

The Biblical DSS as Representing Variety in Judaism and Early Christianity

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I. Textual Variety in Judaism

The purpose of this paper is to examine the variety within Judaism and Christianity regarding the biblical texts used in each of these religious environments. We will focus more on the situation within Judaism than within Christianity since more texts are known for the former group.

We base ourselves especially on the situation in the Judean Desert, where a multitude of texts has been found. These texts reflect a different textual reality in Qumran and the other sites in the Judean Desert, Masada, Wadi Murabba'at, Wadi Sdeir, Naḥal Hever, Naḥal Arugot, and Naḥal Şe'elim. These other sites house texts that belong to the group that preceded the Masoretic Text, and that are usually named the proto-Masoretic Text. On the other hand, in Qumran we witness a textual plurality that includes several "popular" texts. The difference between the various groups of texts is characterized as socio-religious and not chronological, that is, different texts were used at the same time by different groups in ancient Israel.

We first turn to the proto-Masoretic and Masoretic Text.

A. The (Proto)-Masoretic Text

1. Proto-Masoretic Texts: Definition¹

There has been much progress in the research of the Masoretic Text since the first Judean Desert scrolls were found seventy years ago. The medieval components of the Masoretic Text, its vowels and accents, were not included in the ancient scrolls, and they continue to be studied as exponents of medieval texts based on earlier sources. However, the consonantal framework is ostensibly ancient, as it was preceded by virtually identical ancient texts such as those found in some of the Judean Desert scrolls that are now called proto-Masoretic.

A new term has been invented for these texts. Few scholars realize today that the term "proto-Masoretic" did not exist seventy years ago. At one point, scholars started using that term when describing Judean Desert scrolls that were so closely connected to the medieval

texts that the latter could be conceived of as the immediate continuation of the former.²

2. Proto-Masoretic Texts: Essence

Moving from terminology to content, I will try to identify the real proto-Masoretic texts. However, what is our frame of reference when comparing ancient sources with the medieval texts, since the latter differ among themselves in small details? The accurate Tiberian manuscripts often differ from the Sephardi, Ashkenazi, and Italian manuscripts while, within the Tiberian group, Codex L(eningrad) hardly differs from the Aleppo Codex. If we take Codex L as our point of reference, there are Judean Desert scrolls that differ no more from that codex than the medieval texts differ from one another. These Judean Desert scrolls differ slightly from Codex L, merely up to two percent of their words. This is the first circle of true proto-Masoretic scrolls that have their natural continuation in the medieval texts, for example, MasPs^a (end of the first century BCE), MasLev^b (30 BCE–30 CE), 5/6HēvPs (50–68 CE), and MurXII (ca. 115 CE). The second circle, still within the Masoretic family, differs in up to ten percent of its words, in minute spelling differences and in small details in content and language. I assign the name “MT-like texts” to this group (while Armin Lange labels them semi-Masoretic texts³). Examples are 4QJer^a (225–175 BCE), 1QIsa^b (50–25 BCE), and 4QJer^c (25–1 BCE).⁴

3. Opposition between Proto-Masoretic and Other Texts in Antiquity

One of the amazing facts about the Judean Desert text corpora is that they display a very clear dichotomy. The Qumran corpus is characterized by textual variety, while the other sites only reflect the proto-Masoretic text. The textual variety of Qumran includes a large number of MT-like texts in the Torah, along with a small number of texts that are close to SP and the LXX, and a large number of non-aligned texts in the other books. In my analysis, there are no Qumran texts that are long enough to be identified as proto-MT.⁵

There is only one explanation for the present situation: the community that lived at Qumran had textual preferences that differed from those of the Judean Desert communities. It is no coincidence that in the same period, between 50 BCE and 70 CE, only proto-Masoretic scrolls ended up at the Judean Desert sites, and no such scrolls were taken to Qumran. Instead, at Qumran we find evidence of a variety of textual profiles. This assumption is supported by the evidence of the tefillin (phylacteries) adding a sociological aspect to the textual evidence.

The Qumran tefillin differ from those from the Judean Desert sites (Murabba‘at, Naḥal Hēver, Naḥal Şe‘elim, etc.). For the sake of argument, the latter will be named “Judean

Desert tefillin” even though Qumran is also found in the Judean Desert.

The Qumran community believed in an open textual approach, that included popular texts and texts that reflect a free copying of the MT texts (the MT-like texts), while the Judean Desert communities strictly held on the MT.

The many tefillin found at the Judean Desert sites differ from those at Qumran with regard to several parameters:⁶

Two different profiles of tefillin are recognized, as the inclusion of Scripture passages in the tefillin usually coincides with their textual character and the manufacturing methods:

a. Rabbinic-type tefillin from the Judean Desert contain the passages required by the rabbis together with the spelling and content of MT (both proto-MT and MT-like). They lack interlinear additions as a means of correcting,⁷ do not break up words at the ends of lines, are written on neatly shaped pieces of leather, and disallow the writing on both sides of the leather and the squeezing in of letters at the ends of lines.

b. Tefillin from Qumran contain passages beyond those required by the rabbis, they use a harmonizing Bible text, which usually reflects the texts of the LXX and SP that were current in Israel as “popular” texts, and they are written in the spelling and morphology of the Qumran Scribal Practice type.⁸ The Qumran tefillin differ from the rabbinic tefillin in all the manufacturing details described in the previous paragraph.⁹

