The canonical Old Testament in Hebrew (the Masoretic Bible) contains 150 psalms; yet five more psalms of David and part of a sixth (151B) are now recognized. The disparate date and character of these additional psalms are best represented by discussing and translating them individually. The early, pre-Christian date and Jewish character of four of these psalms—Psalms 151A, 151B, 154, and 155—is proved by the discovery that they are extant in the Qumran Psalms Scroll (\(1{\text{IQPs}}\)), which dates from the first half of the first century A.D.\(^1\)

Despite the disparateness that separates these psalms, there may be an organic relationship between them, and earlier ones may have inspired later ones. This possibility arises with the recognition that Psalms 151A, 151B, 152, and 153 are all influenced by the tradition recorded in 1 Samuel 16 and 17, according to which David slew both lions and bears (1Sam 17:36) and defeated the Philistine Goliath, eventually cutting off his head with the giant’s own sword (1Sam 17:51).

**Texts**

Psalm 151 is preserved in Greek (LXX), Hebrew, and Syriac;\(^2\) Psalms 152 and 153 only in Syriac; Psalms 154 and 155 in Hebrew and Syriac. Generally speaking, the Hebrew, because it is earlier and the language of the original, is to be preferred over the other texts.\(^3\)

The translation of the Greek (LXX) and Hebrew is based upon the edition by Sanders.\(^4\) The translation of the Syriac is based upon the edition by W. Baars.\(^5\) Sigla are as follows:

- **A** – Baghdad, Library of the Chaldean Patriarchate, MS XI 113, fols. 118b–20b, of circa the twelfth century. This MS was once in Mosul; it is our base text.

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\(^{2}\) The editions of the Gk. (LXX), Heb., and Syr. used herein are given below. For a critical edition of the Eth. (which derives from the LXX) and a translation, see S. Strelcyn, “Le Psaume 151 dans la tradition éthiopienne,” *JSS* 23 (1978) 316–29. The Old Lat., which is also dependent upon the LXX, is available in R. Weber (ed.), *Le Psautier romain et les autres anciens psautiers latins* (Collectanea Biblica Latina 10; Rome, 1953).

\(^{3}\) M. Noth argued that the Syr. was separated from the original Heb. by a Gk. intermediary version. See his “Die fünf syrisch überlieferten apokryphen Psalmen,” *ZAW* 48 (1930) 13. M. H. Goshen-Gottstein has now argued persuasively that the Syr. depends directly on the Heb. See his “The Psalms Scroll (\(1{\text{IQPs}}\)): A Problem of Canon and Text,” *Textus* 5 (1966) 32. Sanders correctly states, “... all scholars agree that the Hebrew psalm (151) in the scroll is the original.” See his “The Qumran Psalms Scroll (\(1{\text{IQPs}}\)) Reviewed,” *On Language, Culture, and Religion: In Honor of Eugene A. Nida*, eds. M. Black and W. A. Smalley (The Hague, 1974) p. 85.


MORE PSALMS OF DAVID

JRL Syr 7 – Manchester, John Rylands Library, Syriac Manuscript 7, fol. 135a, of the sixteenth century. It contains only Psalm 151 of the pseudepigraphical psalms.

Collective importance

Some distinguished scholars have argued that one or more of these pseudepigraphical psalms were composed by the Essenes, the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Most scholars, however, conclude correctly that while some passages can be interpreted in line with Essene theology, this possibility does not indicate that these psalms were composed by the Essenes, who shared ideas with other Jews contemporaneous with them.

The presence of these psalms within the Qumran Psalter (11QPs*) raises the question of the extent of the Davidic Psalter prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. At Qumran, of course, the Psalter was appreciably different from the present collection in Hebrew; but what was the shape of the Psalter elsewhere? M. H. Goshen-Gottstein has argued that the Psalter was already set (and canonized) by the second century B.C. and that excerpts from it, along with apocryphal compositions, were placed in 11QPs*, which is therefore the earliest "Jewish prayerbook." A similar interpretation is defended by P. Skehan, who contends that 11QPs* is a "library edition" of the "standard collection of 150 Psalms." The presence of "apocryphal" psalms such as the Prayer of Manasseh, and the Psalms of Solomon, which were considered inspired by many Jews around the turn of the era, along with the presence of apocryphal psalms in 11QPs* indicate the distinction between canonical and apocryphal psalms had not been clarified before the advent of Christianity. 13

Translation

The translation attempts to be as literal as intelligible English will allow, so that comparisons can be made between the Syriac and the Hebrew. For a convenient collection of divergent translations, see Sanders' The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll (pp. 100–3). Syriac and Hebrew words are translated consistently by the same English word; when possible, cognate words are translated identically.

