

Chaos Theory and the Text of the Old Testament¹

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INTRODUCTION

Canon and Text are closely related. For those who believe in divine revelation mediated by authorized agents, the central questions are (1) which writings come from these agents authorized to speak for God and (2) have their writings been reliably transmitted to us? Although my inquiry is focused on the latter question, the former is logically prior. How one answers the first question will determine evaluation of evidence relating to the second.

What defines a canonical text according to Nahum Sarna, is “a fixed arrangement of content” and “the tendency to produce a standardized text.”² Since the very first biblical text constituted a covenant, this automatically implies a fixed arrangement of content and a standard text. I am referring to the Covenant at Sinai, a marriage between Yahweh and Israel. A marriage contract does not have a long oral pre-history. Its content is fixed from the start. The current view today is that the content and text of the Old Testament (OT) was not standard until the second century AD. So Jesus could

not really know for sure what writings were inspired by God nor did he have a stabilized text. This is what I am calling, “chaos theory.”

Analysis of the evidence has led me to conclude that the text of the OT in content, arrangement, and stability was fixed probably at the beginning of the fourth century BC by Ezra and Nehemiah.³ It is the history of this text that I attempt to treat in what follows.

UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF THE TEXT

The authors of the OT produced their work between the fifteenth and fourth centuries BC. How can we know that the final form of the text regarded as canonical by the second century BC has been transmitted to us in a reliable and trustworthy manner?

The answer to this question can be provided (1) by describing the sources that have survived, whether they are copies of originals in Hebrew/Aramaic or whether they are ancient translations or versions and (2) by understanding the history of the transmission of the text. The word *understanding* is all important because the data are not self-interpreting.

BRIEF SKETCH OF STAGES IN HEBREW WRITING

Before the invention of the printing press in 1450 AD, all books were copied by hand. Producing books was painstaking and slow work. We call books created in this way manuscripts, a term derived from two Latin words: *scriptus* (written) and *manu* (by hand).

In 692, Monkwearmouth-Jarrow Abbey in England was granted additional land to raise 200 head of cattle to provide parchment (animal skin) for the ambitious project of producing three complete illustrated Bibles. Bede was undoubtedly involved in this task, which took more than two decades to complete.⁴ The Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran required as many as seventeen sheepskins for just one book of the OT.⁵

In broad terms, three stages can be discerned in the history of writing the biblical text in Hebrew. First, only consonants were used to represent the language in the earliest stage of writing. This is a reliable way of writing since context determines readings that are uncertain. Israeli newspapers still use only consonants. Correct pronunciation of the biblical text, moreover, was

passed down orally from priest to priest, and from scribe to scribe.

Second, beginning sometime in the ninth century BC, the letters *hê*, *wāw* and *yôd* (and later also sometimes *'ālep*) were given a double function to represent long vowels as well as consonants. This system, however, was not consistent or systematic and, moreover, did not represent all the vowels.

Thirdly, during the period 600–1000 AD, Jewish scholars called Masoretes developed a system of dots and squiggles to go over and under the letters. The dots represented all the vowels and also the accents.

Early Hebrew writing employed a script similar to that used by the ancient Phoenicians. Later, under the influence of the Chaldean Kings of Babylon, scribes switched to using the Aramaic script.

Genesis 1:1 in Archaic Hebrew Script

𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤏𐤁𐤀

Genesis 1:1 in Aramaic Square Script

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ

Genesis 1:1 With Masoretic Vowels / Accents

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

We will now describe the basis of our modern printed bibles and the major surviving sources and witnesses to the text.

MODERN PRINTED EDITIONS OF THE HEBREW OT

Biblia Hebraica, published in 1905–1906 and edited by Rudolf Kittel, was the first critical edition of the Hebrew Bible that included in systematic way evidence from ancient versions. It was based on the text of the Second Rabbinic Bible of 1524-1525 which in turn was derived from twelfth century masoretic manuscripts. The Third Edition of *Biblia Hebraica*, 1929–1937 was the first modern printed Bible to be based on MS (EPB. I) B 19A in the National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, 1008 AD. Also known as the Leningrad Codex (L), it is the oldest manuscript that contains the complete

OT. It was chosen because the text of Codex L is the closest to the famous Aleppo Codex in the parts of the Aleppo Codex that survive. The Aleppo Codex was produced by the famous Ben Asher family of Tiberian Masoretes around 930 AD and since 1948 is missing the Torah.⁶ The Third Edition of *Biblia Hebraica* also included readings from the Dead Sea Scrolls beginning with the 1951 Print Run. The current edition is called *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1967–1977) or BHS and a fifth edition, *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* is currently in preparation. The newer editions improve only the apparatus or footnotes.