4. Background of MT

I now turn to the nature of the proto-Masoretic texts. These individual texts, and therefore also the later MT, should be considered a mixed bag textually before they were incorporated in the collection now known as MT. A slight layer of unity was imposed on them at a later stage. In the first stage, each biblical book formed a textual unit separate from other Scripture books, and was subject to constant change. All the proto-Masoretic texts went through two stages of development; during the first stage, each Scripture book was inconsistent at all levels, both internally and externally, in comparison with other Scripture books, especially in matters of spelling,¹⁰ and was subject to perpetual motion regarding its content. In the second stage, extreme care was taken to no longer change the text and from then onwards it became a very carefully transmitted text. However significant as these assumptions may be – and they are mere assumptions – they do not bring us closer to clarifying the enigmatic background of the proto-MT. I will thus try to collect a few snippets of information on the first stage of that text from internal and external sources. Internal data may give us some clues about the nature of the proto-MT

text by looking inside the text. External data help us to analyze the persons and sources that embraced the proto-MT. The proto-MT influenced these sources, and not vice versa.

a. There is no evidence regarding *the persons* who shaped the proto-Masoretic text. It is very enticing to assume that certain theological circles were involved in the rewriting of at least a minute layer of the proto-MT text before it became sacrosanct, but the evidence is still lacking.

i. A comparison of the proto-MT with other textual witnesses reveals some features about that text. Undoubtedly, this kind of comparison is subjective and in each book the evidence is different. In the Torah, the proto-MT provides a conservative text as opposed to a harmonizing and facilitating one in the other witnesses.¹¹ On the other hand, in Joshua 20 it offers a *harmonizing* text, bringing the earlier law of the city of refuge of the LXX based of Numbers 35 (P) into agreement with the laws of Deuteronomy 19.¹² *I could continue in this way.* In the story of David and Goliath, MT adds a long *theological* explanation to the story of the LXX, stressing that God can bring victory to his people even through unimportant people (1 Sam 17:12–31). In Jeremiah, the second layer of the proto-MT stresses the guilt of the nation and the centrality of God.¹³ However, I do not know how much these revisional layers in MT have in common. For example, Stipp concluded that the added layers of the proto-MT in Jeremiah and Ezekiel have nothing in common although both expand the short text underlying the LXX.¹⁴ This kind of analysis does not provide information on the background of proto-MT. We learn about the authors of the proto-MT books, or a layer in the development of these books, but not necessarily about proto-MT itself.

ii. By the same token, there is no proof that the proto-Masoretic texts changed the content in any way in line with the views of proto-rabbinic circles in spite of the attempt by Geiger¹⁵ and others to find Pharisaic and anti-Sadducean changes in MT. Such theological changes as are found in the text were inserted by individual scribes.¹⁶ The proto-Masoretic text influenced the rabbis and not the other way around, because the text could no longer be changed when these circles were operating.

b. Moving to *external evidence*, we would like to know which persons held on to the proto-Masoretic texts in early centuries. Turning to archeological and literary sources, we find the proto-Masoretic texts in two synagogues (see below), we find texts and tefillin in the hands of the Zealots on Masada and the followers of Bar Kokhba in the Judean Desert communities, and later in the rabbinic literature. On the one hand there is a long line of users of the proto-Masoretic texts that can be identified with proto-rabbinic, Pharisaic, and rabbinic circles, and on the other hand we can also identify the persons and

communities that did *not* use the proto-Masoretic texts (see below).

c. *Synagogues*. On rare occasions, there is physical proof that MT was stored in synagogues. Three scrolls found in two synagogues provide unequivocal proof of the presence there of proto-Masoretic texts.¹⁷ The latest evidence pertains to the Leviticus scroll from the first or second century CE (based on paleography) found in the *aron ha-qodesh* of the En-Gedi synagogue.¹⁸ That synagogue is dated from the late third/early fourth century to ca. 600 CE.¹⁹ The text of this fragmentary scroll of Leviticus 1–2 agrees in all its details, including the paragraph breaks, with Codex L, making it the first ancient source to agree completely with the medieval MT text. The Masada Deuteronomy scroll²⁰ (Deut 33:17–34:6) contains merely sixty-seven partial words.²¹ Both scrolls were placed under the synagogue²² floor in two separate *genizot*.²³

The Masada Ezekiel²⁴ scroll (35:11–38:14), dating to 50–1 BCE, containing four large fragmentary columns, likewise reflects the text of Codex L with a few exceptions.²⁵

d. *The people behind the Judean Desert collections*. What the persons behind these two corpora, the Zealots of Masada and the followers of Bar-Kokhba, have in common is that they were freedom fighters and political rebels. At the same time, in religious matters they closely followed the guidance of the (proto-)rabbinic spiritual centers in Jerusalem. Some scholars stress the priestly influence on the leadership of the Second Jewish Revolt.²⁶ It is fair to say that we have access to only a small percentage of the proto-Masoretic text, possibly five percent, but since all the early texts are virtually identical to the medieval MT, I believe that also in the other books the proto-Masoretic texts would have been identical to the medieval text.

Furthermore, a close link between the rabbis and the proto-Masoretic text is reflected in the content of most Judean Desert tefillin, which are written in the MT orthography and reflect the instructions of the rabbis for the manufacturing of the tefillin (see above, § 3).²⁷

At a later period, the great majority of the biblical quotations in rabbinic literature and the *piyyutim* (liturgical hymns) reflect the text of proto-MT. This trend is very clear and therefore the few deviations from MT in these sources²⁸ are negligible. Proto-MT is further reflected in the targumim, the Jewish-Greek translations, and the Vulgate.²⁹

Thus, the proto-Masoretic text was in the hands of the Pharisees after 70 CE as well as before that time, in addition to being in the hands of similar circles that cannot always be exactly defined.³⁰ But this does not mean that the proto-Masoretic text shows traces of Pharisaic influence.

e. As a counterweight to the communities that used the proto-MT texts, I now turn to the persons and communities that did *not* use the proto-Masoretic texts. In the first place,

this is the Qumran community in whose midst we found only a single proto-Masoretic text, 8QPhyl I.³¹ Other Qumran texts that have been considered proto-Masoretic are either too small or their character is too uncertain to be considered as such.

