The Contribution of 1QS and CD to the Lexicography of יסר*

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Introduction

As a conclusion to the section dedicated to the Dead Sea Scrolls, Angel Sáenz-Badillos wrote:

> It is obvious that the vocabulary of Qumran was more extensive than that of [Biblical Hebrew], and was open to morphological and semantic innovation. It has all the characteristics of a language in a changing, multilingual environment, wanting to stay faithful to tradition but often forced to accept change.[1]

Studying the relationship in the Septuagint between the root יסר and the Greek terms belonging to the word family of παιδεύω, I came across one possible such evolution in the Cairo Damascus Document (hereafter CD), and in the Community Rule (hereafter 1 QS). Both documents[2] have a specific use of the *hitpael* of יסר[3], which cannot easily be explained by the Masoretic Text (MT).[4] Let us now have a closer look at the occurrences:

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[1] Angel Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Trans. J. Elwolde; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 146; trans. of *Historia de la Lengua Hebrea* (Sabadell: AUSA, 1988).

[2] For more detail regarding the relationship between CD and 1QS, see Charlotte Hempel, "CD Manuscript B and the Rule of the Community – Reflections on a literary Relationship," *DSD* 16 (2009): 370–387.

[3] 1QS III, 6, IX, 10; 4Q270 7i15; CD-A IV, 8; CD-B XX, 31.

[4] This common specific use allows us to take CD into account in this lexical study, although Qimron stated that the Hebrew of the Cairo Genizah has been "distorted by the copyists of the Middle Ages and thus does not reflect the DSS

(CD-A IV,8)[5] לעשות כפרוש התורה אשר התוסרו בו הראשנים

In order to act according to the exact interpretation of the law in which the forefathers were instructed[6]

(CD-B XX,31–32) והתיסרו במשפטים הראשונים אשר נשפטו בם אנשי היחיד

And they are instructed in the first ordinances, in conformity with which the men of the Unique One were judged

(4Q270 7i15) ואלה הם[שפטים א]שר ישפטו [בם כל המתיסרים

[And these are the reg]ulations by which [shall be ruled] all those disciplined

(1QS III,6) טמא טמא יהיה כול יומי מואסו במשפטי לבלתי התיסר ביחד עצתו

Defiled, defiled shall he be all the days he spurns the decrees of God, without allowing himself to be taught by the community of the counsel

(1QS IX,10) ונשפטו במשפטים הרשונים אשר החלו אנשי היחד לתיסר בם

But instead (they) shall be ruled by the first directives which the men of the community began to be taught

All these occurrences have the *hitpael* stem and the use of the preposition ב associated with משפטים[7] in common, in order to express "to be instructed in." It is therefore surprising that García Martínez and Tigchelaar have chosen "to discipline" for 4Q270 7i15 and "to teach / to instruct" for the other occurrences. If we were to choose between

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language." Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (HSS 29; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1986), 15, §0.12.

[5] The Hebrew texts are from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition* (2 volumes; Leiden: Brill, 1997–1998).

[6] Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from the Qumran corpus are from García Martínez & Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*.

[7] Except 1QS III, 6, although this could be implicit, as משפטים is mentioned just before and in CD-A IV, 8; however, David Hamidović, *L'écrit de Damas: Le manifeste Essénien* (Collection de la Revue des Études juives; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 27 suggests that פרוש התורה is a synonym for משפטים.

the two interpretations, "To teach/to instruct" is better suited to the context. Hence, the translation given for CD-A IV, 8 by García Martínez and Tigchelaar is very close to that of Schechter in 1910[8]:

> In order to do according to the interpretation of the law in which the forefathers were instructed

Many scholars agree,[9] even if the exact interpretation of these sentences is still questioned.[10] Only Schwarz has suggested another translation, according to the basic root of יסר.[11] However, Denis explains that the meaning "to teach/to instruct" is in accordance with the root יסר in biblical Hebrew.[12] A closer look, however, reveals that this explanation is not particularly satisfying, as

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[8] Solomon Schechter, *Fragments of a Zadokite Work* (vol. 1 of *Documents of Jewish Sectaries*; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), xxxv.

