

ABSTRACT

THE ELEVENTH SONG OF THE SABBATH SACRIFICE:
LITERARY FORM AND EXEGETICAL CONTENT

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The study focuses on an enigmatic passage from the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, a liturgical composition discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Although previous commentators found the passage almost unintelligible, detailed investigation of its text, language and literary structure makes it possible to shed some light on it. This passage includes a well-structured poetic unit, whose internal logic is exegetical in nature: the author harmonizes the details of various scriptural passages that describe – from his point of view – the same architectural element, namely, the dais of the divine throne, located at the inner sanctum of the heavenly temple, emphasizing repeatedly that its figurative ornaments are living entities. In reworking the various proof-texts and integrating them with one another, the poem relies on exegetical traditions attested in the ancient versions (including primarily the Septuagint and the Targums), and draws upon certain mythological and cultic traditions rooted in ancient Near Eastern literature and iconography, especially those of the Levant. This analysis allows us to extract the passage from its isolation and set it against a broader cultural background that explains some of its seemingly exceptional features.