I found no evidence that any Second Temple composition is based on MT. This shows that MT was not used as the base for writing additional compositions. There are no clear indications that any of the Qumran scrolls, the Apocrypha, or the Pseudepigrapha are based unmistakably on MT to the exclusion of other sources. If one were to remove the idiosyncratic readings from the Temple Scroll or the pesharim, we would not be left with MT. Although some Qumran compositions and quotations are based seemingly on MT, this assumption cannot be substantiated when there is no opposition between MT and these other sources. In only one case is the text of MT quoted to the exclusion of other texts, but the evidence is limited. This pertains to the long MT text of Jeremiah when compared with the short LXX text, as shown by Armin Lange for Ben Sira and three Qumran compositions.

Lange demonstrated that the Hebrew text of Ben Sira quoted Jeremiah in a few readings according to the long version of MT and not the short version of 4QJer^{b,d} and the LXX.³² From his examples, I quote: Jer 1:10 = Sir 49:7; 18:6 = Sir 36(33):13. Likewise, the quotations from Jer 33:17, 15 in 4QCommGen A (4Q252) 5:2, 3–4; Jer 29(36):21 in 4QList of False Prophets (4Q339), 5–6; Jer 27:12 in 4QBarkhi Nafshi 3:3 follow the long text of MT and not the short text of the LXX.³³

f. The *earliest evidence* for the proto-MT (texts from Masada from 50 BCE) is much later than the earliest MT-like texts from Qumran (4QJer^a ascribed to 225–175 BCE). In my view, this discrepancy resulted from the fact that no proto-MT texts were preserved at the early site of Qumran, and the communities that preserved the MT-like texts in the Judean Desert at a later period took with them more recent scrolls. From early times onwards, the procedure of creating precise scrolls was based on a physical comparison with a master copy stored in a central place. Only in this way could the exact identity of all scrolls be achieved. At the same time, less precise scrolls were created by scribes who freely inserted a few changes into these scrolls.

We were able to trace the history of the persons and communities that embraced the proto-MT; however, we have to be modest about these conclusions because they are instructive regarding the socio-religious environment of the proto-MT, but not about the proto-MT text itself, which remains enigmatic (see below, n. 46). We do not know much about the origin of that text before it became the proto-MT text. We may never be able to solve that issue although, at least in the Torah, there may be some clues.³⁴

B. The Popular Texts of Palestine³⁵

My working assumption is that in the Torah the proto-MT is the text of the intellectual and religious elite of Palestine, and that the other texts were kept with the people. In the Torah the proto-MT reflects a conservative text that was kept by the groups that may be named the forerunners of MT. The Qumran community held on to the non-MT texts that may be considered popular. Among these we find SP, the LXX, and several additional texts, such as texts that were copied in a free copying style. By the same token, there are many harmonizing texts of the Torah that were kept by the people that were not the elite, among them especially SP and the LXX that display clear secondary features. I call these popular texts, a term first used by Paul Kahle (but not for these texts). I do not know yet whether this distinction can be carried through in the other books.

One of the assumptions in my textual outlook is the idea that the SP group and the LXX are closely connected. The assumption of a common ancestor of the LXX and the SP group was first surmised in the 1815 monograph by Wilhelm Gesenius, who guided the discussion of the SP and LXX in a sound direction.³⁶ In Gesenius' view, the two traditions derived from a common source that he named the "Alexandrino-Samaritan edition."³⁷

1. The SP and the LXX

Central in my analysis are both the large number of agreements between the SP and LXX, and their special nature.³⁸ These two sources agree frequently in secondary readings in all the books of the Torah. For example, in most of the differences between the SP and MT in Jacob's blessing in Genesis 49, the SP agrees with the LXX.³⁹ This closeness is visible especially in their shared and separate harmonizing pluses, but also in individual readings. In each of the books of the Torah, the LXX contains even more harmonizations than the SP. Until one does a word-for-word analysis of each of the Pentateuchal books one does not realize how often the LXX and SP agree in secondary readings (see below). This agreement is extended to the so-called pre-Samaritan Qumran scrolls. Compared with MT, the two sources also have in common a revision of the genealogical lists in Genesis 5 and 11, in which revisional and hence secondary traits are recognizable.⁴⁰ These combined data lead to the suggestion that the LXX and SP have a common background in secondary readings, even though they actually disagree as often as they agree.⁴¹ Although the books of the Torah differ in content, the LXX and SP must have undergone a similar textual development or they were based on a common base text in all five books, although at a later stage the two texts went in separate directions.

2. Compositions Based on the Common Text Base of LXX-SP

The assumption that the LXX and SP derived from a common text base is supported by the fact that several rewritten Bible compositions are closer to the common text of the LXX and the SP than to MT (11QT^a, 4Q252 [4QComm Gen A], *Jubilees* in its Ethiopic versions, Pseudo-Philo, Genesis Apocryphon, as well as 4QTestimonia). In fact, there are no rewritten Bible compositions that are based clearly on MT instead of the LXX and SP.⁴²

An additional group of texts based on the common LXX-SP base are the liturgical texts: two different branches of tefillin from Qumran⁴³ and three liturgical Qumran texts that contain the same pericopes as the tefillin (4QDeut^{j,k1,n}).⁴⁴

3. The Character of the Two Text Blocks in the Torah

The two tradition blocks differ not only in content but also in character. The texts of block II (all texts except for MT) are closely connected by links in common secondary features as opposed to mainly primary features in block I, MT. However, I stress that MT also contains some secondary features.