6 This unexamined version of Psalm 151 was discovered by Charlesworth while working on a catalogue of the Syr. MSS in the John Rylands Library. The variants in JRL Syr 7 are frequently similar to those in BM Add. MS 14.674, fols. 160b–61b, of the 12th cent., and to MS G. 31. Sup., fol. 176b in the Ambrosian Library in Milan, of the 16th cent. Compare the apparatus in Baars's edition with the major variants cited below.


9 M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, Textus 5 (1966) 22–33.


12 11QPs* contains other pseudepigraphical psalms than the 5ApocSyrPs; and it preserves a prose account of the psalms attributed to David, stating that the total was 4,050, which is clearly an inflated figure that lauds David's genius. J. Strugnell has found another psalm of David's in LAB 59; he concludes, "As a general observation let us call attention to the fact that, like Ps 151A, 151B, and Syriac Ps 152, this is clearly a Davidic pseudopigraphon, ex persona David." See Strugnell, CBQ 27 (1965) 207–16; the quotation is on pp. 215f.

13 See herein the discussion of the pseudepigraphical psalms and odes just mentioned. See also Sanders, "Cave 11 Surprises and the Question of Canon," New Directions in Biblical Archaeology, eds. D. N. Freedman and J. C. Greenfield (Garden City, N.Y., 1971) pp. 113–30.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

The important publications are too numerous to list; in addition to the works cited herein see the bibliographical data reported in the following:


The original language of this psalm is Hebrew. The Syriac of Psalm 151 derives from the Greek (LXX); but in Psalms 152–55 it comes directly from the Hebrew.¹ A mere cursory comparison of the Syriac and Hebrew of Psalms 151–55 reveals that the Syriac of 151A and 151B, in contrast to Psalms 154 and 155, is dissimilar to the Hebrew. The Syriac of Psalm 151 is similar to and dependent upon the Greek (LXX). Originally Psalm 151 was two separate psalms, 151A and 151B; unfortunately the latter is lost because this section of 11QPs* is mutilated. The Greek (LXX) and Syriac have truncated both psalms.

Psalm 151 must predate the second century B.C.; it is in the Greek (LXX), which antedates that period. F. M. Cross has argued recently that in “no case can it be later than the 3rd century B.C.”² This early date certainly dismisses the possibility that Psalm 151 was composed by the members of the Qumran community, which did not originate until the middle of the second century B.C.³

Before verse two there is a line that is a later interpolation; the line is as follows: “And I discovered a lion and a wolf and I killed and rent them.” The idea is intrusive to the thought of the psalm; it also is not preserved in 11QPs*, is only in the margin of MS A (the most reliable Syr. tradition), and is missing in JRL Syr 7. The line has been interpolated from Psalms 152 and 153.

¹ See Strugnell, “Notes on the Text and Transmission of the Apocryphal Psalms 151, 154 (= Syr. II) and 155 (= Syr. III),” HTR 59 (1966) 278. Magne (“Les Textes grec et syriaque du Psaume 151,” RQ 8 [1975] 548–64) attempts to refute Strugnell’s arguments and concludes that the Syr. and Gk. of 151 are “two independent versions” of the Heb.

151A and B (11QPs* 151)

Hebrew
A Hallelujah of David the Son of Jesse

151A

1 I was the smallest among my brothers, and the youngest among the sons of my father; and he made me shepherd of his flocks, and the ruler over his kids.⁴

2 My hands made a flute, and my fingers a lyre; and I shall render glory to the Lord, I thought within myself.⁵

a. It is amazing that the portions of the leather upon which this psalm is written are preserved without a lacuna. The script is easy to read; cf. the facsimiles in Sanders, The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11, and in G. Jeremias, H.-W. Kuhn, and H. Stegemann, eds., Tradition und Glaube: Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt. Festgabe für Karl Georg Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag (Göttingen, 1971) plates 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Compare the Hymn of the Pearl (vs. 1): “When I was a little lad / And dwelling in my kingdom, the house of my father, . . .” (trans. Charlesworth).

The mountains cannot witness to him, 
nor the hills proclaim (him); 
the trees have elevated my words, 
and the flocks my deeds. 

