

manuscripts from Qumran, such as 4Q120 and 4QpapLXX-Lev^b, the divine name appears as *iaō* (Shaw 2002; Rösel 2007; Lichtenberger 2018). In others, such as the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever (8HevXII gr), the divine name is written in a paleo-Hebrew script. The lack of consistency shows that conventions for handling texts bearing the divine name were still developing.

Following the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE, authorities once again had to wrestle with facilitating the deity's presence in the absence of the temple. The text of the law was already functioning within the society's memory as a species of presencing media, however, which allowed authorities to more clearly codify, standardize, and demarcate that function. Those texts that were understood to be written under divine inspiration "defile the hands," according to early rabbinic literature. Tosefta Yadayim 2:14, for instance, indicates that the Song of Songs defiles the hands as a result of being written under divine inspiration, while Ecclesiastes (or Qohelet) merely constitutes the wisdom of Solomon, and therefore does not defile the hands. The idea seems to be that the texts that defile the hands are endowed with some vestigial degree of divine agency. The initial reflective logic behind this notion of defiling the hands has been lost to the ages, but the intuitive aversion to touching presencing media in profane contexts (Baumgarten 2016)—by this period all contexts were profane—is not difficult to appreciate in light of this book's theoretical framework.²⁸ Martin Goodman (2007, 74–75) has even suggested ("very tentatively") that the notion of "defiling hands" may have arisen as a rationalization for treating scrolls of the law with a degree of reverence that paralleled to an embarrassingly close degree the pagan treatment of idols.²⁹ The consequences were reduced to matters of ritual impurity, however, no doubt at least in part because of the frequency of incidental contact with the scrolls, which would have been handled by some individuals on a daily basis. According to some rabbis, there were different degrees to which divine inspiration was understood to have attended different texts, depending, for instance, on whether they were inspired to be recited or inspired to be written.

As with other presencing media, there were also appropriate materials that had to be used and prescribed processes that had to be undertaken by appropriately authorized individuals. The Talmud prescribes the acceptable manner of the preparation and handling of the scrolls, as well as the types of animal skins that were appropriate for creating the parchment. By the end of the third century CE, m. Yad. 4:5 explained that biblical texts did not "defile the hands" unless they

²⁸ See, for instance, Lim 2010, who argues that the sacred contagion of the scriptures is best understood in parallel to the lethality of the unauthorized touching of the ark of the covenant.

²⁹ An example of the superlative degree of that reverence is the public execution (ordered by a Roman procurator) of a Roman soldier in the 50s CE who destroyed a copy of the law (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.229–231; *Ant.* 20.115).