The novel idea of subdividing the textual witnesses of the Torah into two text blocks is closely connected with the perception of two different scribal approaches, conservative and popularizing.⁴⁵

In this binary division, the primary nature of the texts cannot be proven. The discussion thus moves to the presence of secondary readings, among which harmonizations take a central position. The texts of block I are characterized by the absence of secondary features, and those of block II are characterized by their presence.

When stressing the secondary features of block II, I not only focus on elements that enable the characterization of these texts, but I also try to grasp their central features. It so happens that harmonizing additions represent the most characteristic *textual* feature of the LXX in the Torah. In a similar fashion, Esther Eshel has argued that the pre-Samaritan scrolls should be named “harmonistic” and not “pre-Samaritan,” and she expanded that group to include texts such as 4Q158, *tefillin*, and *mezuzot*. I expand that group even further. My working hypothesis is that the texts that I have assigned to text block II are characterized by secondary textual features and the one text that is assigned to block I, MT, carries far fewer such features.

What is not included in the working hypothesis is the situation in the other books. If we preferred MT in the Torah as the most authentic text form, this is not the case in Samuel, Jeremiah, and possibly additional books. This can only mean that the persons who composed the archetype of MT did not use the same kind of copies for these books as they

used for the Torah.

4. Popular Texts in the Post-Pentateuchal Books

In the post-Pentateuchal books we also witness conservative and popular texts, as we do in the Torah, but the picture is different. In the Torah, most non-MT texts are popular, while this is not the case in the other books. In Samuel, we cannot characterize with certainty any text as conservative/precise or popular. Probably the LXX reflects such a text. In Jeremiah, the opposition between the two text forms is not along these lines either. Both the short and the long texts are fine texts, deriving from different stages in the development of the book. Likewise, the Qumran scrolls of Joshua are fine scrolls that differ in content from MT; the LXX of Joshua reflects a manuscript that is equally as old as MT or predates it. On the other hand, in Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, Qohelet, Canticles, Lamentations, and Psalms, we do have several popular scrolls, some of which were penned by the QSP school. Among the LXX books, several are of a midrashic nature, especially 1 Kings (3 Kingdoms), and they should be considered non-conservative.

The nature of MT remains enigmatic.⁴⁶ While the Torah in MT is a conservative text, the MT of Samuel and possibly Hosea is not. In several books, it clearly is not the oldest text, and therefore the rules for evaluating the books in MT differ between the Torah and the post-Pentateuchal books.

II. Textual Variety in Christianity

Within Christianity, the textual variety is of a different sort, referring to the employment of two different types of Greek text. The writings of the New Testament are our only source of information for early Christianity. They are in Greek, yet they reveal information about the Hebrew background of the NT, the texts used by the evangelists and Paul. Even the text used by some early Christian authors is relevant.

The early Christians made much use of the text of the Hebrew Bible, but signs of the direct use of the Hebrew Bible have not been preserved. All that has been preserved are the Christian texts in Greek. We thus learn indirectly about the use by the early Christians of Hebrew sources, since their exegetical systems resembled those of the members of the Qumran community. The exegetical system of the Qumran pesharim has much in common with that of the Gospels, as both communities base their belief on the Hebrew Bible.

We now turn to the question regarding which text form of the Bible was used by the early Christians. We noted above that the backgrounds of the individual proto-MT books

differ, but when we reach the first century CE, the proto-MT already exists as one textual unit, and we can ask legitimately about the approach of the early Christian sources towards the Jewish texts of the Hebrew Bible. The quotations from the NT could have been based on one of several sources. Did the early Christians use the proto-MT, the Bible of the Pharisees such as found in the Judean Desert in sites other than Qumran? Yes, and no. Not directly; that is, we have no Christian sources that quote from the Jewish Masoretic Bible in Hebrew, but the NT Gospels and Paul often quote from that text via a Greek intermediary. For, to all intents and purposes, the *kaige*-Th Greek revision of the LXX reflects the proto-MT text, which is the text that may be identified with Pharisaic and rabbinic circles. The NT often quotes the so-called *kaige*-Th text of the Greek Bible and not the LXX. In other words, the text of the very people that the NT often criticizes is quoted in the NT. However, in my view, the quotation of the Pharisaic text did not necessarily imply acceptance of the ideas of the Pharisees. In any case, most of the quotations were from the LXX, but we wonder why the text of *kaige*-Th was quoted.

In my view, the early Christians' choice of a text was narrowed down to a few options; the quotations were in Greek as the literature of the New Testament was in Greek. It was therefore natural that the existing Greek translations, which were Jewish translations, were chosen as the base text for the quotations. At that point, there existed no Christian-Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible, and, in fact, at no point in time were there any Christian-Greek versions of the Hebrew Old Testament.