For who can proclaim and who can announce, 
and who can recount the deeds of the Lord? 
Everything God has seen, 
everything he has heard and he has listened.

He sent his prophet to anoint me, 
Samuel to make me great; 
my brothers went out to meet him, 
handsome of figure and handsome of appearance.

(Although) their stature was tall, 
(and) their hair handsome, 
the Lord God did not choose them.

But he sent and took me from behind the flock, 
and he anointed me with holy oil, 
and he made me leader for his people, 
and ruler over the sons of his covenant.

c. Or "(Nor) the trees elevate my words, and 
the flocks my deeds." The translation of this vs. 
is problematic. The waws and yodhs are very 
similar in 11QPs, the poetic structure open to more 
than one possibility. Numerical translations have 
been defended; see Sanders (The Dead Sea Psalms 
Scroll, pp. 100-3). Strugnell (HTR 59 [1966] 280) 
renders this verse as follows: "The mountains 
cannot witness to Him / nor the hills proclaim about 
Him / (Nor) the trees (proclaim) His words / nor 
the flocks His deeds." For a thoroughly different 
difference see J. Magne, "Orphisme, pythagoire 
e, essénisme dans le texte hébreu du Psaume 
151?" RQ 8 (1975) 508-47, see especially p. 532 
(or 544). Some scholars argue that vs. 3a should 
be read so that the Heb. is ly and not lw: "The 
mountains cannot witness to me [italics mine]"; 
cf. e.g. J. Carmignac, "Nouvelles précisions sur 
le Psaume 151," RQ 8 (1975) 593-97.

Vss. 2b and 3 are not preserved in Syr., as can 
be seen by comparing the two translations above; 
they are also missing in the Gk. and Lat. In contrast 
to Isa 55:12, vs. 3 claims that mountains and hills 
cannot witness to the Lord. If the vs. implies that 
the trees and flocks do receive and enjoy David's 
words and deeds, then Sanders is certainly right in 
suggesting that these vs. might "exhibit overtones" 
from traditions relating to Orpheus, who is the 
mythical Greek shepherd musician. Sanders 
wisely cautions that this possibility is rather ten- 
uous; but if it is correct, 11QPs 151 preserves the 
only literary evidence of an Orphic David, who is 
well known in mosaics and paintings (see the 
photograph opposite p. 98 in Sanders, The Dead 
Sea Psalms Scroll). Also see the Orphic fragments 
in the Supplement to the present work. Yet it should 
be pointed out that the old Lat. and some copies of 
the LXX understood vs. 4b to say that God 
hears everything, reflecting 1Sam 16:7; see San- 
ders, Dead Sea Psalms Scroll, p. 97, n. 10. A. 
Dupont-Sommer (David et Orphée [Stance pub-
lique annuelle des cinq Académies] Paris, 1964) 
accepts Sanders' suggestion of Orphic overtones in 
151 and sees in it an allusion to the Pythagorean 
concept of the harmony of the world and music of 
the spheres. Other scholars (e.g. W. H. Brownlee, 
J. Carmignac, F. M. Cross, I. Rabinowitz, P. W. 
Skehan) have been critical of Sanders' suggestion, 
but it has been defended rigorously by J. Magne 
in RQ 8 (1975) 508-47 and in "Seigneur de l'Univers 
u ou David-Orphée?" RQ 9 (1977) 189-96. The omission of 2b and 3 in Syr. and Gk. 
should be explained; perhaps the Gk. scribe (the 
Syr. is dependent upon the LXX), like the Arab of 
the "Pseudo-David" Psalter (cf. Strugnell's text 
and translation in HTR 59 [1966] 280) corrected 
David's unorthodox thoughts. Cross denies possible 
Orphic influence; he renders vss. 3f. as follows:
O that the mountains would bear Him witness, 
O that the hills would tell of Him, 
The trees (recount) His deeds. 
And the flock. His works! 
Would that someone tell and speak, 
And would that someone recite His works!

The Lord of all saw; 
The God of all heard, 
And He gave heed.

