



What you have here is as follows: (1) **blue** notes about modern handwriting by the scholar who handle the photo of the text – he puts in verse numbers corresponding to the Masoretic text (=MT) versification and finishes lines based on MT. (2) a **red** line underlining the portion in question, and the Hebrew text from the MT to that corresponding portion (from Isa 7:11). (3) notes / arrows in **brown** and **purple** about the way letters are formed – see below.

Barker's position is fraught with problems. First a note for anyone who knows Hebrew to whom you might show this. Qumran hand-writing style at times (not rare) does not make the final "m" of a word look like the final mem of Hebrew look like you'd see it today in print or in other manuscripts. And so, **מעמ** in the above would look like **מעם** in more modern style. I'm going to stick with **מעמ** in what follows, since that is visually more similar to what is in the manuscript.

Now some critique:

(1) Barker wants people to think that the Qumran scroll have TWO words in the text - the preposition **מן** followed by the noun **אמ** ("mother"). The word is not **מאמ** but **מעמ**. The difference in the middle consonant is crucial. What we have here is a sloppily written

ע (= the letter ayin), not א (= the letter aleph). What happened was that the ink bled a bit, enough to “join” the letter with the prior “m” – see the purple arrow for an example of a little lower-left extension on the letter “m” followed by ayin. They are almost touching, and if the ink bleeds over, you’d get what you have in verse 11. The reason it is certain that verse 11 has ע (and so the word is מעמ) and not א, is that the verse 11 word clearly does not have a right “leg” that goes all the way down to the bottom of the line like the other alephs clearly do in the manuscript. I’m actually friends of two guys who have looked at this under magnification as well. One is Stephen Pfann, who is well known to people who kept up with the Jesus Tomb nonsense. Steve is the guy who went back to the “Mary Magdalene” ossuary and looked at it under magnification and wrote an article on the epigraphy that circulated on the web quite a bit. Mary Magdalene on the ossuary is a myth. Steve lives in Jerusalem, so he has immediate access to that sort of thing. Steve is also the guy who transcribed our (Logos) current set of Qumran biblical scrolls. The other guy is Peter Flint, who lives about an hour from where I do. I’ve had him down to the office a couple times, and he spoke in our lecture series. Peter is currently the guy in charge of the final edition of the Great Isaiah scroll for DJD, the official publication series for the Dead Sea Scrolls. Neither of these guys saw an א here, and if this were for a dissertation or something, I could get a magnified photo for you.

(2) Since what is in the text is NOT מאמ but מעמ, Barker has another problem.

What we see in the text are three consonants together with the final nun (ן) of מן [“min”]

NOT present. While it is true that מן (“min”) can and does lose the final nun when prefixed to nouns or other words, THIS PARTICULAR COMBINATION (מעמ) IS NOT WHAT WOULD BE USED to represent “from the mother of” since (aside from mother being אמ not עמ) these three consonants are a very common *compound preposition*

(מעם = “with”; “from”). The compound preposition (מעמ / מעם) occurs roughly 40 times in the Hebrew OT, so it is very common. I have not been able to find any instance of “min” being prefixed to the noun “mother” in comparison. If the scribe had intended readers to know that he meant “from the mother of”, he would not have joined the single letter מ with THESE last two consonants (it would have created ambiguity at best, and much confusion at worst). He would have written מן עמ (actually, מן אמ) to be clear.

(3) There is also the issue that no specialists in Qumran spelling (orthography) and paleography have agreed with Barker here (see my note about Pfann and Flint above). She's alone, and so this is idiosyncratic at best. She's got nothing conclusive, and it's fair to say that even her speculation lacks credence in light of the above.

(4) The LXX also disagrees with her: παρὰ κυρίου θεοῦ σου ("from the Lord your God"), and of course no NT author has such a quotation.

(5) No Jew would have YHWH as having a mother either. The Hebrew text is filled with many references to divine plurality. Barker operates under the guidance of a somewhat conspiratorial notion that such things were edited out or obscured – but why, then, are there so many "still there"? Were they so stupid as to miss them? She might say yes, but that's pretty desperate.