When do we recognize NT Scripture quotations that differ from the LXX and are closer to MT than to the LXX *ad loc.*? Since most quotations reflect the LXX (OG), these unusual quotations reflect a special situation. This situation is recognized especially when the LXX *ad loc.* differs from MT because of its different Hebrew *Vorlage* or its free translation character. In the case of the free translation of the LXX of Isaiah, we can recognize these relations rather easily. In such cases, we can often identify the versions that are quoted in the NT, especially the *kaige*-Th revision from the first century BCE, which preceded the writing of the NT books. This version revised the OG towards a literal representation of the Hebrew text then current in Israel (the proto-Masoretic text), which later continued as the medieval MT. This line of research was initiated by Barthélemy within the realm of LXX studies,⁴⁷ and was continued within NT studies by such scholars as Dietrich-Alex Koch, Menken, and Wilk.⁴⁸ It is now clear that Matthew and Paul often quoted from *kaige*-Th.⁴⁹ There is no reason to assume that Matthew and Paul produced these literal translations, because the agreements between the quotations and known revisions such as *kaige*-Th are too obvious.⁵⁰

A well-known example of such a quotation is the one from Isa 25:8 in 1 Cor 15:54 quoting not the LXX (κατέπιεν ὁ θανατός ισχύσας = MT כָּל־עֵלְוָה נִמְנָה לְעֵלְוָה), but *kaige*-Th, κατέπιθη ὁ θανατός εἰς νίκος. The quotation reflects a variant understanding of MT's vocalization עֵלְוָה ("he devoured") as עֵלְוָה ("was devoured"), as well as a different etymological understanding of נִמְנָה as "to the victory."

I have no precise statistical information as to which manuscript tradition prevailed in the various NT writings, that of the OG or of the Hebraizing revisions. However, clearly the LXX (OG) was quoted in most writings of the NT,⁵¹ and the use of an early Greek Scripture revision by Matthew and Paul pertains to a minority of the quotations. The use of the LXX in the Apocalypse of John is *sui generis*.⁵²

It remains intriguing that Paul used both the LXX (OG) version and the *kaige*-Th revision for the same biblical book (Isaiah), apparently under the same conditions, and in the same epistles (Romans, 1 Corinthians).⁵³ Paul likewise quotes from revisional texts in 1 Kings (3 Reigns) and Job,⁵⁴ but in these cases he quotes more frequently from the LXX (OG).⁵⁵ It seems to me that Paul quoted from different versions concurrently or possibly he revised some of his own writings according to different LXX manuscripts.⁵⁶ Probably the type of text that was used by Paul and that was often central to the development of his ideas was not important to him. That is, during his travels, Paul based himself on the text that happened to be available to him in the communities in which he stayed. This situation caused him to use texts of a different nature, even Greek texts that derived from the Pharisaic circles with which he polemicized.

The case of Matthew's Bible is similar and, at the same time, different. Matthew reflects both the LXX (OG) and an early revision, but these two sources probably derived from different layers in Matthew's compositional process. The quotations from the OG (such as Matt 3:3 // Mark 1:3 = Isa 40:3 LXX) in Mark and Luke derived from Mark and Q (Luke), and Matthew altered them only slightly, as shown by Menken.⁵⁷ At the same time, the ten fulfillment prophecies in Matthew⁵⁸ reflect a revised Greek text such as *kaige*-Th in Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Minor Prophets, and the Psalms. According to Menken, this was Matthew's Bible that he must have known when he composed his Gospel in the last decades of the first century CE; on the other hand, according to Menken, the quotations from the LXX reflect Matthew's sources. Thus, Matthew himself did not use two different types of the Greek Bible, but he adhered to the Greek revised Bible text.⁵⁹

The use made by an individual author of different Greek versions reflects the textual situation in Palestine at that time, as known from the finds from the Judean Desert. From the first century BCE onwards, there was an ever-growing discomfort with the LXX

version because of its deviations from the Hebrew text then current in Palestine. Revisions of the LXX (OG) started to appear. Our major source of information for this development is the Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever from the first century BCE, which reflects the *kaige*-Th revision. Barthélemy characterized this revision as *Les devanciers d'Aquila*, describing it as “précédée d’une étude sur les traductions et recensions grecques de la Bible réalisées au premier siècle de notre ère sous l’influence du rabbinat palestinien.” At Qumran, also in the Judean Desert, we found other Greek fragments that reflect the LXX version and are probably even closer to the OG than to the text of our main uncials.⁶⁰ Some of these Greek fragments are earlier than the Naḥal Ḥever scroll of the Minor Prophets (between the end of the second century BCE and the beginning of the first century CE). These Greek fragments, found at different localities in the Judean Desert, thus reflect different socioreligious conditions paralleled by the Hebrew texts found in these localities. Both the Hebrew and Greek texts from Qumran reflect a community that practiced openness at the textual level and was not tied to MT, while the other Judean Desert sites represent Jewish nationalistic circles that adhered only to the proto-rabbinic (proto-Masoretic) text in Hebrew and the Jewish revisions of the LXX towards that Hebrew text.⁶¹

In sum, it can be said that the textual situation in early Judaism and in Christianity developed along similar lines. Different types of texts were known in both Judaism and Christianity. In Judaism, there were diverging conservative and popular texts, and only the latter were used as the base for compositions based on the Hebrew Bible. Likewise, in the Greek-speaking Jewish-Christian community, there were two different Greek texts, the LXX (OG) and a Pharisaic revision of the LXX (OG), named *kaige*-Th. Both were used in early Christian writings without reflecting any ideological intentions.

Notes

¹ For a longer version of the first part of this study, see my paper “The Socio-Religious Setting of the (Proto-) Masoretic Text,” *Textus* 27 (2018): 134–52.

² If I am not mistaken, this term was first used by William F. Albright in an influential 1955 study launching his “local texts theory.” In this study, he wrote about the three text “recensions” located in three different localities, Babylonia (“the proto-Masoretic text-tradition”), Egypt (“the Egyptian recension of the LXX”), and Palestine. See William F. Albright, “New Light on Early Recensions of the Hebrew Bible,” *BASOR* 140 (1955): 27–33, here 30. Indeed, the program “Google Books Ngram Viewer” indicates that this term did not appear in the literature written in the English language prior to 1955.

