the plural) was used in the title of the composition contained in this manuscript (a fragment from Isa 40:11–12), and was included in the text in the plural, in its classical understanding as the content given by God. The second is 4Q458 15:2 (fragment 15, line 2). The preserved text of this manuscript is too fragmentary to draw any conclusions from it. In the whole of fragment 15, only three lines survive, in which only two words can be identified (in l.1 the noun בְּכוֹרִי "my firstborn"; in l.2 הַנְּבוּאָה "prophecy").³¹

Except for "David's Compositions" of 11Q5, the collection of the Qumran manuscripts does not link the noun נְבוּאָה to the person of David to present a full image of David as a prophet. In the Qumran manuscripts, attention should be paid to the terms that contain references to prophet and prophecy and the context in which they are used. This will make it possible to determine whether there is any link between the person of David and these terms in the Qumran writings.

Another word related to the noun נְבוּאָה found in "David's Compositions" is the verb נָבֵא, derived from the same root, which means to prophesy, or to be in the prophetic rapture (1 Sam 10:11; 1 Kings 22:12; Jer 19:14; Ezek 11:4; Joel 3:1 and others).³² It is rarely used in the manuscripts, and appears only nine times in the Qumran literature: CD VI, 1; 3Q4 3; 4Q267 2, 6; 4Q269 4i2; 4Q385 2, 5; 4Q385 2, 6; 4Q385 2, 7; 4Q385b 1, 2; 4Q386 1i4.³³ In most cases, as many as five times, the verb נָבֵא occurs in the text of Pseudo-Ezekiel (4Q385 – 386), which is a paraphrase of the vision of dry bones from Ezek 37. In CD VI, 1, this verb is present in the section referring to the prophets of Israel who are holy and anointed. The author of CD condemns their opponents because their prophecy (נְבוּאָה), which encourages Israel to turn away from God, is false. Similar uses of the same verb are found in 3Q4 3; 4Q267 2, 6; 4Q269 4i2, in which there are no references to the person of David. The same is true for CD and Pseudo-Ezekiel. Thus, in 3Q4 3 the verb נָבֵא occurs

29 Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll*, 93; J.A. Fitzmyer, "David, Being Therefore a Prophet... (Acts 2:30)," *CBQ* 34 (1972) 336; P. Flint, "The Prophet David at Qumran," *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. M. Henze) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2005) 160.

30 J.M. Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I (4Q158–4Q186)* (DJD 5; Oxford: Clarendon 1968) 28–29.

31 S. Pfann et al., *Qumran Cave 4 – XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1* (DJD 36; Oxford: Clarendon 2000) 364; although the noun in question does not occur in other Qumran manuscripts, it is noteworthy that it is present in the targumic texts to the Book of Psalms.

32 *DCHV*, 582–583.

33 Flint, "The Prophet David at Qumran," 161.

in the context of Isaiah’s prophecy regarding Judea and Jerusalem, while in 4Q267 2, 6 and 4Q269 4i2 it is used to characterise the words of the false prophets.

Another word that, when combined with the name of David, would clearly indicate his prophetic role in the Qumran writings, is the noun נביא “prophet.” Compared to the lexical items mentioned above, this noun occurs more frequently (57 times). It is used most often in the corpus of manuscripts from Cave 4 and 11.³⁴ Peter W. Flint, who analysed the use of this noun in the Qumran texts, distinguished seven contexts of its use:³⁵

No.	Context	Example of manuscript
I.	Definition of individual prophets known from the books of the Old Testament: הנבי יחזקאל – prophet Ezekiel, הנביא ישעיה – prophet Isaiah, הנביא ירמיה – prophet Jeremiah, הנביא זכריה – prophet Zechariah.	CD III, 21 CD IV, 13 CD XIX, 7 4Q385a, 18ia-b, 2 4Q385a 18ia-b, 6 4Q385a B, 1
II.	Definition of the prophets in a general sense.	1QS VIII, 15–16
III.	Definition of the relationship between the prophet and God through the expression: “My/His servants the prophets”.	1QS I, 3
IV.	Defines the books of the prophets – either alone or in combination with other groups of writings.	4Q397 14–21, 15 CD VII, 17 (individual books e.g. the Book of Amos) 4Q397 14–21, 10 (groups of writings: the Books of Moses, the Books of the Prophets and David)
V.	Occurs in texts, pericopes of an eschatological nature, to describe the person of the prophet who will come with the Messiah at the end of time.	1QS IX, 11
VI.	Is used to refer to the awakening, the coming of an undefined “new prophet”.	4Q175 I, 5
VII.	Characterises the contemporary prophets of the Qumran community, most often presented in a negative way.	1QH ^a XII, 16 11Q19 LIV, 8 11Q19 LVI, 1–5