See Cross, BASOR 231 (1978) 69. Magne ("Le 
Psaume 154 et le Psaume 155," RQ 9 [1977] 95-111) argues that 154 is the product of two authors, 
one who composed a wisdom psalm and a later 
author (redactor) who added verses that called his 
sectarian brothers to participate in a cult in which 
proclamations of God replaced sacrifices in the Tem- 
ple.

d. A vaguely possible meaning, in light of a 
possible chiastic construction with vs. 6, "their 
hair handsome," is to derive the meaning from 
trw, to obtain "handsome with plaited (hair)." 
More probably, derive trw from a defectively 
written todr, masculine "form, outline."
151A and B (5ApocSyrPs 1a)

Syriac

By David, When He Alone Fought Against Goliath

151A

1 I was the smallest of my brothers,
and a child of my father's house.

I was tending my father's flocks;
[and I discovered a lion and a wolf
and I killed and rent them.]'

2 My hands made instruments, and my fingers fashioned lyres.

3 And who will declare my Lord;
that is the Lord; that is my God?

4 He sent his angel;
and removed me from the sheep of my father;
and anointed me with the ointment of his anointing.

5 My brothers were handsome and majestic;
but the Lord did not choose them. '

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a. The title is from MS A. JRL Syr 7: "Another Psalm of David, Supernumerary"; LXX: "This Psalm, Though Supernumerary, Is David's Own Composition, When He Single-handedly Fought Goliath."

b. Or "youngest"; cf. vs. 5. JRL Syr 7: "small."

c. Beth; lit. "among"; but the parallel lines indicate the beth in this line and the one in the next should be translated similarly.

d. JRL Syr 7: "youth."

e. See n. c; lit. "in"; "child": the Syr. noun denotes one between the ages of seven and twelve years.

f. Lit. "And I killed them and I rent them." This line is placed in the margin of MS A; it is missing in JRL Syr 7.

g. Gk. loanword in Syr., organon.


i. The participle can denote the future. The modal coloring of the participle can also be employed; lit.: "And who is he who may declare [or "make manifest"] my Lord?"

j. Note the mixed traditions: JRL Syr 7: "He is the Lord God who hears me" (ignoring the punctuation, the preceding line is corrupt). LXX: "The Lord himself, he hears everything."

k. MS B: "He is the Lord; he is my God." Cf. Jn 20:28.

l. JRL Syr 7: šdr.

m. Or "raised, exalted."

n. JRL Syr 7: 'n" (cf. vs. 1, with LXX).

o. JRL Syr 7 omits.

p. This poetic alliteration is not found in 1lQPṣ and only partly in LXX.

q. Or "old"; ṣwr with ẓwr (vs. 1, "small, young") frequently means "old."

r. Or "was not pleased with them."
151B (11QPs* 151)

Hebrew
At the Beginning of [David’s] Po[wer]
After the Prophet of God Anointed Him

Then I saw a Philistine who was uttering taunts from the ranks of the enemy . . .

1Sam 17:8-25

151B (5ApocSyrPs 1b)

Syriac
(Text is continuous with 151A:1-5 in Syr.)

I went out to attack the Philistine, and he cursed me by his idols.

But after I unsheathed his sword, I cut off his head; and I removed the shame from the sons of Israel.

1Sam 17:51

PSALM 152

The original language of this psalm, which is extant only in Syriac, may be Hebrew (see nn. b and f). In verse 1 the noun for God is 'el, which is parallel to the Hebrew word for God, 'el, not the Syriac name for God, 'allāhā (151:3); likewise in verse 6 'dwnywhy looks like a (probably confused) transliteration of the Hebrew word for “Lord,” 'dwny, whereas the Syriac name for “Lord” is māryyā (vs. 4). Comparisons with Psalms 151, 154, and 155, which are extant in Hebrew and were composed in Hebrew, demonstrate the poor poetic character of this psalm. It seems derivative, uninspired, and a mimic of biblical poetry.

It is impossible to date this psalm. The general tone, Jewish but non-rabbinic character, and association with Psalms 151, 154, and 155 indicate that it was probably composed by a Palestinian Jew during the hellenistic period.

1 Strugnell (HTR 59 [1966] 259) thinks that Psalms 152-55 “certainly derive from a Hebrew text.” This conclusion is open to debate; there is no evidence that they were in the Qumran library (see Sanders, The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll, p. 141). While 151, 154, and 155 in Syr. show clear evidence of a Heb. base, 152 and 153 (especially) are notably different (see nn. to the translation).
Spoken by David After Fighting Against the Lion and the Wolf Which Took Sheep from His Flocks.

O God, b O God, come to my help; assist me and save me; and deliver me c from the killers.