³ Armin Lange, *Handbuch der Textfunde vom Toten Meer, I: Die Handschriften biblischer Bücher*

- von *Qumran und den anderen Fundorten* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 16.
- ⁴ On all these texts, as well as all other scrolls mentioned in this study, see Armin Lange, “2.2. Ancient Hebrew Texts,” in *Textual History of the Bible, The Hebrew Bible, Vol. 1B, Pentateuch, Former and Latter Prophets*, ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 22–59.
- ⁵ The only exceptions are 8QPhyl I and 4QGen^b (50–100 CE), but the latter text, although classified as a Qumran text, probably derived from one of the other Judean Desert sites. See James R. Davila in Eugene Ulrich and Frank Moore Cross, eds., *Qumran Cave 4. VII: Genesis to Numbers*, DJD XII (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994 [repr. 1999]), 31.
- ⁶ The data are provided in the tables and analysis in my study “The *Tefillin* from the Judean Desert and the Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible,” in *Is There a Text in This Cave? Studies in the Textuality of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of George J. Brooke*, ed. Ariel Feldman, Maria Cioată, and Charlotte Hempel, STDJ 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 277–92.
- ⁷ These additions are forbidden according to y. Meg. 1.71c: “One may hang <the letter above the line> in scrolls, but one may not hang <the letter above the line> in *tefillin* or *mezuzot*.”
- ⁸ For a description, see Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*, STDJ 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 261–73.
- ⁹ The distinction between the two main types is not absolute, since one *tefillin* found at Qumran (8QPhyl I) is of the rabbinic type. Furthermore, some *tefillin* that were found at Qumran do *not* contain nonrequired passages and are not written in the QSP (4QPhyl C, D-E-F, R, S, XQPhyl 4). This fact probably indicates that the Qumranites not only produced new *tefillin*, but also imported *tefillin* from outside. The content of the Qumran *tefillin* was probably adapted from *tefillin* that had been imported.
- ¹⁰ MT is an inconsistent collection, in spelling both within and between the books, in sense divisions, *pisqah be’emsa pasuq*, the extraordinary points, in linguistic features distinguishing the Torah from the other books, and in the separation of the early and late books.
- ¹¹ See my study “The Development of the Text of the Torah in Two Major Text Blocks,” *Textus* 26 (2016): 1–27. <http://www.hum.huji.ac.il/units.php?cat=5020andincat=4972>, accessed March 29, 2018.
- ¹² See Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed., rev. and enl. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 294–97 (henceforth: *TCHB*).
- ¹³ See *TCHB*, 243.
- ¹⁴ Hermann-Josef Stipp, *Studien zum Jeremiabuch*, FAT 96 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 127–40.
- ¹⁵ Abraham Geiger, *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwicklung des Judentums*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt a. Main: Mada, 1928; Breslau: Heinauer, 1857); Alexander Rofé, “The Onset of Sects in Postexilic Judaism: Neglected Evidence from the Septuagint, Trito-Isaiah, Ben Sira, and Malachi,” in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism, Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, ed. Jacob Neusner et al. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 39–49 (40–41); idem, “Sectarian Corrections by Sadducees and Zealots in the Texts of the Hebrew Bible,” *RivB* 64 (2016): 337–47.
- ¹⁶ For example, Emanuel Tov, “Theological Tendencies in the Masoretic Text of Samuel,” in *After Qumran: Old and Modern Editions of the Biblical Texts: The Historical Books*, ed. Hans Ausloos et al., BETL 246 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 3–20.
- ¹⁷ The two Masada scrolls are luxury scrolls, as determined by their low rate of scribal intervention and their large top and bottom margins. See Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 125–29. The size of the top margin of the En-Gedi scroll cannot be verified because of the shrinkage of the leather following

the fire.

¹⁸ See Segal, “Leviticus Scroll.”

¹⁹ Yoseph Porath et al., *The Synagogue of Roman-Byzantine En-Gedi* (forthcoming). In this case, the archeological evidence for the synagogue is later than that for the scrolls themselves; this shows that the scrolls could have been used for a considerable time, which is not unusual in a synagogue environment. In the meantime, see the statements of Porath in Segal et al., “An Early Leviticus Scroll,” 3.

²⁰ MasDeut (1043/1–4) [Mas 1c]; see Shemaryahu Talmon, “Hebrew Fragments from Masada,” in *Masada VI, The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965: Final Reports*, ed. Shemaryahu Talmon and Yigael Yadin (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1999), 51–58.

²¹ This scroll contains the end of the book. It is not impossible that the last sheet(s) were damaged due to excessive use (cf. the re-inking of the last column of 1QIsa^a). I am aware that this fragment is of a very limited scope, but its luxury character (see n. 16), usually connected with MT content, should be taken into consideration as well. See Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 127. All of them agree with Codex L, including one paragraph break (33:19/20), with the exception of one spelling detail (33:19 MT Codex L וְשִׁפְנוֹי; MasDeut וְשִׁפְנִי). The scroll has been dated to the early Herodian period (30–1 BCE). See Talmon, “Hebrew Fragments,” 53.

²² It is unclear whether the building already served as a synagogue in that period, but Yigael Yadin, *Masada, Herod's Fortress and the Zealots' Last Stand* (Jerusalem/Tel Aviv/Haifa: 1966), 181–92 thinks that this was the case. In any event, when the Zealots arrived, they definitely used the building as a synagogue. See Ehud Netzer, *Masada III, The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965, Final Reports, The Buildings, Stratigraphy and Architecture* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1991), 402–38.

²³ See Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 35–41.