Unfortunately, the places in the text where the noun נביא occurs do not refer to David. The last noun present in the texts from Qumran, which, similarly to the HB, defines the prophet, is the noun הוזהר “seer,” “watcher.”³⁶ We find it ten times in the Qumran extra-biblical texts; in the War Scroll (1QM XI, 7–8), in the Damascus Document (CD II, 12–13), 1QH^a, 4Q163, 4Q174, 4Q280, 4Q517, 4Q518. It should also be noted that this term is not found in the Qumran manuscripts in the form of *status absolutus*. It always occurs in the text in the form of *status constructus* in combination with another noun, taking on the negative meaning הוזהר רמיה, as in 1QH^a XII, 10; XII, 20 or positive meaning הוזהר אמת: CD II, 12; 1QH^a XII, 18. Most importantly, in the Qumran texts, this term is used without

34 J. Bowley, “Prophets and Prophecy at Qumran,” *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (eds. P. Flint – J. Vanderkam) (Leiden: Brill 1999) II, 356.

35 Flint, “The Prophet David at Qumran,” 161–162:

36 DCH III, 182.

a clear reference to the prophets known from the biblical literature³⁷ and, what is important for this study, without any reference to David.

In the case of the denominative *participium* נִרְאָה, which has a similar meaning to נִרְאָה “seer,”³⁸ no conclusions can be drawn, since this term does not occur (in this form, i.e. the denominative *participium* in the Qal conjugation) in the Essene texts in relation to the figure of David. Moreover, its use in the biblical texts found in Qumran is quite rare; it occurs in this form only in three places (1QIs^a and 4Q57).

The analysis of the texts presented above, in which lexical items such as: “prophecy,” “to prophesy,” “prophet,” “seer,” “watcher,” allows us to formulate a cautious, but not unfounded, opinion that David was regarded as a prophet by the Essene community. In the light of the above, it is easy to notice that, apart from the text of “David’s Compositions,” the Qumran scribes displayed a very cautious approach to directly ascribing a prophetic function to David.³⁹ As demonstrated above, none of these texts, with the exception of the passage in 11Q5, contains a term linked to the person of David that would attribute this function to him.

According to Flint, the link between David and the function of the prophet can be established in the light of the three Qumran *pesbers* to the “Psalms of David”: 1QpPs (1Q16),⁴⁰ 4QpPs^a (4Q171),⁴¹ and 4QpPs^b (4Q173).⁴² This exegete based his hypothesis on the fact that almost all *pesbers* found in Qumran relate to the books of the prophets, i.e. *pesbers* to Isaiah,⁴³ Hosea,⁴⁴ Micah,⁴⁵ Nahum,⁴⁶ Habakkuk,⁴⁷ Zephaniah,⁴⁸ Malachi.⁴⁹ The fact that almost all the *pesbers* were composed for the books of the prophets,⁵⁰ among which

37 Bowley, “Prophets and Prophecy,” 359–360.

38 DCH VII, 362

39 G. Xeravits, “נִרְאָה,” *TbWQ* (eds. H.-J. Fabry – U. Dahmen) (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 2011) II, 847–852.

40 In this fragmentarily preserved manuscript, the *pesber* to Ps 57:1,4; 68:12–13 has survived. 26–27, 30–31, D. Barthelemy – J.T. Milik, *Qumran Cave I* (DJD 1; Oxford: Clarendon 1955) 81–82.

