

Re-Considering the Meaning and Function of the “Mystery” through the רז נהייה (Raz Nihyeh) in 4QInstruction

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1. Introduction

4QInstruction, referred to as a Sapiential work and *Musar le Mevin*, is a substantial wisdom composition dating to the second century B.C.E. consisting of six fragmentary documents – one from Cave 1 (1Q26), and five manuscripts from Cave 4 (4Q415-418, and 423) discovered at Qumran.¹⁾ The puzzling and intriguing phrase רז נהייה (*raz nihyeh*)²⁾ which appears in the composite text has been passionately researched by scholars in terms of the understanding of mystery within the apocalyptic literature (e.g., Dan 2:18 and 4:6, cf. Rev. 1:20).³⁾ This paper

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- 1) 4QInstruction is regarded as displaying sectarian terminologies. For a brief overview of 4QInstruction, see Daniel J. Harrington, “Sapiential Work,” in *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, vol. 2. eds. Lawrence H. Schiffman, and James VanderKam (New York: Oxford, 2000), 825-826; Armin Lange, “Wisdom Literature and Thought in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*. eds. John J Collins, and Daniel Harlow (Michigan: Eerdmans, 2010), 460-465. Throughout this paper, I will refer to this composite document as 4QInstruction.
- 2) The translations of רז נהייה are various and depend on scholars’ understanding on the phrase, which will be examined in the following section. For clarity, this paper will use רז נהייה to refer to the Hebrew phrase itself; the translations of the phrase will be marked in quotations.
- 3) For the most detailed analysis of the רז נהייה, see Matthew J. Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 1-80; Torleif Elgvin,

seeks to propose a plausible interpretation of the **רז נהיה** by analyzing the literary structure of and biblical allusions in 4QInstruction while engaging the various interpretations and arguments about the meaning and function of the **רז נהיה**. I argue that the **רז נהיה** refers to the source of revelatory wisdom that affects one's ethical conduct in daily life, as well as knowledge of divine nature, but also serves as the identity marker between insiders and outsiders.

I demonstrate the issues behind the phrase itself and evaluate the major arguments surrounding the meaning of **רז נהיה**. In order to engage the contemporary discussion of the phrase, I also present literary analysis on the selected passages from 4QInstruction that mention the **רז נהיה** in an attempt to understand the meaning of the phrase as revealed to the text's addressees.⁴⁾ Finally I suggest that the revealed wisdom framed

“Wisdom, Revelation, and Eschatology in an Early Essene Writing,” in *Society of Biblical Literature 1995 Seminar Papers*. ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1995), 440-463; John J. Collins, “The Mysteries of God: Creation and Eschatology in 4QInstruction and the Wisdom of Solomon,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, ed. Florentino Garcia Martinez (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 287-305; J. Strugnell et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XXXIV: Qumran Cave 4, XXIV: 4QInstructions: 4Q415ff* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999); Daniel J. Harrington, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996), 14-22, especially 40-59. Concerning the Qumran community and their ideology, Dorothea Erbele-Kuester, “The Inter-Religious Plurality of Scriptures in Asia and the Intra-Religious Plurality of Psalter Editions in Early Judaism,” *Canon&Culture* 4 (2010), 133-154; 이윤경 “쿰란 시편사본과 폐세르 시편을 통해 본 쿰란공동체의 신학,” *Canon&Culture* 10 (2016), 147-171.

4) Some scholars like Vermes, Wacholder, and Abegg conceive 4QInstruction as an undoubtedly sectarian document, but others like Lange and Elgvin doubt its providence from the Qumran community at the Dead Sea area. See Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 425; Ben Zion Wacholder and Martin G. Abegg, *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls: The Hebrew and Aramaic Texts from Cave Four* (2 vols.;

in an apocalyptic and sapiential context underlies the order of the universe which is available to some chosen people or group(s).⁵⁾

2. Issues in Understanding the Phrase, רז נהיה

In order to understand רז נהיה, it is necessary to briefly discuss the Hebrew word רז.⁶⁾ This term, which is generally translated as “mystery” or “secret” in English and as *μυστήριον* in LXX, occurs in the Dead Sea Scrolls over one hundred times.⁷⁾

Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1992), 2.xiii; Lange, “Wisdom Literature and Thought in the Scrolls,” 460; Elgvin, “Wisdom, Revelation, and Eschatology,” 462-463. By the Qumran community, I refer to a certain sectarian group or groups assumed to have historically resided at Qumran in the Dead Sea area from roughly 2 B.C.E to late 1 C.E. In this study, I assume that 4QInstruction and its themes show at least indirect and thematic relation with the community residing in the Qumran area due to the document’s discovery in a cave near where the community settled.