²⁴ MasEzek (1043–2220) [Mas 1d], see Talmon, “Hebrew Fragments,” 59–75.

²⁵ Eight differences in spelling, three differences in small details. In paragraph breaks, MasEzek is almost identical to some of the medieval texts as recorded by Talmon, “Hebrew Fragments,” 73. On the other hand, the common text of Codex L and MasEzek differs often from that of LXX in these chapters.

²⁶ See David M. Goodblatt, “The Title *Nasi* and the Ideological Background of the Second Revolt,” in *The Bar Kokhva Revolt—A New Approach*, ed. Aron Oppenheimer and Uriel Rappaport (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1984), 113–32. Heb.

²⁷ Remarkably, the same distinction between two types of Hebrew evidence (textual variety at Qumran and the exclusive use of the proto-MT at the other sites) is recognizable in the *Greek texts* found in the Judean Desert. The Greek Pentateuchal texts from Qumran reflect the central tradition of the LXX, and sometimes an earlier stage, occasionally differing from MT. On the other hand, 8HevXII gr from Naḥal Ḥever embodies a first-century BCE Jewish revision of the OG Minor Prophets towards the proto-Masoretic text. Thus, both the Hebrew and Greek texts from Qumran reflect a community that displays an open approach to the Scriptural text, not tied down to the proto-MT, while the other sites in the Judean Desert represent an approach of adhering only to the proto-Masoretic text in their Hebrew and Greek texts. The information from the Naḥal Ḥever scroll thus enriches our knowledge of the social setting of the proto-Masoretic texts in a way that has not been utilized in the past for understanding the Hebrew texts. At the same site of Naḥal Ḥever we find not only the proto-Masoretic scrolls of Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Psalms, but also a Greek Scripture version that Barthélemy connected with rabbinic Judaism

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- in the title of his prepublication of that scroll. Barthélemy exaggerated when forging a link between the individual translation options and rabbinic exegesis.
- ²⁸ See Tov, *TCHB*, 33.
- ²⁹ See my study “The Aramaic, Syriac, and Latin Translations of Hebrew Scripture vis-à-vis the Masoretic Text,” in Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint: Collected Essays, Volume 3*, VTSup 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 82–94.
- ³⁰ I gratefully acknowledge some of the criticisms of David Andrew Teeter, *Scribal Laws, Exegetical Variation in the Textual Transmission of Biblical Law in the Late Second Temple Period*, FAT 92 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 227–37.
- ³¹ The proto-MT 4QGen^b, although classified as a Qumran text, probably derived from one of the Judean Desert sites, and needs to be detached from the Qumran corpus. See n. 5.
- ³² Armin Lange, “The Book of Jeremiah in the Hebrew and Greek Texts of Ben Sira,” in *Making the Biblical Text: Textual Studies in the Hebrew and the Greek Bible*, ed. Innocent Himbaza, OBO 273 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 118–61.
- ³³ Armin Lange, “Texts within Texts: The Text of Jeremiah in the Exegetical Literature from Qumran,” in *Is There a Text in This Cave?*, 187–208; idem, “The Text of the Book of Jeremiah according to Barkhi Nafshi and the Rule of Benedictions,” in *Reading the Bible in Ancient Traditions and Modern Editions: Studies in Memory of Peter W. Flint*, ed. Andrew B. Perrin, Kyung S. Baek, and Daniel K. Falk, EJM 47 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 289–306.
- ³⁴ I think that historical changes in the history of the Jewish people may have played an important role in the creation of the two text blocks in the Torah, that of the MT and that of all other texts, as described in my study “The Development of the Text of the Torah.” The second text block may have been created in Palestine after the return from the exile, while the first one, a conservative text, could have been brought back from Babylon with the exiles. Thus already Albright, “New Light” and Frank M. Cross, “The Evolution of a Theory of Local Texts,” in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, ed. Frank M. Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 306–20. Alternatively, the second text block could have co-existed all along with the first block in Palestine. The SP and the derivatives of the LXX-SP group are indeed Palestinian, while all theories about the geographic background of the first text block are mere hypotheses.
- ³⁵ For this segment, see my study “From Popular Jewish LXX-SP Texts to Separate Sectarian Texts: Insights from the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Michael Langlois, CBET 94 (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 19–40.
- ³⁶ Wilhelm Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi Samaritani origine indole et auctoritate commentatio philologico-critica* (Halle: Bibliotheca Rengeriana, 1815).
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14. Gesenius explained the background of the similarity between SP and the LXX by saying that “the Alexandrian translation and the Samaritan text derived from Judean codices which were similar to each other.” This text, adopted by both the Jews of Alexandria and the Samaritans in Palestine, removed many problems from the original text, and should therefore be characterized as secondary.
- ³⁸ For a detailed analysis of the close relation between the LXX and the SP group, see my study “The Shared Tradition of the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch,” in Emanuel Tov, *Textual Developments, Collected Essays, Volume 4* (2019), 357–72.
- ³⁹ This pertains to fourteen of the twenty different content differences between MT and the SP in verses 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22, 23, 26.
- ⁴⁰ Emanuel Tov, “The Genealogical Lists in Genesis 5 and 11 in Three Different Versions,” in idem,

Textual Criticism ... Collected Essays, Volume 3, 221–38.