41 This manuscript contains the *pesber* to Ps 37:7, 8–19a, 19b–26, 28c–40; 45:1–2; 60:8–9 (108:8–9): Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I* (4Q158–4Q186), 42–50; G. Brooke, “Thematic Commentaries on Prophetic Scriptures,” *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. M. Henze) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2005) 141–142; M.P. Horgan, *Pesbarim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books* (CBQMS 8; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America 1979) 192–226.

42 This manuscript presents the *pesber* to Ps 127:2–3, 5; 129:7–8 and a short quotation from Ps 118 (most likely referring to v. 26 and v. 27): Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I* (4Q158–4Q186), 51–53; Flint, “The Prophet David at Qumran,” 165; Horgan, *Pesbarim*, 226–228.

43 3QpIsa^a (3Q4), 4QpIsa^{a-c} (4Q161–165), M. Baillet – J.T. Milik – R. De Vaux, *Les «Petites Grottes» de Qumrân: Textes Exploration de la falaise; Les grottes 2Q, 3Q, 5Q, 6Q, 7Q à 10Q* (DJD 3; Oxford: Clarendon Press 1962) 95–96; Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I* (4Q158–4Q186), 11–30.

44 4QpHos^{a-b} (4Q166–167), Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I* (4Q158–4Q186), 31–36.

45 1QpMic (1Q14), 4QpMic (4Q168), Barthelemy – Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 77–80; Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I* (4Q158–4Q186), 36.

46 4QpNah (4Q169), Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I* (4Q158–4Q186), 37–42.

47 1QpHab.

48 1QZeph (1Q15), 4QpZeph (4Q170), Barthelemy – Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 80; Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I* (4Q158–4Q186), 42.

49 5QpMal (5Q10), Baillet – Milik – De Vaux, *Les «Petites Grottes» de Qumrân*, 180.

50 S. Berrin, “Qumran Pesbarim,” *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. M. Henze) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2005) 110–133 (in particular pp. 118–122); G. Brooke, “Prophecy and Prophets in the Dead

three concern the “Psalms of David,” who is believed to be their author, may indicate that the Qumran community considered the psalms to be prophetic works. The consequence of this is that their author was granted the status of a prophet.⁵¹

This hypothesis appears to be difficult to defend, as pointed out by Sargent, who, commenting on Flint’s position, argues correctly that the referenced *pesbers* to the psalms contain no references to David’s authorship.⁵² Moreover, the interpretation of the psalms contained in these manuscripts refers mainly to issues related to the life and functioning of the community and refers to the person of the “Teacher of Righteousness,” the “Wicked Priest” and the “Man of falsehood.”⁵³

For example, in the commentary to Psalm 37 (4Q171, 173),⁵⁴ the commentator, when explaining the work, finds some prophecies about contemporary events. The subject of the teaching of Ps 37 is the issue already pointed out by the prophet Jeremiah, but without giving any solution, i.e. the issue of the persecution of the righteous by perverse men.⁵⁵ Since the terms “righteous” and “perverse” were a kind of code for the author of *pesber*, the author assumed that they contained an allusion to the Teacher and his opponents. He thus confirmed the antagonistic relationship between the two leaders by providing an account of their clashes and disputes.⁵⁶

Finally, attention should be paid to the hypothesis formulated by Pomykala. This exegete referred to the content of 4QMMT. In the manuscript 4Q397 14–21, in lines l.10–11, there is a text that reads as follows:

4QMMT (397 14–21; ll.10–11)⁵⁷

Hebrew text	line
[כתב]נו אליכה שתבין בספר מושה [ן]בספר [י]הנ[ביאים ובדו]י [ד]	10
[במעשי] דור ודור ובספר כתוב []ל[]ים ל לוא	11

Sea Scrolls: Looking Backwards and Forwards,” *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* (eds. M.H. Floyd – R.D. Haak) (LHBOTS 427; New York: Clark 2006) 157–158; Horgan, *Pesharim*, 10–192.

51 Flint, “The Prophet David at Qumran,” 167; A similar position was taken by Witherington in relation to the analysis of 4QFlor 1, 7–13, B. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1998) 146.

52 B. Sargent, *David Being a Prophet. The Contingency of Scripture upon History in the New Testament* (BZNW 207; Berlin: De Gruyter 2014) 78.