- 5) In this paper I follow Cross’s definition of the apocalypse as Jewish “movements of several centuries which combined certain figures of wisdom and late prophetic eschatology in a new synthesis, and produced an immense literature, legal, exegetical and wisdom as well as eschatological, mythic and cosmological.” See, Frank Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 68. 3f.
- 6) For a brief summary of the word, see Daniel J. Harrington, “Mystery,” in *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, eds. L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 588-591. The majority of scholars regard רז as the provenance of the word. See, Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 30-31; John J. Collins, *Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 12-71; Markus Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* (J.C.B. Mohr: Tübingen, 1990), 15-16.
- 7) Martin G. Abegg and James E. Bowley, and Edward M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 680-681. The Hebrew word רז appears eight times in the book of Daniel in the Hebrew Bible; 2: 18, 19, 27, 28, 29, 30, 47 and 4:9. See, George V. Wigram, ed., *The Englishman’s Hebrew*

In the Scrolls, רז is a key for the acquisition of secretly revealed knowledge and holds an importance that is without parallel in the biblical passages except for in Daniel (Dan 2:18, 19, 27, 28, 29, 30, 47; 4:6).⁸⁾ The word denotes something that is beyond human understanding and imagination. In Second Temple literature, the רז is often occurred in the context of revelatory experience while presenting important features of the religious and social sensibility and cosmology in terms of its esoteric nature.⁹⁾ For instance, Habakkuk Peshar uses the word to indicate the hidden meaning of Scripture (1QpHab 7:4-5) and 1QH refers to the רז as the secret knowledge pertaining to the creation of the universe (1QH 9.13-15).¹⁰⁾ All these ‘mysteries’ are eventually revealed by God to his elect. Moreover, while in the book of Daniel the רז is secret knowledge granted to the elect by God that is used to uncover the meaning of the King’s dream (Dan 2:19), Enoch describes that the רז is knowledge of heaven (1Enoch 103:2; 104:12). In relation to the occurrence of the “mystery”, 4QInstruction contains many unique usages of רז נהיה, which is translated in various ways.¹¹⁾

Though the רז appears in Second Temple literature, occurrences of the phrase רז נהיה are very rare. Besides 4QInstruction, רז נהיה occurs only in 1QS (Col 11. 3-4)¹²⁾

and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1963), 1166.

8) Gunther Bornkamm, “Μυστήριον,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. IV. (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 802-828.

9) Samuel Thomas, “Mystery,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, eds. John J. Collins, and Daniel Harlow (Michigan: Eerdmans, 2010), 978.

10) Hartmut Stegemann, *et al.*, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XL: 1QHODAYOT with Incorporation of 1QHODAYOT^b with 4QHODAYOT^{a-f}*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 130.

11) Concerning the analysis of the phrase, ‘רז נהיה,’ see Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 30-80.

12) “By his righteousness he shall blot out my transgression. For from the fountain

and the Book of Mysteries (1Q27 1 i. 3-4 or 4Q300 3.3-4).¹³⁾ While the Book of Mysteries refers to *רו נהיה* as demonstrating God’s control over history with emphasis on the final judgment against the wicked, 1QS uses the phrase as part of a claim that the speaker received revealed knowledge about God.

The occurrences of *רו נהיה* in the Book of Mysteries and 1QS indicates that the phrase is a key word in the Scrolls’ deterministic theology, signifying man’s inability to understand the divine plan and God’s will.¹⁴⁾ In spite of the phrase’s significant impact on the Qumran community’s theology in the Scrolls, there is little accord on a translation of the phrase. According to Samuel I. Thomas’s categorization of the translations, there are various proposed translations;

...“mystery of existence” or “mystery of being”; “mystery of becoming”; “mystery to come”; “mystery of that which was coming into being”; “mystery of future”; and “mystery that is to be.” This is to name just the most prominent

of his knowledge he has released his light. My eye beheld his wonders, and the light of my heart beheld the mystery of what shall occur and is occurring (*רו נהיה*) forever” James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Damascus Document, War Scroll, and Related Documents*, vol. 1 of *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr), 47.

13) “...all their wisdom. And [t]he[y] do not know *רו נהיה*, nor understand ancient matters. And they do not know what is going to happen] to them; and they will not save their souls from *רו נהיה*. And this will be for you the sign that this is happening...” Florentino Garcia Martinez, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, Vol.2. (New York: Brill, 1997), 663.

14) Jonathan Klawans, “The Dead Sea Scrolls, the Essenes and the Study of Religious Belief: Determinism and Freedom of Choice,” in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods*. ed. Maxine L. Grossman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 280-283; Lawrence H. Schiffman, “4QMysteries: A Preliminary Edition and Translation” in *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: Biblical, Epigraphic, and Semitic Studies in honor of Jonas C. Greenfield*, eds. Ziony Zevit et al. (Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 208.

translations. The different senses captured in these translations reflect the various opinions of the grammatical form and function of *נהיה*...¹⁵⁾

The different translations of *רז נהיה* are based on different understandings of the grammatical sense and function of *נהיה*, which is considered a *nifal* participle in Hebrew. In the Hebrew Bible, the *nifal* verbal form of the verb *היה* (translated as ‘to be’ or ‘to become’) conveys the idea of ‘to be done’, ‘to occur’, and ‘to come to pass’.¹⁶⁾ For instance, while the *nifal* form of *היה* indicates completed past event like the utterance of a speech that has already been performed (1Kings 12.24) or an event which has already happened (Joel 2.2), the *nifal* form of the verb in the Scrolls is used for indicating both past events (1QM 17.5; CD 2.10) and future events (1QS 11.4; 1Q27 1.3-4).¹⁷⁾ Due to this flexible usage, the translation of *נהיה* remains disputed. It is worthwhile, however, to note several significant translations of *רז נהיה* to unfold the proper meaning of the phrase.