Shall I descend to Sheol by the mouth of the lion? Or shall the lion d maim e me?

Is it not sufficient for them to ambush my father’s flocks; g and to tear a sheep from his sheepfold? They are even wishing to slay me. h

Spare, O Lord, your elect one; i and deliver your holy one from destruction; so that he may continue praising you j in all his times, and may praise your magnificent name.

When you have saved him from the hands of destroying k death, l and when you have rescued my captivity m from the mouths of n beasts.

Quickly, O Adonai, p send from your presence a redeemer; q and lift me up from the gaping abyss which is seeking to enclose me in its depths.

a. The title is from MS A. The above translation differs from Sanders’ idiomatic rendering (The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll, p. 142), because I have attempted to be literal, have occasionally used different MSS, and have translated cognate words in these Heb. and Syr. texts consistently (often missing a beautiful phrase in English).

b. The line is beautiful in Syr.: ʼilm thē 𬀩y’dī. The choice of the Heb. ʼilm (God) seems deliberate to bring out the assonance with 𬀩y’dī (to my help).

c. Or “my soul.”
d. All other Syr. MSS: “the wolf.” MS A seems in error.

e. The usual meanings of this verb (bl) in the Piel are “to confound, confuse, mar, spoil.” Jastrow (Dictionary, ad loc.) cites an example in which the verb denotes an action that accelerates death. This meaning is apposite here because of the previous vs., the synonymous parallel, and vs. 3c.

f. “Me” is written 𬀩y’dī, which is a Hebraism and denotes the nota accusativi, with a prefixed redundant h, the Syr. note of the accusative. This observation plus “ʼilm for “God” (see n. b) may indicate that this psalm was translated from Heb.

g. Lit. “to them that they lay in ambush for the flocks of my father.”

h. Or “my soul.”
i. All other Syr. MSS omit “your elect one.”
j. Lit. “continue in your praises.”
k. For “destroying,” all other Syr. MSS have “and of the vicious wolf.”
l. The redundancy is unattractive; all other Syr. MSS replace “death” with “lion.”
m. Or “prey”; the noun seems ill-chosen.
n. All other Syr. MSS: “hands of.”
o. The Heb. Adonai is employed; by error MS A reads “his Lord.”
p. Or “the Redeemer.”

PSALM 153

This psalm is extant only in Syriac. The original language may be Hebrew, but there is even less evidence of that hypothesis for this psalm than there is for Psalm 152. The above statement regarding date and provenance of Psalm 152 applies to Psalm 153 as well.

1 See the introduction to Psalm 152.
153 (5ApocSyrPs 5)

Spoken by David After* Receiving God's Grace When He Delivered Him from the Lion and Wolf and Those Two He Killed by His Hands

Praise the Lord, all you nations; glorify him and bless his name;

For he delivered the physical life of his elect one from the hands of death; and he redeemed his holy one from destruction.

And he saved me from the snares of Sheol; and brought me forth from the abyss that is inscrutable.

Because before my salvation could proceed from before him, I almost became two parts by two beasts.

However, he sent his angel and closed from me the gaping mouths; and redeemed my life from destruction.

I myself shall praise him and exalt him because of all his graces, which he has provided and is providing for me.

a. Or "while." The translation differs from Sanders' rendering for the same reasons given in n. a to 152.
b. Lit. "the two of them."
c. Or "soul." In vs. 5 "my life" is haiyai.
d. Or "my soul."
e. The lamadh denotes the cause. The Syr. is inelegant. The adverb "almost" is in the wrong place.
f. Lit. "my soul."
g. Or "will provide"; the verb is an active participle.

PSALM 154

The original language of this psalm is Hebrew. The Syriac derives directly from the Hebrew but not necessarily from the Hebrew as preserved in 11QPs. Because the psalm is preserved in this first-century manuscript, it must date from the first, or better the second, century B.C. There is no reason to doubt that it was composed somewhere in Palestine.

Of Psalms 151–55 this one is most closely aligned with the thoughts in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The "many ones" (or many) of 154:1 (only Syr.; Heb. lost) may be parallel to "the many," a technical term (Rabbim) that defines the fully initiated members of the Qumran community (cf. 1QS 6.8–7.25). The "many," however, may be only a generic reference, as it is in 155:10 and Isaiah 53:11. The Hebrew of 154:4, which has been translated "Join an assembly," could be rendered "join a yahad"; the latter is a technical term at Qumran for the community of oneness in covenant with God (cf. 1QH 11.10–14; 1For further discussion, see Strugnell, HTR 59 (1966) 272–75.


