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# 4Q246

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*The Aramaic text 4Q246 (the "son of God" text) is recognized as a document of first-rate importance, but scholars have not been able to agree on its interpretation. The present study offers new readings, translation, and commentary, and suggests that a proper understanding of the fragment's internal poetic structure and of its affinity to the Akkadian prophecies leads to the conclusion that the text represents the "son of God" as a negative figure. The probable historical background of 4Q246 is the Seleucid period, especially the struggle against Antiochus IV Epiphanes.*

*Key Words: Son of God, 4Q246, Mark 14:64, Luke 1:35, Akkadian prophecies, Antiochus Epiphanes*

The Aramaic text 4Q246 was acquired by J. T. Milik from the antiquities dealer Kando in 1958. J. A. Fitzmyer published part of the text based on a lecture of Milik's, and a number of discussions appeared based on this partial publication.[1] Recently Emile Puech has published the full text with commentary; Fitzmyer has also returned to the text with a full commentary and interpretation.[2] The availability of the complete fragment will undoubtedly initiate a new phase in the discussion of this fragmentary document.



4Q246 contains two columns of nine lines each. The first column, having been torn approximately through the middle, is missing the first half of each line, but the second column is complete. It is of course impossible to estimate exactly how long the complete scroll may have been, but the column length is only about half that of a normal size scroll. Paleographically, the text was said by Milik (according to Fitzmyer) to date from the latter third of the first century BCE, a judgment with which Puech agrees.[3] The letter forms are those of "early formal Herodian" script, although Milik's and Puech's dates may be too narrow.

Linguistically, the text, as luck would have it, contains few of the diagnostic features typically used to place Palestinian Aramaic in a typological series. There is one example of non-assimilated nun: (ינתן, II, 8) and one of elided aleph (תתא, I, 4). The preformative of the third masculine singular imperfect of the verb הוי is lamedh (להוה, I, 7), typical of Qumran Aram...

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