Foremost, J. T. Milik and I. Rabinowitz emphasize the future aspect of *רז נהיה*, rendering it as “a mystery to be”¹⁸⁾ and “the mystery of future”.¹⁹⁾ In particular, Rabinowitz asserts that in the context of the Book of Mysteries (especially, 1Q27) the

15) Samuel I. Thomas, *The “Mysteries” of Qumran: Mystery, Secrecy, and Esotericism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 150-151. Italics original.

16) Francis Brown, *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1979), 227.

17) K. H. Bernhardt, “היה,” in *TDOT*, vol. 3, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgern (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), 376.

18) I. Rabinowitz, “The Authorship, Audience and Date of the De Vaux Fragment of an Unknown Work” in *JBL* 71 (1952), 21.

19) J. T. Milik, *Qumran Cave 1*, DJD, 1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 102-104.

phrase conveys a futuristic sense similar to Milik’s translation, “the mystery of future.”

However, in the context of the demand to ask the “understanding son” to reflect daily on רז נהיה (4Q417 2 i. 18, “And you, understanding son, consider *Blank* רז נהיה, and know [the ...] of every living being, and its way of walking that is appointed for [its] deeds...”),²⁰⁾ the phrase does not seem to be understood in the future sense. Here, the *nifal* participle may convey the present tense just as easily as the future. As mentioned above, 4QInstruction sometimes refers to the past (4Q418 123 ii. 4, “God uncovered to the ear of those who understand רז נהיה”). Moreover, the *nifal* participle of היה in the Hebrew Bible frequently indicates past events. Milik and Rabinowitz’s translations therefore cannot fully explain the temporality of the רז נהיה in 4QInstruction.²¹⁾

In contrast to the emphasis on the future aspect of the נהיה, there are attempts to read the רז נהיה in the past. R. de Vaux read the phrase as “the mystery of past” (“le mystère passé”).²²⁾ De Vaux based his argument on the fact that in the Hebrew Bible, the verb in the *nifal* form usually takes the meaning of ‘to happen’ in the past tense (Deut. 4:32; 27:9; Prov. 13:19; Judg. 19:30; Jer. 5:30; 48:19). That said, the verb in the *nifal* form is also used in the Hebrew Bible to make a point that is valid for the totality of the temporal order (Exod.11:6; Joel 2:1-2; and Dan. 12:1).²³⁾ In 4QInstruction, however, the phrase

20) Martinez, and Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 859.

21) Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 38.

22) Rabinowitz, “The Authorship, Audience and Date of the De Vaux Fragment of an Unknown Work,” 22.

23) Brown, *The new Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic*, 227-228; John J. Collins, “The Mystery of God: Creation and Eschatology in 4QInstruction and the Wisdom of Solomon,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, ed. Florentino Garcia Martinez, (Leuven: Leuven University

clearly conveys the future sense (4QInstruction 417 2 i. 10-11, “For what is more significant than poor man? And do not rejoice in thy mourning (when thou shouldst mourn), Lest thou have trouble in thy life. [Gaze upon רז נהיה, and comprehend the birth-times of salvation, And know who is to inherit glory and toil”)²⁴⁾ The Book of Mysteries (1Q 27 1 i. 3-4) presents evidence for the future tense of רז נהיה in terms the eschatological mode (“And [t]he[y] do not know [רז נהיה], nor understand ancient matters. And they do not know what is going to happen] to them; and they will not save their souls from רז נהיה. And this will be for you the sign that this is happening. When those born of sin are locked up, ...”).²⁵⁾ In this respect, the translation of רז נהיה in the past is disputed by counter-evidence for the future aspect of this verb.

In order to uncover the temporal aspect of נהיה, some scholars use the abstract translation, “the mystery of existence.”²⁶⁾ However, this abstract translation considers the *nifal* form as a noun and ignores the *nifal* participle as an adjectival modifier. As such, this translation could be an interpretation of the content that רז נהיה conveys but not an appropriate translation of the phrase itself.²⁷⁾

Unlike the precedent scholarship, Matthew Goff rightly understands the multifaceted temporality of נהיה in terms of the word’s development in the context of Second Temple Judaism;

Press, 2003), 289.

24) Torleif Elgvin, et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XX: Qumran Cave 4, XV, Sapiential Texts, Part I*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 176. Hebrew is added instead of Elgvin’s translation.

25) Schiffman, “4QMysteries” 210-211.

26) Florentino Garcia Martinez, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol.2. (New York: Brill, 1997), 845-877.

27) Collins, “The Mystery of God,” 289; Schiffman, “4QMysteries” 11ff.

The temporal meaning of the word (נהייה) makes translating this phrase inherently problematic. I doubt whether any translation can fully convey its temporal sense. Any translation of נהייה must specify a single tense – past, present, or future. The word, itself, however, is trying to convey the fact that רז נהייה extends throughout all of history. I opt for the translation “the mystery that is to be” (רו נהייה) that is used by Collins and very similar to the one chosen by Harrington.²⁸⁾

In terms of the temporal sensitivity of the רז נהייה, Schiffman also translates the phrase as “the mystery that was coming into being.”²⁹⁾ In the context of 4QInstruction, the phrase is not limited to a certain temporal sense, but extends to the entire range of time and history (4Q 417 1 i. 3-4). Even though Thomas follows Goff’s translation in his book, he criticizes this kind of translation because it is not a translation of the term, but rather an interpretation of the phrase based on a thematic analysis of its occurrences in 4QInstruction. So he concludes that it does not show “the perception of an existential reality that transcends time – or in other words to the fullness of spatio-temporal reality.”³⁰⁾ Thomas’ comments on the translation succinctly point out the binary aspect of רז נהייה to indicate both temporality and spatiality. It is also true, however, that there is a limit to language in expressing both aspects.³¹⁾ In spite of Thomas’ keen evaluation, Goff’s translation is a proper alternative because it inclusively captures the multifaceted aspects of the temporality of רז נהייה. His translation of רז נהייה as “the mystery that is to be” captures the diverse dimensions of temporality, which are embedded in colorful usages of רז נהייה

28) Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 34; “Garden of Knowledge,” *Pedagogy in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, eds. Karina Martin Hogan, Matthew Goff, and Emma Wasserman (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 179-180.