3 See n. 7 to the introduction of this contribution.
The phrase "join (or form) a yahad," however, is not found elsewhere in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Other nouns that are technical terms at Qumran, but not necessarily ideas peculiar to the Dead Sea Scrolls, are "the innocent ones" in 154:3, 18 (cf. 1QS 4.22) and "the poor ones" in 154:18 (cf. 1QH 2.34, 5.13f.). Concepts cherished at Qumran are the ideas expressed in 154:10f. that the Most High accepts praise as equal to sacrifices and in 154:13f. that the righteous share in common meals and constantly study the Law; but these emphases are also characteristic of the prophets and the practices of other Jews, especially the Pharisees. It seems, therefore, that while there is nothing peculiarly Qumranian about Psalm 154, it may be proto-Essenian and predate the exodus of the Essenes to Qumran.

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5 Skelton states that "it is interesting that this, Ps 154, is a reflex of the Essene religious assemblies and communal meals." See Skelton in Qumrân: Sa piété, sa théologie et son milieu, p. 169.

6 Sanders shows that the psalm portrays "three distinct groups": the righteous, those addressed by them, and the wicked. He has also raised the possibility that the psalm is "proto-Essenian, or Ḥasidic." See Sanders, The Psalms Scroll of Qumrân Cave 11, pp. 69f.

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154 (11QPs¹ 154)

Hebrew

1 (lost)

2 (lost)

3 [Associate]¹ yourselves with the good ones;
   and with the pure ones² to glorify³ the Most High.

4 Join an assembly⁴ to announce his salvation;
   and do not be lax to announce his power
   and his gloriousness⁵ to all simple ones.

5 For to announce the glory (or honor) of the Lord,
   wisdom has been given.

6 And to recount his many deeds,
   she was made known⁶ to humanity:

7 To announce to simple ones his power,
   to explain to those lacking understanding his greatness,⁷

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a. The Heb. of 154:1-2a is lost; the verb "associate" is restored from the Syr. The above translation is different from those now available because I have attempted to translate the Syr. and Heb. versions so that cognate (and corresponding) words within each are easily recognized. Hence, Syr. mēn and Heb. mbw¹ in 154:8 are both rendered by "entrance."

b. Or "your souls."

c. Or "innocent ones." The Heb. and Syr. have the same word, but the meanings are slightly different.

d. Heb. p'yr (beautify, glorify); Syr. 8bh (glorify, praise), which corresponds to Heb. 8bh (praise).

e. Or "Form an assembly (or yahad)"; Heb. yhd, which is a technical term at Qumran; it meant the community of oneness in covenant with God (cf. 1QH 11.10-14; 3.19-23). See n. 1.

f. The Heb. noun for "glorious (154:4, 9)
   is cognate with "to glorify" in 154:3b, 10a, 17a,
   and with "glory" in 154:5a. The theme of the
   psalm is clearly to glorify God's glory, as is
   demonstrated by the first two vss., preserved only
   in Syr.: "glorify God . . . proclaim his glory . . .
   glorify his excellence . . . narrate his glorious
   ness." Wisdom (vs. 5) was given to accomplish
   this task.

g. Heb. nw²h, "made known," is cognate with

h. Sanders (The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll, p.
   105): "and to explain to senseless folk his greatness
   . . ."
Those far from her openings, those banished from her entrances.

Because the Most High is the Lord of Jacob, and his gloriousness is over all his deeds.

And a person who glorifies the Most High, he accepts as one who brings a meal offering,

As one who offers he-goats and baby bulls; as one who anoints the altar with many burnt offerings; as sweet-smelling fragrance from the hand of the righteous ones.

From the openings of the righteous ones is heard her voice; and from the congregation of the pious ones her song.

When they eat with satiety she is cited; and when they drink in association together.

Their meditation is on the Law of the Most High; their words to announce his power.

How far from the wicked ones is her word; from all haughty ones to know her.

Behold the eyes of the Lord will have compassion upon the good ones;

And upon those who glorify him will he increase his mercy; from an evil time will he deliver them.