53 Barthelemy – Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, 81–82; Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 – I (4Q158–4Q186)*, 42–53.

54 A commentary on this text can be found in the latest commentary on the Book of Psalms published by Herder, D. Böhler, *Psalmen 1–50* (HThKAT; Freiburg – Basel – Wien: Herder 2021) 687–688; J. Goldingay, *Psalms. I. Psalms 1–41* (BCOTWP; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2006) 518.

55 Böhler, *Psalmen 1–50*, 656–690; Goldingay, *Psalms*, 514–535.

56 J. VanderKam, *Manuskrypty znad Morza Martwego* (Warszawa: Cyklady 1996) 58–59.

57 E. Qimron – J. Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4 – V: Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah* (DJD 10; Oxford: Clarendon 1994) 58–59.

Translation

10	We have written to you so that you may study the Book of Moses and the Books of the Prophets and (the writings of) David
11	the events of ages past. In the Book it is written [] not

As stated in line l.10, the author encourages the addressee to study carefully the books of Moses, the books of the Prophets, and (the writings of) David. On this basis, Pomykala suggests that, since David's writings are listed alongside the books of Moses, who was regarded as a prophet by the Qumran community (as exemplified by the content of the Temple Scroll, 1QS 1:1–3),⁵⁸ and alongside the books of the Prophets, David's writings should also be regarded as prophetic texts and their author himself should be recognised as a prophet.⁵⁹

In order to properly assess this proposition, i.e. whether the author of 4QMMT seeks to portray David as a prophet, it is necessary to look at the manuscript holistically, paying particular attention to the places where David is mentioned. This refers to the two manuscripts that comprise the entirety of this legal document: the already mentioned 4Q397 (14–21, 10) and 4Q398 (11–13, 1; 14–17 II, 1).⁶⁰

The first fragment of 4Q398 (11–13, 1) reads as follows:

4QMMT E (+ d) (= 4Q398 11–13, 1) with the translation into English⁶¹

	Hebrew text	line
	[הבר[כת]בא[ג]ו ב []] בימי שלומה בן דויד ואף הקללות	18
	[ש]באו ב[מי]ר[ובעם בן נבט ועד גל[ג]ת ירושלם וצדקיה מלך יהוד[ה]	19
	[] [ש]יב[ר]אם ב[]	20

Translation

18	[The blessings have (already) befallen in...] in the days of Solomon the son of David. And the curses
19	[that] have (already) befallen from the days of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and up to when Jerusalem and Zedekiah King of Judah went into captivity
20	that He will bring them[]

58 The author of the Temple Scroll clearly presents the prophetic status of Moses. It should be noted, however, that he is not presented in the same way as the "classical" prophets, such as Isaiah or Jeremiah, who through the visions given to them commented on faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the Law of God in their contemporary community. Rather, Moses is portrayed as a figure who was given, as Brooke argues, the "original" revelation associated with the transmission of the Law to which the prophets later referred ("Prophecy and Prophets," 154, 161–162; Bowley, "Prophets and Prophecy," 361–362; G. Xeravits, *King, Priest, Prophet: Positive Eschatological Protagonists of the Qumran Library* [STDJ 47; Leiden: Brill 2003] 174–184; G. Brooke, "Moses in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Looking at Mount Nebo from Qumran," *La construction de la figure de Moïse* [ed. T. Römer] [Transeuphratène 13; Paris: Gabalda 2007] 207–221; Flint, "The Prophet David at Qumran," 161.)

59 Pomykala, "Images of David," 42.

60 Porzig, "David in the Judean Desert," 11.

61 Qimron – Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4 – V: Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah*, 60.

The above-cited fragment is an interpretation of the text of Deut 30:1–2, which contains a prediction of a blessing and a curse in connection with two ways of behaving towards God. According to the author of the manuscript, all the blessings found their fulfilment during the reign of Solomon, the son of David, while the curses came during the reign of the later kings of Israel and Judah; Jeroboam and Zedekiah. At the end of time, once the reign of the inept kings ceases, the blessing will return, as mentioned in the subsequent lines (21–22) of the cited fragment. It will last forever and will not be revoked. Curses will fall on the wicked who will be extirpated. Although the remark concerning the coming of the days of David is not explicitly expressed in the text, according to Qimron and Strugnell, the use of the expression בִּימֵי justifies this interpretation.⁶² Thus, in the above-mentioned fragment, David is identified with a historical figure, the father of the king (2 Sam 5:14; 11:3; 12:18, 24; 1 Chron 22:9), during whose reign Israel was blessed, and there is no reference to his prophetic function.