29) Schiffman, “4QMysteries” 210-211.

30) Thomas, *The “Mysteries” of Qumran*, 152-153.

31) Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 30-42.

encompassing all three tenses (past, present, and future) in 4QInstruction.

Even though Goff's translation displays an attempt to capture the entire temporal sense of the *רו נהיה*, it has to be noted that the phrase in Hebrew employs a sensible awareness of transcendent reality beyond time and space. Thus, while the meaning of *רו נהיה* has to be understood in the context in which the phrase is used, it also has to be noted that the complexity of the phrase is not limited to temporality, but extends to the value of its underlying content, discussed in the following section.

3. Understanding the Content and Role of *רו נהיה* in 4QInstruction

The variety and complexity of *רו נהיה* can be resolved by appreciating the concepts which the phrase conveys. The comprehension of the *רו נהיה* is not only dependent on how the phrase is translated in terms of the temporal aspect, but also on how the content of the *רו נהיה* is understood in terms of the thematic influence of wisdom and apocalyptic tradition. Because 4QInstruction is a composite document, however, the text is fragmentary so it is not surprising that it does not make consistent conclusions and that it is difficult to find one coherent theme for *רו נהיה* which appears over twenty times.³²⁾

In 4QInstruction the addressee is typically asked to gaze on the *רו נהיה* (4Q418 77. 2) and seek it (4Q418 77. 4), or not to be distracted from it. "God of knowledge is the foundation of truth, [and through *רו נהיה* he expounded its basis" (4Q417

32) For examples, see 4Q415 6 4; 4Q416 2 i 5; 4416 2 iii 9, 14, 18, 21; 4Q417 I i 3, 6, 8, 18, 21; 4Q417 1 ii 3; 4Q418 77 2, 4, etc; Abegg and Bowley, and Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance*, 680-681.

2. 8). Moreover, רז נהיה as profound wisdom connects with the method to acquire truth and enables one to distinguish good from evil (4Q416 2 iii. 14-15, “Investigate רז נהיה, and consider all paths of truth, and observe closely all the roots of injustice. Then you will know what is bitter for a human being and what is sweet for a man”). The רז נהיה also involves “the birth-times of salvation and who will inherit glory and toil” (4Q417 1 i. 11). By understanding רז נהיה, one can know the nature of man (“תולדות”), the judgment of man, and the weight of time (4Q418 77. 1). As Collins points out, this contextually varied usages of the רז נהיה include knowledge of the eschatological reward and punishment and also conveys the idea of the human and cosmic condition.³³⁾

In relation to the sapiential character of רז נהיה, 4QInstruction contains parallels to the wisdom tradition such as its pedagogical aspects³⁴⁾ and the belief that wisdom is uncovered through the observation of the universe (Proverb 3:19-20; 8:22-21);³⁵⁾

[*And by day and by night meditate upon רז נהיה*], and study (*it*) continually. And then thou shalt know truth and iniquity, wisdom [and foolish]ness *thou shalt [recognize], every ac[t]* in all their ways, Together with *their* punishment(w) *in* all ages everlasting, And the punishment of eternity. Then thou shalt discern between *the* [goo]d and [evil according to their] deeds. For the God of knowledge is the foundation of truth And

33) Collins, “The Mystery of God,” 290.

34) Matthew J. Goff, *Discerning Wisdom: The Sapiential Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 27-28.

35) “The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.” (Proverb 3:19-20); “The LORD created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth.” (Proverb 8:22-21). Throughout this paper I will consult with NRSV unless otherwise mentioned.

by/on נהיה רז. He has *laid out* its (=truth's) *foundation*, And *its* deeds [He had *prepared with all wis*]dom And *with a* [c]unning *has* He *fashioned it*, And the *domain* of *its deeds* (*creatures*) (4Q417 1i. 6-9).³⁶⁾

According to the passage, the world is composed according to a rational structure because God created it with all His wisdom and cunning (4Q417 1 i. 9). Without His wisdom and will, the world and its creatures would not exist.³⁷⁾ 4QInstruction also describes God's creation as mysterious, for God created the world by means of "mystery" (4Q417 1 i. 8-9). Here, "mystery" does not mean the manifestation of God's revelation, but rather indicates the content of what is already revealed in God's creation. In this respect, the נהיה רז refers to the knowledge about God's activity of creation.³⁸⁾ 4QInstruction expresses God's activity of creation as a mystery and describes the overwhelming power of divine action that lies beyond human understanding.