[Bless] the Lord, who redeems the poor ones from the hand of strangers and delivers [ . . . ]

[ . . . Jacob and a judge of [ . . . ]

(lost)
The title is from MS A, but it is very late and has little relation to the content of the psalm.

b. In Ps 151–53 šbh is translated as "praise"; here it denotes "glory." Uppermost in the poet's mind is the concept of glorifying (or praising) God's glory. The root šbh or its cognates appear in vss. 1 (bis), 2 (bis), 3, 4, 7, 10, and 17. The masculine noun for "praise, honor, glory," šwbh, is translated "glory"; the feminine noun with the same meaning, šwbwt, is distinguished as "gloriousness."

c. "The congregation of the many" is a technical term in the Dead Sea Scrolls, but it probably no longer retained this meaning in the latter Syriac-speaking churches.

d. Or 'your (plural) soul'; proposed npškwn (your souls); the emendation is not demanded, since npškwn can mean 'your souls.'

e. Or 'be gathered.'

f. Ignore the supralinear dot that indicates the feminine pronoun; such dots are later than the date of composition of this psalm.

g. Or "infants"; the noun is plural and frequently denotes boys and girls under five years old.

h. Or "glory" (another word than employed herein), "magnificence."

i. Or "understood, ascertained."

j. MS A incorrectly has added the Nestorian vocalization for the first-person-singular pronoun.

k. Again, see n. j; the Nestorian vocalization is incorrectly first common singular.

I. Lit. "those in want of a heart (or mind)"); but both the Syr. and Heb. phrases really mean "those who are senseless (or stupid)." The Semite thought of his chest or breast as the place of intelligence and feeling.

m. Both verbs in this vs. appear to be passive participles.

n. Or "his servants"; but see vs. 6.

o. Or "man," "mortal."

p. In Psalm 151:5 šbh with š means "choose."

q. Good English demands this translation; but "offers" and "offering" are not cognate in Syr.
And as one who offers he-goats and baby bulls; and as he who anoints the altar with many burnt offerings; and as sweet-smelling fragrance from the hand of the righteous ones.

From the gates of the just ones is heard her voice; and from the voice of the just ones her admonition.

And concerning their food fullness (is) in truth; and concerning their feast their portions (are) together.

Their discussions (are) on the Law of the Most High; and their word is to announce his power.

How far from the wicked ones (is) her word; and from all evil ones her understanding.

Behold the eye of the Lord will have pity upon the good ones;

And upon those who glorify him will he increase mercies; and from an evil time will he redeem them.

Blessed be the Lord who saves the poor ones from the hand of strangers; and redeems the innocent ones from the hand of the evil ones;

Who raises the horn from Jacob, and the judge of the nations from Israel;

So that he may prolong his sojourn in Zion; and may cause adornment forever in Jerusalem.

PSALM 155

Hebrew is the original language of the psalm. As with Psalm 154, the Syriac appears to derive directly from the Hebrew. This psalm is not Qumranian but biblical; it is similar in style to Psalm 22. Since it is extant in 11QPs it must date at least from the first century B.C. and is probably much earlier. The Syriac translator is gifted; he cannot be identified with the author of Psalms 152 and 153 (if one were to assume a Syr. original for them). Like most of the canonical (or Masoretic) psalms, this psalm is generic in thought and tone; hence it is impossible to discern its author, date, or provenance.
1 O Lord, I called unto you,
be attentive to me.

2 I spread forth my palms,
toward your holy dwelling;

3 Incline your ear;
and give me my request.

4 And my petition
do not hold back from me.

5 Build me up;
and do not cast me down.

6 And do not abandon (me)
before the wicked ones.

7 The rewards of evil,
may the Judge of Truth remove from me.

8 O Lord, do not condemn me according to my sins;
for no one living is righteous before you.

9 O Lord, instruct me in your Law;
and teach me your statutes;

10 So many may hear of your deeds,
and nations may honor your magnificence.

11 Remember me and do not forget me;
and do not let me enter that which is too difficult for me.

12 The sins of my youth cast far from me;
and my transgressions do not remember against me.

13 O Lord, purify me from the evil plague;
and do not let it again turn back to me.

14 Dry up its roots from me;
and do not let its leaves bloom in me.

15 Magnificent are you, O Lord;
therefore complete my request from before you.

a. There is no title in the Heb. For the means
of translating, see n. a to 154.
b. Or “my soul.”
c. Lit. “do not cast it down.”
d. Or “cause to turn back.”
e. Heb. mdpR (statutes) which is cognate with
tdpR (do not condemn me) in 155:8.
f. Lit. “and.”
g. Or “glory, honor.”
h. Or, with Sanders (The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll, p. 111): “and lead me not into situations
too hard for me.”
i. See n. d.
j. See n. g.
k. Heb. shin in the Piel, imperative with Hit.
To whom may I cry and he would give to me?
And human beings, what can [their] pow[er] add?