The third and final fragment from 4QMMT, thematically linked to David as king, is found at the end of Part C in lines l.25–26.

4QMMT E (+ d + f) (= 4Q398 14–17 ii) with the translation into English⁶³

Hebrew text	line
[נשן]אי עונות זכור [את] דויד שהיא איש חסדים [ן]אף	25
היא [נ]צל מצרות רבות ונסלוח לו ואף []	26

Translation

25	[whose] misdeeds were forgotten. Remember David, who was a man of righteous deeds and indeed [i]
26	was delivered from many troubles and was forgiven []

In order to encourage a positive attitude in the addressees, the author of the manuscript depicts David as a law-abiding king, distinguished by righteous deeds, thanks to which he avoided many troubles in his life and obtained forgiveness for his sins. These words of encouragement were addressed, according to the researchers of this manuscript, to an addressee contemporary to the author of the manuscript, who was an unspecified ruler or high priest from the times of the Hasmonean era. He was thus encouraged to follow the example of David, described as איש חסדים “a man of righteous deeds,” and thus a king who sought and observed the Torah.⁶⁴ Citing, among other things, these historical facts from David’s life, the author of 4Q398 suggests that if the addressee (a ruler or high priest) acts

62 Qimron – Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4 – V: Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, 60; C.A. Evans, “David in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *The Scrolls and the Scriptures. Qumran Fifty Years After* (eds. S.E. Porter – C.A. Evans) (JSPSup 26; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1997) 186.

63 Evans, “David in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 62.

64 Qimron – Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4 – V: Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, 121; Pomykala, “Images of David,” 37.

in a similar way to David, he can expect similar outcomes in his life.⁶⁵ Thus, the cited text and its message also cannot be regarded as arguments in favour of the view that David was presented as a prophet.

Thus, it can be said that in the two fragments that comprise 4Q398, the author refers to the figure of David in historical terms,⁶⁶ highlighting his positive characteristics but does so in the light of his royal function. A hypothesis that speaks of David as a prophet, based on a fragment of document 4Q397, is difficult to accept. In the opinion of the authors of the critical edition, but also of other exegetes, the name of David occurring in line 10 probably refers not so much to the psalms of David as to the כתובים “Scriptures” and provides significant evidence in favour of the formative history of the triple division of the later principle.⁶⁷ Furthermore, this phrase can be seen as a way of referring to the whole of Scripture, which we find a little later in Luke 24:44.⁶⁸ In the conclusion to the whole Gospel, just before presenting the scene of the ascension, Luke evokes the image of the last meeting of the apostles with the resurrected Christ, emphasising the Christological nature of the fulfilment of the whole of Scripture.⁶⁹ The only peculiarity of this pericope (Luke 24:36–49) is the division of the Scriptures not into two parts, the Law and the Prophets (cf. Luke 24:27), but into three parts. Luke is, apart from earlier premises present in the literature from Qumran, the first New Testament witness of such a division. Indeed, he considers the psalms to be scriptural texts.⁷⁰ In the light of the above analysis, it can be concluded that the entire legal text of 4QMMT does not contain any references to David as a prophet.

Conclusion

The attribution of the prophetic role to David intensifies during the period of the Second Temple. There is no passage in the entire Hebrew Bible where David is directly referred to as נביא “prophet.” Nevertheless, this perception of him can be found in several places in the books of the Bible. These include 2 Sam 23:1–7 (“David’s last words”), 2 Chron 8:14, where David is referred to as איש־הֵאלֹהִים “the man of God,” a title used for certain prophets (Elijah – 1 Kings 17:18; an unnamed prophet – 1 Kings 20:28; 2 Kings 1:9, 11, 13; Elisha – 2 Kings 4:16, 21, 25, 27; 5:8, 14, 15). The same term איש־הֵאלֹהִים used in reference to David is also used in Ne 12:24, 36, in the context of the list of priests and Levites from the time of Jehoiakim and the dedication of the rebuilt walls of Jerusalem. In 2 Chron 29:25, David

65 Evans, “The Reputation of Jesus,” 642.

66 Evans, “David in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 185–189.

67 Qimron – Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4 – V: Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, 59.