4QInstruction as a sapiential text is interested in discussing the addressee's truthful behaviors in daily life;

Study the mystery that is to be, And understand all the ways of Truth, And all the roots of iniquity thou shalt contemplate. Then thou shalt know what is bitter for a man, And what is sweet for a *person*. Honor thy father in thy poverty, And thy mother in thy *low estate*. For as God (*scarcely* 'the Father') is to a man, so is his own father; And as *the Lord* is to a person, so is his mother; For they are 'the *womb* that was preg-

36) Original italics. See, J. Strugnell et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XXXIV: Qumran Cave 4, XXIV: 4QInstructions: 4Q415ff*, 154.

37) This idea is parallel with 4Q418 55. 5-6, "is He not God of knowledge? [Has He not founded His elect ones] on the truth, So that He might establish all [their/our ways on a foundation of under] standing? He has distributed to those who are to inherit truth." See, J. Strugnell et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XXXIV: Qumran Cave 4, XXIV: 4QInstructions: 4Q415ff*, 267.

38) Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 20.

nant with thee’; And just as He has set them in authority over thee And *fashioned (thee)* according to the Spirit, So serve thou them, And as *they* have uncovered thy ear to רז נהיה, Honour thou them for the sake of thine own honor. And *with [reverence]* venerate their *person*, For the sake of thy life and of the length of thy days. *vacat*. And if thou art poor as *we[re··· just as···]* (4Q416 2 iii. 14-19).³⁹⁾

In 4Q416 2 iii 14-19, the author assumes that he is writing for certain addressees by using the second person plural pronoun, ‘you’. The רז נהיה is connected to the relationship between the addressee and his parents. Like the wisdom texts such as Ben Sira (1:26, “If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord will lavish her upon you”), 4QInstruction seeks to acquire wisdom through Torah piety.⁴⁰⁾ 4Q416 2 iii. 15-16 asks the addressee to “honor your father and your mother” (4Q416 2 3. 16), which is cited in Exod 20:12 and Deut 5:16, and reflects that Torah is a part of the רז נהיה. The commandment to honor one’s parents is often found in the wisdom literature (Proverbs 23:22, “Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.” 23: 25, 30:17). The blessing of longevity for those who honor their parents is also found in Ben Sira 3:6 (“Those who respect their father will have long life, and those who honor their mother obey the Lord”), and demonstrates that God’s dominion broadly extends to one’s daily life. What is interesting in 4Q416 2 iii 14-19 is that the parents are assigned the divinely appointed task of revealing רז נהיה. In the context of the teaching practiced in the school-like setting, רז נהיה is secret knowledge accessible only to those who remain obedient to the ordinances of

39) Hebrew added, original italics. See, Strugnell et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XXXIV: Qumran Cave 4, XXIV: 4QInstructions: 4Q415ff*, 113.

40) Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 46; Large, “Wisdom Literature and Thought in the Scrolls,” 457.

4QInstruction.⁴¹⁾

In the Scrolls, the mystery is found in God and God reveals his wisdom to the upright. Moreover, this wisdom and knowledge is eschatological because each encompasses “the end to the existence of injustice.” The occurrences of mystery in selected passages from the Dead Sea Scrolls demonstrate that mystery generally consists of something hidden, usually knowledge, and that it is accessible to a special individual or group(s), but often through different means depending on the text and the context. In the context of the usages of the mystery, to share a particular notion of *רז נהיה* strengthens the affinity with each member and estranges outsiders and their inappropriate understanding of God’s will. In addition to the character of the wisdom tradition in 4QInstruction, the usage of *רז נהיה* conveys the apocalyptic idea as it is conveyed in 4QInstruction in terms of the revelation of God’s concealed plan of salvation (4Q416 2. 5-6; “Consider *רז נהיה* and grasp the birth-time of salvation, and know who will inherit glory and toil”).⁴²⁾ Nevertheless, the fact that 4QInstruction presents an apocalyptic idea does not mean that it is part of the body of apocalyptic literature, because 4QInstruction does not provide any dream or vision narrative like that found in Daniel (especially, chapter 7) or Enoch. And the understanding of *רז נהיה* in 4QInstruction is not revealed through a mediator like an angelic figure.⁴³⁾ Instead, 4QInstruction does align divine wisdom, knowledge and mystery under an apocalyptic overtone and shows that mystery and divine knowledge are concretely connected.

Concerning the attention placed on the apocalyptic character of 4QInstruction, Thomas discredits the attempt to demonstrate

41) Thomas, *The “Mysteries” of Qumran*, 222.

42) Martinez and Tigheelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. vol. 2, 849.

43) Elgvin, “Wisdom, Revelation, and Eschatology in an Early Essene Writing,” 450-451.

a deliberate, thematic linkage between apocalypticism and the wisdom tradition in 4QInstruction;

... some continue to advance the argument that any co-existence of wisdom and apocalypticism in a single composition must be due to successive historical and literary stages. As I argue, however, it is just this kind of juxtaposition that characterized the flexibility with which “mystery” language is employed in Qumran texts. In other word, notions of “mystery” find purchase in a variety of texts and literary types associated with different kinds of religious authority and expression which are often brought together in Qumran texts.⁴⁴⁾

Thomas asserts that the combination of wisdom-oriented and apocalyptic ideas demonstrates a flexible juxtaposition without purposeful arrangement. The majority of research, however, demonstrates that the appearances of the apocalyptic and wisdom traditions in 4QInstruction have a purpose.⁴⁵⁾ The combination of the apocalyptic ideas with the wisdom tradition shows the process of development and change in the wisdom tradition rather than an expression of literary flexibility. In particular, *רז נהיה* brings together the apocalyptic and wisdom themes and touches historical circumstances in 4QInstruction such as the establishment of the Hasmonean dynasty and the influence of Hellenistic culture.⁴⁶⁾ Moreover, the phrase is

44) Thomas, *The “Mysteries” of Qumran*, 154.