From befo[r]e you, O Lord, is my trust.
I called, "O Lord," and he answered me;
[and he healed] my broken heart.

I slumbered [and I s]lept;
I dreamed, nevertheless . . .

155 (5ApocSyrPs 3)

Syriac
The Prayer of Hezekiah When the Assyrians Surrounded Him and He Asked
God Deliverance* from Them*b

1 O Lord, I called to you,
hearken to me.
2 I stretched out my hands
to the dwellings of your holiness;
3 Incline your ear;
and grant me my request.
4 My prayer
 do not withhold from me.
5 Build me* up;"d
and do not destroy me."e
6 And do not uncover me"f
before the wicked ones.
7 The rewards of evil turn from me,
O Judge of Truth.
8 O Lord, do not judge me according to my sins;
because guilty* before you is every life."h
9 O Lord, explain to me your Law;
and teach me your judgments;

a. The Syr. is ghyr; elsewhere ps is represented by the English verb and cognates "to deliver."
b. The title is from MS A, but it is late and has no basis in the psalm itself.
c. Or "my soul."
d. MS A (seek it) is corrupt; read with other Syr. MSS and the Heb., which has bnh, "build."
e. Lit. "do not destroy it."
f. Lit. "do not uncover it."
g. Lit. "not innocent" or "not free from guilt."
h. The close order of words between the Syr. and Heb. indicates that the former derives directly from the latter, and not through a Gk. intermediary.
i. Syr. 'lypy; lmd in Syr. obtained a meaning different from lmd in Heb. (cf. the Heb.).
So that many* may hear of your works,
and the nationsk may give thanks for your honor.¹

Remember me and do not forget me;
and do not let me entera that which is too difficult for me.

The sins of my childhood removea from me;
and my insolvency do not remember against me.

O Lord, cleanse me from the evil leprosy;³
and do not let it again return⁴ to me.

Dry up its roots from me;
and do not let its leaves bud in me.

Powerful and great are you, O Lord;
hence,t my request will be fulfilledd from before you.

To whom may I complain and he would give to me?
And human beings, what can their strength add (for me)?

From before you, O Lord, (is) my confidence.
I called to the Lord, and he answered me;
and he healed my broken heart.

I slumbered and slept;
I dreamed, nevertheless I was aroused.¹

And you supported me, O Lord.
And I shall render (thanks)u because the Lord has deliveredl me.

Now I shall behold their shame;
I trusted in you and shall not be ashamed.
Give honor (to the Lord) for ever and ever.

Save Israel, your elect one;
and those of the house of Jacob, your chosenoe one.

j. Or "the many."; see n. c to 154 (5ApocSyrPs 2).

k. Or "peoples." 

l. Or "your glory, magnificence." 

m. The same verb in the same verbal stem is used in Mt 6:13 in the Peshitta: "and do not let us enter into temptation." 

n. Or "transfer, cause to pass." 

o. Or "disobedience, rebellion." 

p. A scribe wrote grb³ in the margin of MS A; Baars (The Old Testament in Syriac, p. iv) takes this note as a correction to what is in the text of MS A: grb³, "the man." 

q. The Nestorian vowels in MS A denote the Aphel infinitive; the Pe'al infinitive is also possible (cf. Nöldeke, Compendious Syriac Grammar, p. 108).

r. Or "on this account." 

s. All other Syr. MSS: "will be full (or complete)."

t. This passive voice reflects the divine passive and means "the Lord aroused me" (cf. next vs.). All other Syr. MSS: "I was helped."

u. The vs. is difficult to translate; the verb qbl means render thanks with tybwf, which may have been lost through copying. In the margin of MS A (and in 18E1) sgp Iby, "he injured my heart." The Heb. is lost because of the scroll's condition.

v. Or "tried (or approved) one." At the end of the collection of psalms a scribe adds in MS A: "So ends, by the assistance of our Lord, the writing of the Psalms of the blessed David, the prophet and king, with the five psalms which are not among the Greek or Hebrew numbering. However, as they are said (and) preserved in Syriac so we have copied them for him who desires (a copy)."