68 Sargent, *David Being a Prophet*, 77; F. Bovon, *Luke 3: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 19:28–24:53* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 2012) 394.

69 This fulfilment is emphasised by Luke using the appropriate Greek terminology: δεῖ “must”, the verb πληρῶω “to fulfil” and τα γεγραμμένα “what is written”.

70 Bovon, *Luke 3*, 394.

is mentioned alongside Gad, the royal seer, and Nathan, the prophet, when attributing importance to music and musical instruments for cultic purposes. Although David is not explicitly named in the text by any term peculiar to a prophet, mentioning him alongside the two prophets may indicate this function.⁷¹

Unlike the texts of the Old Testament, the author of "David's Compositions" analysed in this paper clearly presents David as a prophet. This is evident at the beginning of the second section of "David's Compositions," before the enumeration of the psalms and songs of David. The last word of line l.3 and a half of line l.4 contain the first, though not explicit, allusion to David's prophetic function. This view can be formulated based on the verbal sentence present in this place ויתן לו יהוה רוּחַ נְבוֹנָה וְאוֹרָה "the Lord gave him a discerning and enlightened spirit."

With the beginning of line l.11, which is the last line shaping the content of the entire work, the author provides the reason for the composition of the aforementioned psalms and songs. The author notes in a direct and unambiguous manner: כּוֹל אֱלֹהִים דִּבֶּר בְּנְבוּאָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לוֹ מִלְפְּנֵי הָעֶלְיוֹן "All these he spoke in prophecy which had been given to him before the Most High." The noun נְבוּאָה used in the text, expressing this gift in connection with the person of David, is a novelty compared to other manuscripts belonging to the Qumran literature and the entire HB. The entire corpus of manuscripts from Qumran contains only one reference to such a function of David. This reference is to be found precisely in "David's Compositions."

The evolution of this thought will take place in the texts of the New Testament (Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; 2:30). Acts 2:30 is a text that can be considered a breakthrough in this understanding of the person of David in the canonical books. For the first time in the biblical texts, his name will be associated directly with the noun προφήτης. The use of the syntagma seems to have influenced the interpretations of later Christian commentators who, like the author of the Acts of the Apostles, associate David directly with the prophetic function. The reference here is to a pseudo-epigraphic work entitled *Letter of Barnabas* written between 70 and 130 BC, St Jerome's commentary on the letter to the Galatians (*Hieronymi Presbyteri Commentariorum in Epistulam Pauli Apostoli ad Galatas*), where the reader can encounter the words: "De Dauid quoque, licet multi de Domino nostro aestiment prophetatum (quod nos etiam non negamus),"⁷² which should be translated "As for David, many believe that he prophesied concerning the Lord (and we don't deny that he did)."

Such a belief was established in later centuries, the best proof of which is the work of St. Isidore of Seville entitled "De ortu et obitu patrum." The whole of this work is contained in 86 chapters, each of which is devoted to the characteristics of one of the characters of the Old or New Testament. In chapter 33, Isidore, beginning to characterise David,

⁷¹ R.W. Klein, *2 Chronicles* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 2012) 126.

⁷² G. Raspanti (ed.), *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Pars I, 6: Opera exegetica, Comentarium in epistulam Pauli apostoli ad Galatas* (CCSL 77A; Turnhout: Brepols 2006) 196.

emphasises his origin and royal-prophetic function: “David, rex idem atque propheta, ortus de genere Juda, filius Jesse, natus in Bethlehem...” (33, 56),⁷³ “David, king and also a prophet, of the tribe of Judah, son of Jesse, born in Bethlehem...”

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73 J.P. Migne (ed.), *Sancti Isidori, Hispalensis Episcopi, Opera Omnia V–VI–VII* (PL 83; Paris 1862) 139.

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