45) Shane Berg, “Religious Epistemology and the History of the Dead Sea Scrolls Community,” in *The “other” in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, eds. Daniel C. Harlow et. al. (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 347-348; Daniel J. Harrington, “Wisdom and Apocalyptic in 4QInstruction and 4 Ezra,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, ed. Martinez, Florentino Garcia (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 343-355; Elgin, “Wisdom, Revelation, and Eschatology in an Early Essene Writing,” 463; Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 68; Collins, “The Mysteries of God,” 296-297.

presented as an interwoven reference between Torah-oriented wisdom and apocalyptic eschatology while encouraging the addressee to make an effort to acquire knowledge of history and the world. While special knowledge of God and the world is guarded by *רז נהיה*, it is also explained and confirmed in the text.

4. *רז נהיה* as the Embryonic Trace of the Community

The investigation so far has focused on the grammatical and literary analyses of the phrase, *רז נהיה* in terms of the temporal and conceptual sense of mystery, which conveys the idea of esoteric knowledge. This special knowledge in 4QInstruction is not described as wisdom for an individual alone (4Q418 69 ii. 9, “And you, chosen ones of the truth...” and 4Q418 69 ii. 12-13, “And the s[ons of] heaven whose inheritance is eternal life..”).⁴⁷⁾ Additionally, 4QInstruction demonstrates an interest in the addressee’s social existence by providing practical admonitions (for instance, 4Q416 2 iii. 15, “honour your father in you poverty, and you mother in your step”).⁴⁸⁾ For example, the composition stresses that the addressee pay off debts (4Q4172 i. 21-22), endure harsh treatment from superiors (4Q416 2 ii. 12-15), and suggests that he rely on God when he does not have enough money for his daily needs (4Q417 2 i. 19). 4QInstruction does not describe the organization or structure

46) Lange, “Wisdom Literature and Thought in the Scrolls,” 456-458.

47) Martinez and Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol. 2, 871. Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 47.

48) *Ibid.*, 853; Eibert Tigchelaar, “Wisdom and Counter-Wisdom in 4QInstruction, Mysteries, and 1Enoch,” in *The Early Enoch Literature*, eds. Gabriele Bocaccini and John J. Collins (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 193; Joshua Ezra Burns, “Practical Wisdom in 4QInstruction” in *Dead Sea Discoveries*, (March 2004), 12-42.

of the sectarian community (1QS and CD do) nor is there any clue as to who the text belongs or whether it is related with the sect which is assumed to have settled in Qumran at the Dead Sea because no passage in 4QInstruction mentions the existence of a specific community.⁴⁹⁾ The practical admonition and style of speech in 4QInstruction, however, presupposes the daily life in a regular society and implies that the addressee is implicitly related with the community that preserved the texts.⁵⁰⁾ In this respect, **רז נהיה** retains its socio-linguistic function in 4QInstruction even though the identity of the group behind 4QInstruction has yet to be determined.⁵¹⁾

רז נהיה demonstrates the identity of a certain group. For instance, 4Q4172 i. 14-24 implies that there is some degree of distinction between the addressee and those not addressed;

And you, understanding one, inherit your reward in the remembrance of the [·f] or it comes. Engraved it /the/ {your} portion, and ordained is all the punishment, for engraved is that which is ordained by God against all the ··· [· of] the sons of Seth, and a book of remembrance is written in his presence for those who keep his word. And this is the

49) Elgvin, “Wisdom, Revelation, and Eschatology,” 443.

50) The relation of 4QInstruction with the sectarian community remains open to debate. Vermes and Elgvin support the direct connection of 4QInstruction with the sect; Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 425; Elgvin, “Wisdom, Revelation, and Eschatology in an Early Essene Writing,” 462-463. But, a majority of scholars are in doubt whether 4QInstruction shows sectarian traits; Lange, “Wisdom Literature and Thought in the Scrolls,” 460-461; Strugnell et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XXXIV: Qumran Cave 4, XXIV: 4QInstructions: 4Q415ff*, 36; Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 228; Thomas, *The “Mysteries” of Qumran*, 159; Collins, “The Mysteries of God,” 304-305.

51) Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, 219-228; Thomas, *The “Mysteries” of Qumran*, 242; 이윤경 “쿰란 시편사본과 페세르 시편을 통해 본 쿰란공동체의 신학,” 161-163.

vision of meditation and a book of remembrance. And he will give it as an inheritance to Enosh together with a spiritual /people/, f[o]r according to the pattern of the holy ones is his fashioning, but he did not give meditation (as) a witness to the spirit of flesh, but he did not give meditation (as) a witness to the spirit of flesh, for it does not know the difference between [goo]d and evil according to the judgment of its [sp]irit. *Blank* And you, understanding son, consider *Blank* רז נהיה, and know [the ...] of every living being, and its way of walking that is appointed for [its] deeds [...] and ... [...] ... Between much and little, and in your counsel [...] [...] your ... in רז נהיה [...] [...] of each vision know, and in all [...] And be continuously st[ea]dfast. Do not get touched by injustice (4Q417 2 i 14-24).⁵²⁾

4Q417 2 i 14-24 refers to the heavenly book and distinguishes ‘spiritual people’ with access to the book from ‘the spirit of flesh’ who do not have access. There is a division between those who understand the content of רז נהיה and those that do not.⁵³⁾ Moreover, רז נהיה in 4Q417 2 i 14-24 does not indicate fragmentary information, but rather the whole knowledge the addressee must seek which is linked to the magnificence of God and the understanding of history. In this respect, רז נהיה, which contains knowledge of the divine character and history, is not limited to a collection of instructions for the individual, but extends to those who were separated from ‘every spirit of flesh’ and ‘abstain from all abominations of the soul’ (4Q418 81 2 and 4Q418 212 4, “every spirit of flesh and the sons of heaven”).⁵⁴⁾ The more restricted and distinguishable a group is, the more powerful רז נהיה in terms of its distinguishing between

52) Martinez and Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol. 2, 859.

53) Strugnell et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XXXIV: Qumran Cave 4, XXIV: 4QInstructions: 4Q415ff*, 9.

54) Martinez and Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol. 2, 418, 863.

insiders and outsiders.⁵⁵⁾ רז נהיה implicitly functions to distinguish those who can access and understand it from those who cannot (4Q418 123 ii. 4; “its period which God uncovered to the ear of those who understand רז נהיה”).⁵⁶⁾

Moreover, the רז נהיה is closely related to the possession of esoteric knowledge (4Q418 77. 1-4).⁵⁷⁾ In 4Q418 77 1-4, רז נהיה is a part of divine knowledge which enables the addressee to understand one’s eschatological reward and judgment. If there is no knowledge that must be kept secret, the רז נהיה cannot exist. Moreover, in 4QInstruction, acquiring understanding of the רז נהיה is necessary in order to become the recipient of divine revelatory knowledge. This kind of knowledge provided to a limited group of people is privileged information. The knowledge retained and transmitted by the few but withheld from many fuels the need for רז נהיה to incorporate esoteric traits. Thus, sapiential knowledge in 4QInstruction is neither secret nor esoteric because it is accessible to all mankind. Instead, the transmission and understanding of revealed knowledge retains its secrecy and esotericism.⁵⁸⁾ From the perspective of the exotic admonition that promotes open teaching, the concealment of the knowledge could be revealed as the result of divine will

55) Among later interpreters of “mystery” languages, Paul often utilized the language to connote esoteric divine knowledge to distinguish the community he established from outsiders (1Cor 15:51). See, Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 27-28.

56) Martinez and Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol.2, 875.

57) “רז נהיה, and grasp the nature of [m]an, and see the correct[ness of ...] [... and the visitation of] his [w]ork. And then you shall understand the judgment of man, and the weight [...] [...] the flow of his lips, according to] his spirit. And grasp רז נהיה accor[ding to the w]eight of times and the measure of [...]” Ibid, 871.

58) Samuel Thomas, “Esoteric Knowledge in Qumran Aramaic Texts” in *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings of the Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran at Aix-en-Provence, 30 June-2 July 2008*, eds. Katell Berthelot and Daniel Stokl Ben Ezra (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 406.

to communicate with certain people (4Q418 123 ii. 4).

Finally, the addressees' distinction is upheld by the norms and ordinances that they are demanded to follow. 4QInstruction reminds the addressees of their status as a result of receiving God's wisdom through comprehension of רז נהיה (4Q418 43, 44, 45 10-11, "you will know eternal glory with his wonderful mysteries ... And you, understanding one, inherit your reward") and asks them to glorify God (4Q418 81 4, "honour him by this; by consecrating yourself to him") and expect concrete hope of salvation (4Q417 1 i 10-11, "Consider רז נהיה and grasp the birth-times of salvation, and know who will inherit glory and t[oi]l").⁵⁹⁾

5. Concluding Remarks

The wisdom text 4QInstruction shows a link in the development of the wisdom tradition that is influenced by apocalyptic ideas associated with the text's contemporary social circumstances.⁶⁰⁾ Given the pervasiveness of esoteric and secret knowledge in ancient societies including that in which the Qumran community was situated,⁶¹⁾ the central role of secret knowledge for the group in 4QInstruction is not surprising. The emphasis on רז נהיה in 4QInstruction presents an extension and development of the emphasis on the concealment that is

59) Martinez and Tigchelaar eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol. 2, 869, 871, and 855.

60) Elgvin, "Wisdom, Revelation, and Eschatology in an Early Essene Writing," 462-463.

61) Michael Barkun, *A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 4-14; David Aaronovitch, *Voodoo Histories: the Role of the Conspiracy Theory in Shaping Modern History* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2010).

necessary for disclosure in the inter-subjective fields. In 4QInstruction, the רז נהיה is unlocked by the revelation of the future and the consideration of the past, which provides admonitions for one’s present and future. This revelatory understanding, however, is only granted by God and is accessible only to the elect who are “continuously steadfast” (4Q417 2. i. 23) and who separate themselves from “every spirit of flesh”(4Q418 81. 1-2).⁶²⁾ Even though 4QInstruction does not fall under the category of Apocalyptic literature, it shows the thematically delicate combination of wisdom with apocalyptic ideas. This combination does not only indicate the appearance of a new literary genre of the Second Temple period, but also serves as textual evidence of the interpretative creativity at that time.

