

## Qumran Corner

*Another Fragment of SdeirGenesis*

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Until now, three fragments have been identified as belonging to a scroll known as Sdeir-Genesis (= Sdeir 1), including one with the remains of two columns. These fragments were purchased from Khalil Eskander Shahin (also known as Kando) in the summer of 1952, and photographed at the Rockefeller Museum on 25 July 1952. The first fragment was published in 1953 in the context of a study on the findings from Wadi Muraba'at.<sup>1</sup> Five years later, Josef Milik determined that these fragments were not from Wadi Muraba'at as first believed, but that they originated from Wadi Sdeir.<sup>2</sup> Eventually, the three fragments were published in DJD 38.<sup>3</sup> Based on its paleography, the document was dated to the second half of the first century CE. If one accepts the testimony of the Bedouins who claim that the scroll was found in Wadi Sdeir, now known as Nahal David, it may be that it was discovered in the 'Cave of the Pool',<sup>4</sup> since until now it is the only cave in which remains from the Bar Kokhba period had been found in the wadi.<sup>5</sup> An economic document dated to the 'Sixth of Adar, year three of the redemption of Israel by the hand of Shimon son of Kosiba' was also found in Nahal David together with SdeirGenesis.<sup>6</sup>

Column 1 of fragment 1 of SdeirGenesis preserves remains of Genesis 35:6–10. Fragment 2 contains parts of Genesis 35:26–36:2, leaving little doubt that we are dealing with the continuation of that same column. Column 2 of fragment 1 contains remains of Genesis 36:5–12, while fragment 3 preserves parts of Genesis 36:13–17, seemingly the continuation of that second column.<sup>7</sup>

In DJD 38, it is reported that sometime after 1990, a small fragment (6.2×1.8 cm) containing remains of three lines was added to the plate contain-

<sup>1</sup> O. Verf, 'Excavations in Jordan, 1951–1952: Wady el Marabaat', *ADAJ* 2 (1953), p. 85, pl. 12; C. Burchard, 'Gen 35:6–10 und 36:5–12 MT aus der Wüste Juda (Nahal Hever, Cave of the Letters?)', *ZAW* 78 (1966), pp. 71–75.

<sup>2</sup> J. T. Milik, 'Le travail d'édition des manuscrits du Désert de Juda', in *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg 1956* (VTSup 4), Leiden 1957, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> C. Murphy, '1. SdeirGenesis', in J. Charlesworth and others, *Miscellaneous Texts from the Judaean Desert*, (DJD 38, Clarendon, Oxford, 2000), pp. 117–124.

<sup>4</sup> H. Eshel, 'The History of Research and Survey of the finds of the Refuge Caves', in H. Eshel and D. Amit, *The Bar-Kokhba Refuge Caves*, Israel Exploration Society, Tel Aviv, 1998, pp. 29–32 (in Hebrew).

<sup>5</sup> On the Bar Kokhba period remains in the 'Cave of the Pool', see G. D. Sandel, 'Am Toten Meere', *ZDPV* 30 (1907), pp. 79–84; Y. Aharoni, 'An Archaeological Survey at En-Gedi', *Bulletin of the Israel Exploration Society* 22 (1958), pp. 40–44 (in Hebrew); N. Avigad, 'Expedition A', *IEJ* 11 (1961), pp. 8–10; N. Avigad, 'Expedition A—Nahal David', *IEJ* 12 (1962), pp. 170–181.

<sup>6</sup> A. Yardeni, '2. Sdeir papPromissory Note? ar', in J. Charlesworth and others, *Miscellaneous Texts from the Judaean Desert*, (DJD 38, Clarendon, Oxford, 2000), pp. 125–129.

<sup>7</sup> See note 3.

ing fragments of the book of Numbers and Deuteronomy from the Seiyal collection (Mus. Inv. 534). Peter Flint, who edited the fragment, simply marked it as an 'Unidentified Fragment', adding that in his opinion the fragment is not biblical. The fragment was published without a photograph, and should be deciphered as follows:<sup>8</sup>

1. אַ [ ]  
 2. ילדה [ ]  
 3. אַת יעלם וְאַתָּה [ ]

In our opinion, there is little doubt that this fragment contains Genesis 36:3–5, and that it should be reconstructed in the following manner:

1. אַחיות נביות ותלד עדה לעשו את אליפז ובשמת (39)  
 2. ילדה אַת רעואל ואהליבמה ילדה את יעוש (35)  
 3. אַת יעלם וְאַתָּה קרח אלה בני עשו אשר ילדו (37)  
 4. לו בארץ כנען ויקח עשו את נשיו ואת בניו (38)

1. si[ster of Nebaioth. <sup>4</sup>Adah bore to Esau Eliphaz; Basemath]  
 2. bore [Reuel; <sup>5</sup>and Oholiabamah bore Jeush,]  
 3. [and] Jalam, and [Korah. Those were the sons of Esau who were born]  
 4. [to him in the land of Canaan. <sup>6</sup>Esau took his wives, his sons]

The column width of this new fragment would thus be similar to that of SdeirGenesis,<sup>9</sup> further confirming that it is part of that scroll. This new fragment is to be placed at the top of column 2 of fragment 1 of SdeirGenesis, actually, our reconstructed line 4 is partially preserved in line 1 of fragment 1 column 2. Thus, we now have 3 fragments belonging to the second column of SdeirGenesis, arranged in the following manner from top to bottom: this new fragment; fragment 1 column 2; followed by fragment 3. It seems as though the first line of our fragment may have been the first or the second line of the column. Between it and the last line of fragment 2 the following line (Genesis 36: 2–3) is missing:

- (39) בַּת עֲנָה בַת צִבְעוֹן הַחִוִּי וְאֵת בִּשְׁמַת בַּת יִשְׁמָעֵאל

‘[daughter of Anah, daughter of Zibeon the Hivite, <sup>3</sup>and also Basemath daughter of Ishmael]’, which may have been the last line of column 1 or the first line of column 2. The new fragment is identical to the Massoretic text.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> P. Flint, ‘2.XHev/SeNumber<sup>b</sup>’, in J. Charlesworth and others, *Miscellaneous Texts from the Judaean Desert* (DJD 38, Clarendon, Oxford, 2000), p. 177. Based on the photograph we reconstructed אַת יעלם in line 3, although Flint had אַת יעלם.

<sup>9</sup> Average column length for SdeirGenesis is 37 spaces; see Murphy, ‘1. SdeirGenesis’ (above, note 3), p. 117.

<sup>10</sup> The three fragments published by Murphy are similar to the MT. Murphy pointed that in SdeirGenesis, Genesis 36:6 preserved the reading בְּנֵי, as found in most of the MT manuscripts, this in spite of the fact that there are a few Hebrew manuscripts which preserve the reading בְּנוֹת; see Murphy, ‘1. SdeirGenesis’ (above, note 3), p. 118.