[9] See also Philip R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the "Damascus Document"* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1983), 241. J.H. Charlesworth, *Damascus Document, War Scroll, and Related Documents* (ed. J.H. Charlesworth; vol.2 of *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Hebrew Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 19: "was taught" and 37 "they are to be instructed"

[10] Maxine L. Grossman, *Reading for History in the Damascus Document: A Methodological Study* (STDJ 45; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 112–4, states that the alliance with the forefather is not necessary the alliance with the patriarchs and is not always positively interpreted. Here it should be the alliance with the founders of the sect. According to Hamidović, *L'écrit de Damas*, 67, n.53, the directives mentioned in CD-B XX,31 are the laws given by the Teacher of Righteousness. *Ibid.*, 77, n.14 explains that the Law is progressively revealed; therefore, the interpretation is important. See also Stephen Hultgren (2007), *From the Damascus Covenant to the Covenant of the Community, Literary, Historical, and Theological Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 66, Leiden: Brill, pp. 528–529).

[11] Ottilie Johann Renata Schwarz, *Der erste Teil der Damaskusschrift und das alte Testament* (Lichtland: Diest, 1965), 19: "durch das sich hatten ermahnen lassen die Früheren."

[12] Albert-Marie Denis, *Les themes de la connaissance dans le document de Damas* (Studia Hellenestica 15; Leuven: Publications Universitaires de Louvain, 1967), 88–107.

1.   The root יסר is never used in the MT with the meaning of "to instruct someone in something." Furthermore, the preposition ב associated with יסר is purely instrumental, and

2.   the *hitpael* is not used in this way elsewhere.

Therefore, the specific usage in CD and 1QS is different from that of the MT, as will be stated in the following section.

Biblical Hebrew as a Background

The semantic field of יסר

The basic meaning of יסר is still being debated. On one hand, Branson[13] argued that it means "to instruct", and this meaning shifts to "to chastise", owing to the harsh pedagogy at that time. This theory is more or less accepted by Merril[14] and Euteneuer.[15]

On the other hand, Sæbø[16,] following von Rad,[17] suggested that the etymology is uncertain and that the basic meaning is "to chastise". They explained that the verb evolved to mean, "to train, to instruct", owing to the resultative nuance of the *piel* stem[18] in which this verb is frequently used.

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[13] Robert D. Branson, "יסר," *TDOT* 6:129–134.

[14] Eugene H. Merril, "יָסַר (yāsar I)," *NIDOTTE* 2:478–481

[15] Marie Euteneuer, "יָסַר jāsar," *TWQT* 2:177–181.

[16] Magnus Sæbø, "יסר, jsr, züchtigen," *THAT* 1:738–742.

[17] Gerhard von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (2 volumes; Munich: CHR Kaiser, 1957), 1:429

[18] See e.g. Ernst Jenni, *Das hebräische Pi'el. Syntaktisch-semasiologische Untersuchung einer Verbalform in Alten Testament* (Zurich: EVZ, 1968), 217–8. He expresses once again his thesis in *ibid.,* "Aktionsarten und Stammenformen im Althebräischen: das Pi'el in verbesserter Sicht," *ZAH* 13 (2000):67–90, However, some scholars interpret the *piel* stem as a complex form that includes several meanings such as an intensification or a repetition of an action. See Jan Joosten, "The Function of the Semitic D Stem: Biblical Hebrew Materials for a Comparative-Historical," *Orientalia* 67 (1998):202–230. In fact, as יסר is quasi-exclusively used in the *piel* stem, it is difficult to reach a conclusion.

I consider Sæbø to be more convincing than Branson.