<주요어>

비밀, 라즈 니흐예(רז נהיה), 복합적 시간성, 지혜, 쿰란

<Key Words>

Mystery, רז נהיה (Raz Nihyeh), complicated temporality, wisdom, Qumran

* 접수일 2020년 2월 4일, 수정일 2020년 3월 6일, 게재 확정일 2020년 4월 1일

62) Martinez and Tigchelaar eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, vol. 2. 859, 871.

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<초록>

4QInstruction의 라즈 니호예(יהיה רז)를 통해서 바라본 “비밀”(רז)의 의미와 기능 재고

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“비밀”(mystery) (단 2:18 and 4:6, cf. 계 1:20)이라고 번역된 “라즈”(רז)라는 단어는 주로 묵시적인 배경에서 마지막때에 하나님께서 보여주실 신비한 하나님의 뜻 또는 지식으로 해석되며, 그 비밀스러움으로 인해 많은 학자들에게 흥미로운 주제로 여겨져 왔다. 본 논문은 비밀이라는 단어가 그동안 묵시적인 관점에서 이해되어 온 의미와 함께 추가적으로 담고 있는 의미와 기능들을 살펴보고자 한다.

이를 위해 본 연구는 비밀에 관한 구약의 용례를 소개하고 라즈 니호예(יהיה רז)에 관한 학자들의 견해들을 평가하면서 본 용어가 지니는 복잡함과 다양한 논점들을 살펴본다. 또한 4QInstruction에서 라즈 니호예(יהיה רז)를 사용하는 본문들을 분석하고, 비밀이라는 단어가 유대 문헌 내에서 묵시적인 배경 이외에도 다양한 해석과 기능을 보여주고 있음을 소개한다.

이를 통해 본 연구는 4QInstruction의 라즈 니호예(יהיה רז)가 미래적으로 드러나는 계시 일뿐 아니라, 이미 드러난 현재의 삶에도 주어지는, 묵시적 전통과 결합, 발전된 지혜로서의 의미를 가지고 있음을 논증한다. 또한 라즈 니호예(יהיה רז)의 이러한 복합적 시간성은 4QInstruction이 묵시문학의 범주에 정확하게 포함되지는 않음에도, 묵시와 지혜의 배경을 모두 함축하고 있다는 점에서, 제 2성전 시기의 새로운 문학장르의 등장을 보여주며, 더 나아가 이 시기의 창조적인 해석의 문헌적 증거이기도 함을 이야기한다.

결과적으로 “비밀”이라는 단어는 묵시적 의미와 함께 개인의 일상의 삶에 영향을 주는 계시된 어떤 지식을 가리키며, 더 나아가 이 지식이 “변치 않고 굳건한” 이들(4Q417 2. i. 23)과 자신들을 “악의 영”에서 멀리하는 이들에게(4Q418 81. 1-2)만 제공되는 것이라는 점에서, 그 지식을 지닌 자를 내부자로, 그렇지 못한 자를 외부인으로 구별하게 만드는, 정체성의 표시의 기능도 하고 있음을 논증한다.

<Abstract>

Re-Considering the Meaning and Function of the
“Mystery” through the רז נהיה (Raz Nihyeh) in
4QInstruction

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The puzzling and intriguing phrase רז נהיה (raz nihyeh) which appears in the composite text has been passionately researched by scholars in terms of the understanding of mystery within the apocalyptic literature (e.g., Dan 2:18 and 4:6, cf. Rev. 1:20). This paper seeks to propose a plausible interpretation of the רז נהיה by analyzing the literary structure of and biblical allusions in 4QInstruction while engaging the various interpretations and arguments about the meaning and function of the רז נהיה. I argue that the רז נהיה refers to the source of revelatory wisdom that affects one’s ethical conduct in daily life, as well as knowledge of divine nature, but also serves the identity marker between insiders and outsiders.

I demonstrate the issues behind the phrase itself and evaluate the major arguments surrounding the meaning of רז נהיה. In order to engage the contemporary discussion of the phrase, I also present literary analysis on the selected passages from 4QInstruction that mention the רז נהיה in an attempt to understand the meaning of the phrase as revealed to the text’s addressees. The wisdom text 4QInstruction shows a link in the development of the wisdom tradition that is influenced by apocalyptic ideas associated with the text’s contemporary social circumstances. Given the pervasiveness of esoteric and secret

knowledge in ancient societies including that in which the Qumran community was situated, the central role of secret knowledge for the group in 4QInstruction is not surprising. The emphasis on רז נהיה in 4QInstruction presents an extension and development of the emphasis on the concealment that is necessary for disclosure in the inter-subjective fields. In 4QInstruction, the רז נהיה is unlocked by the revelation of the future and the consideration of the past, which provides admonitions for one's present and future. Finally I suggest that the revealed wisdom framed in an apocalyptic and sapiential context underlies the order of the universe which is available to some chosen people or group(s). Even though 4QInstruction does not fall under the category of Apocalyptic literature, it shows the thematically delicate combination of wisdom with apocalyptic ideas. This combination does not only indicate the appearance of a new literary genre of the Second Temple period, but also serves as textual evidence of the interpretative creativity at that time.