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A RESPONSE TO ELIZABETH OWEN'S "4QDEUT^N:
A PRE-SAMARITAN TEXT?"

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I would like to thank the editors of *Dead Sea Discoveries* for giving me the opportunity to respond to Elizabeth Owen's article (vol. 4:2, July 1997), which makes extensive use of my previous work on 4QDeutⁿ. While I find myself in broad agreement with her conclusions (see below), I feel that her article, with its heavy reliance on my unpublished doctoral dissertation, gives a misleading impression of my scholarship on 4QDeutⁿ, and I would like to take this opportunity to set the record straight.

As Ms. Owen notes on p. 163, n. 7, in 1988 I completed a doctoral dissertation at Harvard University which included a preliminary edition of 4QDeutⁿ. Subsequent to that I published two studies on 4QDeutⁿ, "The All Souls Deuteronomy and the Decalogue," *JBL* 109 (1990) 193–206, and "4QDtⁿ: Biblical Manuscript or Excerpted Text?" in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins* (eds. H. Attridge, J. Collins, T. Tobin; Lanham, MD: University Press, 1990) 13–20 (an article evidently unavailable to Ms. Owen). Finally, in 1994, I published 4QDeutⁿ, as Sidnie White Crawford, in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* 14. Needless to say, the published version of 4QDeutⁿ in DJD 14 underwent critical revision and represents, I hope, an improvement over the unpublished, preliminary version found in my doctoral dissertation. A careful reader should note a development of my thought, as well as the correction of errors, between 1988 and 1994. Thus, statements which Ms. Owen correctly attributes to me in the preliminary unpublished edition of 4QDeutⁿ of 1988 are often modified or abandoned by me in subsequent publications, particularly DJD 14 in 1994.

However, because of its extreme reliance on my dissertation, the article may give the impression that my positions have not changed since 1988, an impression I would like to correct. A minor and a

major example will suffice. On p. 166, n. 19, Owen states, "Note that White incorrectly claims (Critical Edition, 227, 295; JBL 198) that M in Exodus has this direct object marker." This is true. She then goes on to say, "Cf. DID 14, 125." It is in DJD 14, on p. 125, that I correct my own previous error. Owen's footnote, however, gives me credit for the mistake but not the correction! This is, as stated above, a minor example, but a careful comparison of Ms. Owen's article with my work reveals several misleading examples of this type, in which she takes my early unpublished work to be more authoritative than my later edition.

The major example of the article's inaccuracy regarding my position is in the thesis of the article itself. Ms. Owen states that 4QDeutⁿ is a non-aligned text, arguing against my supposed claim that it is a "pre-Samaritan" text. I indeed made that claim in 1988 in my unpublished dissertation. However, in no published work do I claim that 4QDeutⁿ is "pre-Samaritan," rather stating that "there is not enough evidence on which to base a judgment" (*JBL* 109 [1990] 206), or "it is a harmonizing text" (*Scribes*, 15). In DJD 14 I made no claim of affiliation for 4QDeutⁿ at all, because I no longer believed the evidence supported such a claim (thus by implication abandoning the position I took in my doctoral dissertation). I was, however, willing to make a statement of affiliation for manuscripts where it was warranted, as in the case of 4QDeut^g.¹ Thus, when Ms. Owen takes issue with my 1988 position, she is shadowboxing; her opponent left that, arena several years ago. Overall, Ms. Owen's article would have been better served if the view she has attributed to me had been based on my latest statement on 4QDeutⁿ.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to suggest that Julie Duncan has opened a fruitful avenue of inquiry into 4QDeutⁿ's textual character in view of its nature as an excerpted text. As Duncan and I have demonstrated in several articles, there are four manuscripts of Deuteronomy from Qumran which are most likely excerpted texts: 4QDeut^j, 4QDeut^{kl}, 4QDeutⁿ, and 4QDeut^q.² As Duncan has recently

¹ For 4QDeut^g I state, "This manuscript stands squarely in the proto-rabbinic tradition in both text and orthography" (DJD 14, 56).

² White, *Scribes*. J. Duncan, "Considerations of 4QDt^j in Light of the All Souls Deuteronomy and Cave 4 Phylactery Texts," *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Madrid, 18–21 March, 1991* (eds. J. Treballe Barrera and L. Vegas Montaner; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992) 1.199–215; *idem*, "Excerpted Texts of Deuteronomy at Qumran," *RevQ* 18 (1997) 43–62.

shown, all of them have slightly expanded texts (the exception to this may be 4QDeut⁹). She explains this phenomenon by suggesting that these texts were copied from memory, resulting in accidental conflation.³ She may well be correct; it is possible that these texts, because of their nature as excerpted texts, were treated differently from “regular” biblical scrolls, and thus cannot be used to determine the presence or absence of textual families among the biblical manuscripts at Qumran. Therefore, Ms. Owen’s conclusion that 4QDeutⁿ is a non-aligned text is sound; I would simply add that it is non-aligned because it is an excerpted text.

³ Duncan, “Excerpted Texts,” 61–62.