Firstly, Branson relies on etymological studies. Since the Semitic root *WSR is found in other Semitic languages with the meaning "to instruct", it should mean the same in Hebrew. However, this could be misleading. In fact, this root is composed of one weak consonant, "waw", and a fricative, "Samech", subject to frequent shift.[19] Therefore, detecting a word belonging to this root is challenging, and the occurrences are infrequent.[20] Scholars are therefore compelled to interpret these sentences according to the Hebrew meaning of יסר. Hence, Branson could not, from these occurrences, argue that יסר means "to instruct" without falling into a circular argument.

Secondly, Branson is therefore impelled to assume that the Hebrew verb developed the entire range of its semantic field in the Hebrew Bible. In fact, whereas the occurrences of יסר meaning "to chastise" are clear,[21] the occurrences in which it is supposed to mean "to in-

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[19] See the contribution of Professor Meyer-Laurin in the present volume.

[20] The root *WSR is said to be attested four times in Ugaritic. One is a personal name (*KTU* 4.281.29), and one is debated (*KTU* 1.4 VII 48, see Mark S. Smith and Wayne T. Pitard, *The Ugarit Baal Cycle* [2 volumes; SVT 55, 114; Leiden: Brill, 1994–2009], 2:651). One is differently interpreted (*KTU* 1.4 V 4, "to rebuke", according to *WUS,* and "to teach", according to Gregorio Del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín, eds. *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition*, (2 volumes; HdO 1/67; Leiden: Brill, 2003. The last one (*KTU* 1.16 VI 26) asserts that the grey beard of EL has "taught" him or rather "made him wise" (*WUS*). This could be the only evidence of an early usage of *WSR meaning "to instruct, to teach". However, without any other attestations, this evidence is somewhat weak. Branson suggests comparison with the Akkadian esēru. However, I completely fail to find the meaning "to teach" in *CAD*. This Akkadian verb rather means "to oppress, to request the reimbursement of a debt", and is therefore closer to the meaning "to chastise" than it is to "to instruct". Finally, Branson presents the Arabic *šwry,* which means "advice". However, this noun is not as close to יסר.

[21] See, for example, Deut 22:18, where a young man is chastised by the elders because he has falsely attested that his wife was not virgin before he knew her. See also 1 Kgs 12:11, 14, where the aim of Jeroboam is not to educate his people but to subdue them.

struct" are debatable.[22] Hence, in all occurrences in which יסר is used with the preposition בְּ, this preposition is instrumental and means the instrument or the way in which the correction is given.[23] I will focus on the strongest evidence for the meaning "to instruct": Isa 28:26. Isaiah tells the parable of the sower: he begins with ploughing, that is to say digging and turning over his field, and then scatters the grain.

וְיִסְּרוֹ לַמִּשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהָיו יוֹרֶנּוּ

His God instructs him and teaches him the right way (*NIV*)

For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him (*KJV*)

For his God doth instruct him aright, and doth teach him (*ASV*)

For they are well instructed; their God teaches them. (*NRSV*)

The foremost English translation and the major authorities[24] have interpreted this verse in this way. Following Blenkinsopp,[25] I think that this could be challenged. The subject of the verb יָסַר is thought to be Elohim, and לַמִּשְׁפָּט is interpreted as the preposition le introducing the complement of יָסַר, while מִשְׁפָּט is the way the ploughman

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[22] For example, in Job 4:3, Job is said to have instructed many. However, the nuance here is more "to exhort" or "to strengthen" than "to educate". Some dictionaries consider that יסר possesses a second meaning here (*HALOT*, *NIDOTTE*). Prov 30:1 is sometimes interpreted as "The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him". However, the sentence is debatable, and could also mean "the words of Lemuel, King of Massa whom his mother rebuked." See also. Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 10–31* (AB 18B; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009), 883. In Deut 4:36, the occurrence of יסר is sometimes used to mean "to instruct", but this is debated. See, for example, "From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you (*NRSV*)" and "Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee (*KJV*)". With regard to Isa 28:26, see below.