THE MASORETIC TEXT

As already noted, the Masoretes devised a system of signs to represent the vowels and committed the reading tradition handed down orally to writing. At the beginning, only a few vowels were shown. Later, full vocalization was shown under the influence of Syriac and Arabic Literature. Secondly, they also developed a set of diacritical signs to mark the accents according to the chanting of the text in the synagogue.

The history of the Masoretes correlates with different groups of Jewish scholars. First, a large-scale emigration to Babylon occurred in the second century AD after the Third Jewish Revolt (132-136 AD). Later, conquest of Palestine by Islam in 638 AD made possible a return to Palestine of Jewish scholars and a revival of textual work in Tiberias (Galilee). As a result, there are different systems of vocalization:

Tiberian	sublinear
Palestinian	supralinear
Babylonian	supralinear
'expanded' Tiberian	Codex Reuchlin (AD 1105)

There are two famous families of Tiberian Masoretes: (1) ben Asher and (2) ben Naphtali. The text of the ben Asher family is universally accepted as the most faithful preservation of the text. Ben Uzziel has listed a total of 404 congruences and 860 differences between the Ben Naphtali and Ben Asher texts.⁷ Only eight of these variants concern consonants. These medieval

Masoretic manuscripts are accurate witnesses to an ancient consonantal text of the highest quality.

Important Early Manuscripts of the Masoretic Text 800-1200

The following chart lists important early manuscripts:⁸

“Aleppo Codex”	A	c. 930	missing Torah	pointed by A. ben Asher
BL Or. 4445	B	925	most of Torah	not as close to ben Asher
Cairo Codex	C	895	Prophets	closer to ben Naphtali
Cairo Pent Codex	C3	10 C	Torah	
EPB I B 19a	L	1009	all of OT	close to ben Asher
EPB II B 10	L10	c. 950	frags. of Torah	
EPB II B 17	L17	929	frags. of Torah	
EPB II B 34	L34	975	frags. of Writings	
EPB II B 94	L94	1100	frags. Proph/Writ	
Madrid Comp. Lib.	M1	1280	all of OT	missing Ex 9:33b-24:7b
Codex New York	N	10/11	Latter Prophets	Adler 346 / JTS 232
EPB I B 3	P	916	Latter Prophets	Cod. Bab. Petropolitanus
Codex Reuchlin 3	R	1105/6		
Sassoon 507	S5	10 C	most of Torah	mixed text
Sassoon 1053	S1	10 C	most of OT	least carefully written
Vatican ebr. 448	V	1000?	Torah	
Washington Pent.	W	10/11	Torah	Museum of the Bible
Berlin Or. qu. 680	Ba	11C	Writings	Follows order in Talmud
Camb. Add. 1753	Y	14/15	Writings	

As many as 3,000 manuscripts are known from the middle ages.⁹ All of them attest the same textual tradition with only minor variation.¹⁰

EVIDENCE FOR THE TEXT BEFORE THE MASORETES

Before 1900, we had no Hebrew manuscripts prior to the Masoretes around 1000 AD. Two discoveries changed all this, and we are *just beginning* to evaluate the new materials.