- ⁴¹ The use of secondary readings as a guiding principle in composing the stemma follows Paul Maas's principle of *Leitfehler* (indicative errors): Maas, *Textual Criticism*, 42–49; trans. of “Textkritik,” in *Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft*, I, VII, ed. A. Gercke and E. Norden. These common secondary readings are so significant that the occurrence of a good number of them suffices to characterize textual witnesses. By the same token, the occurrence of a good number of common harmonizations in SP and the LXX suffices to characterize these two sources as textually close to each other. When this is recognized, the large deviations of the SP can be ascribed easily to a secondary factor (subsequent content editing of SP) even though these editorial manipulations are of a greater magnitude than the harmonizations themselves.
- ⁴² For details, see my study “The Textual Base of the Biblical Quotations in Second Temple Compositions,” in *Hā-'ish Mōshe: Studies in Scriptural Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature in Honor of Moshe J. Bernstein*, ed. Binyamin Y. Goldstein, Michael Segal, and George J. Brooke, STDJ 122 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 280–302.
- ⁴³ See my study “The *Tefillin* from the Judean Desert and the Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible” and the analysis above (notes 8–10).
- ⁴⁴ 4QDeut^j contains sections from Deuteronomy 5, 8, 10, 11, 32 and Exodus 12, 13; 4QDeut^{k1} contains sections from Deuteronomy 5, 11, 32. 4QDeutⁿ contains sections from Deuteronomy 8 and 5. In this list the sections from Deuteronomy 8 are not covered by the tefillin. On the close connection between these texts and the “Qumran tefillin” and the possibility that some of them served as master copies for these tefillin, see my study “The Qumran Tefillin and Their Possible Master Copies,” in *On Wings of Prayer: Sources of Jewish Worship, Essays in Honor of Professor Stefan C. Reif on the Occasion of his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Nuria Calduch-Benages, Michael W. Duggan, and Dalia Marx, Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies 44 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019), 135–49.
- ⁴⁵ For details on these two approaches, see my study “The Development of the Text.”
- ⁴⁶ See my study “The Enigma of the Masoretic Text,” in *Theologie und Textgeschichte, Septuaginta und Masoretischer Text als Äußerungen theologischer Reflexion*, ed. Frank Ueberschaer, Thomas Wagner, and Jonathan Miles Robker, WUNT 407 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 45–70.
- ⁴⁷ Dominique Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila*, VTSup 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1963).
- ⁴⁸ Dieter-Alex Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums. Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus*, BHT 69 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986), 102–98; Maarten J. J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible: The Old Testament Text of the Evangelist*, BETL 173 (Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2004); Florian Wilk, “The Letters of Paul as Witnesses to and for the Septuagint Text,” in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of Greek Jewish Scriptures*, ed. Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden, SCS 53 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2005), 253–71.
- ⁴⁹ For example, Wilk, “Letters of Paul,” 264: “In twenty-one quotations ... Each time the Greek version seems to have been reworked to align it with the Hebrew text. Each time, again, this version concurs more or less with one of the translations done by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.” Koch provides different statistics (see n. 48).
- ⁵⁰ This point is made by Menken, *Matthew's Bible*, 280 and passim.
- ⁵¹ Thus David S. New, *Old Testament Quotations in the Synoptic Gospels and the Two-Document Hypothesis*, SCS 37 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 122–23; Thomas, “Old Testament Citations.”
- ⁵² The Apocalypse of John is close to the LXX in most of its quotations, which contain some idiosyncratic LXX renderings. See Gregory K. Beale, “A Reconsideration of the Text of Daniel

- in the Apocalypse,” *Bib* 67 (1986): 539–43. See also L. Paul Trudinger, “Some Observations Concerning the Text of the Old Testament in the Book of Revelation,” *JTS* 17 (1966): 82–88, who stresses that the Apocalypse often reflects Th-Daniel. See further the insightful paper of Hermann Lichtenberger, “Das Alte Testament in der Offenbarung des Johannes,” in *Die Septuaginta und das frühe Christentum: The Septuagint and Christian Origins*, ed. Thomas Scott Caulley and Hermann Lichtenberger (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 382–90.
- ⁵³ Among other places, the LXX (OG) is reflected in Isa 10:22 (Rom 9:27); 29:14 (1 Cor 1:19); 29:16 (Rom 9:20); 40:13 (Rom 11:34); 45:23 (Rom 14:11); 52:5 (Rom 2:24); 59:7 (Rom 3:15); and 65:1–2 (Rom 10:20–21). Revisional texts are reflected in the following verses (for a thorough analysis, see Koch, *Die Schrift*, 59–83, who lists all the verses mentioned here): Isa 8:14 (Rom 9:33); 25:8 (1 Cor 15:54); 28:11 (1 Cor 14:21); and 52:7 (Rom 10:15).
- ⁵⁴ 1 Kgs 19:10 (Rom 11:3), 19:18 (Rom 11:4); Job 5:13 (1 Cor 3:19), 41:3 (Rom 11:35).
- ⁵⁵ For some examples, see Koch, *Die Schrift*, 51–57.
- ⁵⁶ This is one of the options mentioned by Wilk, “Letters,” 267: “... either Paul’s citations originated from at least three different versions of the Septuagint, or its revision toward the Hebrew had not been carried out consistently.”
- ⁵⁷ Menken, *Matthew’s Bible*.
- ⁵⁸ Matt 1:22–23 = Isa 7:14; 2:15 = Hos 11:1; 2:17–18 = Jer 31:15; 2:23 = Judg 13:5, 7; 4:14–16 = Isa 8:23–9:1; 8:17 = Isa 53:4; 12:17–21 = Isa 42:1–4; 13:35 = Ps 78:2; 21:4–5 = Zech 9:9; 27:9–10 = Zech 11:13.
- ⁵⁹ Menken, *Matthew’s Bible*, passim, and summary on pp. 280–83.
- ⁶⁰ See my study “The Greek Biblical Texts from the Judean Desert,” in *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible, and Qumran: Collected Essays*, TSAJ 121 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 339–64.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*