[23] 1 Kgs 12:11, 14; 2 Chr 10:11, 14; Prov 29:19; Jer 10:24; Ps 6:2; 38:2.

[24] See for example Willem A. M. Beuken, *Jesaja 28–39* (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament; Freiburg: Herder, 2010), 93.

[25] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39* (AB 19; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 396.

should prepare his field. Here, the verb יִסֵּר should mean "to instruct someone in something".

However, this translation raises a difficult question, as many other translations of the same verse confirm, namely that מִשְׁפָּט does not usually mean "the correct way to do something", but is related to justice. Hence, this verse should be compared with Jer 30:11 and its doublet Jer 46:28:

וְיִסַּרְתִּיךָ לַמִּשְׁפָּט וְנַקֵּה לֹא אֲנַקֶּךָ

> I will chastise you in just measure, and I will by no means leave you unpunished (NRSV)[26]

The preposition לְ is not interpreted as introducing the accusative, and the meaning is clear and is close to that of בְּ,[27] God corrects his people with justice so as not to put them to death.

The second issue is the separation of the subject from its verb, which is infrequent in classical Hebrew. This is why Blenkinsopp suggested that the subject is, in fact, the ploughman.[28] However, according to Betz, the masculine suffix יִסֵּר could be attributed to the grain (קֶצַח or כַּמֹּן).[29] Even though this verse remains difficult, this interpretation is a better fit with the context and the grammar. Indeed, the parable explains that

> Grain is crushed for bread, but one does not thresh it forever (Isa 28:28, NRSV)

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[26] See also "I will discipline you but only with justice; I will not let you go entirely unpunished (NIV)," "I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished (KJV)," and "but I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished (ASV)."

[27] See also the contribution of Viktor Golinets in the present volume.

[28] Blenkinsopp, Isaiah 1–39, 396.

[29] Dorothea.Betz, "Gott als Erzieher im Alten Testament. Eine semantisch-traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der Begrifflichkeit jsr / musar (paideuo / paideia) mit Gott als Subjekt in den Schriften des AT" (Ph.D Diss., Universität Osnabrück, 2007), 228. Indeed, it is the grain that is beaten in Isa 28:27.

The parallel between the grains in Isa 28:26–28 and the people in Jer 30:11 is striking; thus, we could interpret the parable of Isaiah as meaning that God corrects his people in measure.[30]

Hence, the explanation by Sæbø is more convincing than is that of Branson. The basic meaning of יסר is "to correct, to discipline". More precisely, this verb expresses the relationship between someone having authority (God, father, mother …) seeking to obtain obedience from someone under his/her authority.

Therefore, the occurrence in 1QS and CD shows an evolution from biblical Hebrew that does not present one undisputed occurrence of יסר meaning "to instruct in." The semantic field of יסר in Qumran is otherwise close to that of biblical Hebrew. Hence, 4Q266 8ii5 explains that a father shall "discipline" his child,[31] whereas 4Q4273i4 is an allusion to Isa 28:26.[32] The verbal noun יסור, which means suffering in Sir 40:29 and 1QH^a IV,22[33], as well as in Rabbinic Hebrew,[34] has a specific meaning in the Damascus Document[35] and Community Rule,[36] as well as in 1Q34bis 3ii7, namely that of "directive" and "regulation." Therefore, CD and 1QS share this specific usage: could this be explained by the *hitpael* stem?

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[30] The rereading of this verse by the Hodayot, as well as by the Septuagint, is consistent with this interpretation. In 4Q427 3i4, ועם ידעים נוסרה לכה ונרננה ([And] with those who know we are admonished by you and we shall shout of joy) is close to the interpretation of the Septuagint, καὶ παιδευθήσῃ κρίματι θεοῦ σου καὶ εὐφρανθήσῃ (and you will be instructed by the judgment of your God, and you will rejoice). By reading the root רנן instead of ירה, both the Hodayot and the Septuagint state a paradox: the one who is rebuked will rejoice.

[31] See Prov 13:24; 19:18; 29:17, or even Deut 8:5; 21:18.

[32] See note 29.

[33] And probably in 4Q525 2ii+3, 4 to be compared with Sir 4:17.

[34] See Jastrow. According to this dictionary, the verb יסר means "to discipline, to correct" and even "to punish", but not "to teach".

[35] CD-A VII, 5; 4Q266 XI, 7; 4Q270 7i21.

[36] 1QS III, 1.

The use of the hitpael stem

As Waltke and O'Connor stated,[37] the *hitpael* stem is the double sta-
tus (reflexive-reciprocal) counterpart of the *piel*. Biblical Hebrew
offers no example of the *hitpael* of יסר. The rare stem *nitpael* only
occurs in Ezek 23:48:

וְנִוַּסְּרוּ כָּל־הַנָּשִׁים

so that all women may take warning (*NRSV*)

The consonants could be interpreted as a *nifal*. However, the Maso-
retes vocalised it as a *nitpael*. This stem, which is somewhat frequent
in Rabbinic Hebrew, expresses the reflexive of Piel.[38]

In my opinion, the choice of the Masoretes is due to the context. In
fact, Ezekiel recalls the chastisement of two adulterous women, Oha-
lah and Oholibah, symbolic of Israel and Judah. This chastisement
should be an example and a warning for the women of Judah. There-
fore, יסר does not link God to the women here; it is the women alone
who, seeing the chastisement of Ohalah and Oholibah, correct them-
selves and change their behaviour: this is the nuance expressed by the
nitpael in this instance. This interpretation could be confirmed by the
Septuagint of Prov 22:3:

עָרוּם רָאָה רָעָה וְנִסְתָּר

The clever see danger and hide (*NRSV*)

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[37] Bruce K. Waltke, and Michael P. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical He-
brew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 424, §26.1.1.

[38] See Joüon §59f. With regard to the language of Ezekiel having been qualified
as a transition between Biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew, see Mark F. Rooker, *Bibli-
cal Hebrew in Transition: The Language of the Book of Ezekiel* (Library Hebrew
Bible/Old Testament Studies; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990). He
does not deal with Ez 23:48. His view was criticised by Jacobus A. Naudé, "The
Language of the Book of Ezekiel: Biblical Hebrew in Transition?", OTS 13
(2000):46–71. For him, the language of Ezekiel reflects specifics characteristics
that could not be qualified chronologically.

πανοῦργος ἰδὼν πονηρὸν τιμωρούμενον κραταιῶς αὐτὸς
παιδεύεται,

When the clever sees the wicked severely punished, he himself is
being educated (*NETS*)

In the Septuagint, The close relationship of יסר with παιδεύω, as well
as the meaning of this gnomic sentence, points toward the same mean-
ing as that of Ezek 23:48, someone who observes the punishment of
others will change his behaviour. In this case, the *nitpael* of יסר may
have been falsely[39] found in the form ונסתר and translated by αὐτὸς
παιδεύεται,[40] with at least a metathesis between ת and ס. Should this
interpretation be correct, τιμωρούμενον κραταιῶς would be a gloss
added by the translator or still present in the Hebrew *Vorlage*.

In short, 1QS and CD show a meaning of *hitpael* יסר that could not
be found in Biblical Hebrew. In the Qumran corpus, however, this
stem is widely used instead of the *nifal*.[41] In biblical Hebrew, the *nifal*
of יסר expresses the passive voice of this verb with a nuance of toler-
ance, "let someone be corrected."[42] The *hitpael* of יסר is also used in
4Q275 ii, 1 and 4Q428 xxxvi, 1. However, the context is too damaged
to be certain of the precise meaning. In any event, this usage of *hitpael*
seems specific to 1QS and CD.

Conclusion

There is a specific usage of the root יסר in CD and in 1QS, which
could be qualified as follows:

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[39] Obviously, it is also possible that the *Vorlage* contained the *nitpael* יסר.

[40] Which is a form of סתר, "to hide".

[41] See Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 48–49, §310.16, or, for Late
Biblical Hebrew, Moshe Florentin, "Languages in contact: נפעל and נתפעל in the
Samaritan Tradition and Mishnaic Hebrew," *New Samaritan Studies of the Société
d'études Samaritaines. Essays in Honour of G.D. Sixdenier* (vol.3 and 4, ed. by
A.D. Crown and L. Davey; Studies in Judaica 5; Sidney: Mandelbaum, 1995),
493–498.

[42] Lev 26:23; Jer 6:8; 31:18; Ps 2:10; Prov 29:19. See Joüon §51c.

1. Nowhere in biblical Hebrew does יסר mean "to instruct in";
2. In biblical Hebrew, when יסר is associated with the preposi-
    tion ב, the preposition is instrumental;
3. The hitpael of יסר is never used as such in biblical Hebrew.
    The Masoretes and the Septuagint are witness to a nuance of
    the nitpael of יסר meaning "to change his/her behaviour after
    having seen the suffering of others". Rabbinic Hebrew uses
    the hitpael meaning "to be tried",[43] without the nuance of
    teaching.

This semantic and grammatical evolution is not easy to explain. At the
end of the evolution it has experienced, does יסר change from "to
chastise" to "to teach someone in"? This explanation maintains the
basic root of יסר. Indeed, the training in the divine directives is not
intellectual, but rather corresponds to a *habitus* that is experienced by
someone who has been trained with the whip from his/her youth.

Of course, we could also open the door to a new hypothesis, such as
an influence of the rendering in the LXX of יסר by παιδεύω. The use
of the Greek verb could have influenced the most systematic Hebrew
correspondent.[44] However, this is just a hypothesis.

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[43] Jastrow.

[44] Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 117 noted that there is no Greek
or Latin loan word in the DSS; however, see F. García Martínez, "Greek Loan-
words in the Copper Scroll," *Qumranica Minora: Thematics study on the Dead
Sea Scrolls* (2 volumes; Leiden: Brill, 2007),2:145–170 who detects some Greek
loanwords in the Copper Scroll. With regard to the Greek loanword in Daniel (see
Dan 3:5) or in Mishnaic Hebrew, see Samuel Krauss, *Griechische und Lateinische
Lehnwörter in Talmud, Midrasch und Targum* [Berlin: S. Calvary: 1899]). This is
not surprising, as Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic were widely used during the same
period. However, Qimron mentioned a possible Grecism, מגדל, "tower," used in a
military sense. It is clear that research on the influence of Hellenistic studies in the
Qumran corpus is neglected. The article by Hengel "Qumran and Hellenism," in
Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls (ed. J.J. Collins, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,
2000), 46–56 is rarely discussed, according to Andy M. Reimer, "Probing the
Possibilities and Pitfalls of Post-Colonial Approaches to the Dead Sea Scrolls," in
New Directions in Qumran Studies (ed. J.G. Campbell, W.O. Lyons, L.K. Pie-
tersen; Edinburgh: T&T Clarck), 193. If we accept such influences, could παιδεύω

In any event, the specificity of 1QS and CD confirm the conclusion of Qimron:

> DSS Hebrew has also many features not found in any other Hebrew tradition, in [Mishnaic Hebrew], or in any Aramaic dialect... These unique features show that DSS Hebrew is not merely a mixture of [Biblical Hebrew, Mishnaic Hebrew] and Aramaic, but also draws on a distinct spoken dialect.

As Qimron continues

> Thus, the way is open for new theories about the nature and origin of the Hebrew of the Second Temple period.

I am convinced that a thorough analysis of the DSS could lead to new discoveries regarding vocabulary, grammar and syntax.

ἐν, meaning "to instruct in" (Cf. LSJ) and πεπαιδευμένος meaning "the one who is educated" have influenced the *hitpael* stem יסר with ב and the participle in 4Q270 7i15, respectively?