Texts from the Judaean Desert

Early attestation to the text changed considerably in the twentieth century with the discovery of what are commonly called the Dead Sea Scrolls. Texts were found at the following sites, listed from north to south: Wadi Daliyeh (beyond the Judean Desert, strictly speaking), Ketef Jericho, Khirbet Qumran and caves related to Qumran, Khirbet Mird, Wadi Murabba'at, Wadi Sdeir (=Naḥal David), Naḥal Hever, Naḥal Mishmar, Naḥal Se'elim, and Masada.¹¹ The discovery entails fragments of some 930 texts, of which approximately 200 are biblical books, all dated generally between 250 BC and 130 AD. Some texts were written in Greek and Aramaic, although the majority are in Hebrew. Most Hebrew texts are in the square script, although approximately twelve texts are in the paleo-Hebrew script, mostly scrolls of the Torah. The official publication is in the Oxford Series *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* published between 1955 and 2010. Some thirty-four of the forty-three volumes were published after 1990 and even fourteen after 2000. Additional fragments in private collections were published in 2016.¹² We can say with certainty, then, that scholars have only begun to assess adequately the textual value of these witnesses.

Cairo Genizah Fragments

Another cache of important witnesses was discovered at the end of the nineteenth century in the Geniza of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo, now preserved in the Taylor-Schechter Collection in the Cambridge University Library. Proper protocol for old worn out scrolls requires that they be stored away. The place of storage is called a *genizah*, from Hebrew *ganaz*, i.e., “to store away.” Of some 200,000 documents, 24,700 fragments are biblical texts. Catalogues containing complete description of these texts appeared in four volumes by M. C. Davis and B. Outhwaite published between 1978 and 2003.¹³ These are important proto-Masoretic texts. They have not been

analyzed fully, nor is their witness included systematically in *Biblia Hebraica*.

Here too can be mentioned some eight manuscripts from the third to seventh centuries:¹⁴

EIGHT HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS KNOWN FROM III—VII CENTURIES AD

Torah	Ashkar-Gilson MS: Cambridge TS / Duke
Torah	Lost Severus Scroll (<i>Midrash Bereshit Rabbati</i>)
Genesis	Cambridge T-S NS 3.21 and 4.3
Exodus	Oxford Bodleian Lib. Ms. Heb. d. 89 (P) i
Leviticus	Burned Scroll from En Gedi Synagogue
Numbers	Berlin, Staatsliche Museum, P 10598
Kings	Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Ant. Pap. 47-48
Job	Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Ant. Pap. 49-50

None of these are mentioned by Tov in the first printing of his handbook, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, although the publication by Sirat preceded his own by several years.¹⁵ Apparently their witness was overshadowed by that of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Moreover, a catalogue by M. Dukan of codices in Hebrew from the Orient and Sephardic Region before 1280 lists seventy-four codices.¹⁶ In addition, she dates 158 of the fragments from the Cairo Genizah before this time. These witnesses cast enormous light on the early history of the Masoretic Text. Description of the manuscripts covers codicology as well as content.

In 2019, additional fragments of the Ashkar-Gilson manuscript have been identified mainly in the Cairo Genizah collection so that a total of ten fragments of this early manuscript of the Torah are now known:¹⁷

Gen. 10:28–13:9	Cambridge, T-S AS 36.30
Gen. 44:23–46:20	Cambridge, T-S AS 36.31 + T-S AS 37.26
Gen. 47:17–50:23	Cambridge, T-S AS 37.1 + T-S AS 37.22
Exod. 2:14–3:21	Cambridge, T-S AS 36.36
Exod. 9:18–13:2	London, Jews' College 31
Exod. 13:2–16:1	Cambridge, T-S AS 36.19 + T-S AS 37.8 + Duke, Ashkar Collect. 2

Exod. 17:5–18:14	Cambridge, T-S NS 282.88
Num. 10:16–35	Cambridge, T-S AS 36.10
Deut. 2:9–3:12	Duke University, Ashkar Collection 21
Deut. 32:50–End	Cambridge, T-S AS 37.10 + ENA 4117.13

Before discussing the Dead Sea scrolls, we will briefly mention ancient versions of the Old Testament.

ANCIENT VERSIONS OF THE OT

Samaritan Pentateuch

When the Assyrians conquered the northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC they deported the Israelites and imported other peoples who intermarried with the people of Israel and became the Samaritans. Good relations between Jews and Samaritans were up and down until 128 BC when John Hyrcanus attacked Shechem and the breach between Samaritans and Jews was final.

Only the Pentateuch is recognized among the Samaritans. The Samaritan Pentateuch, therefore, is a version of the Hebrew Text of the Torah transmitted among the Samaritans in isolation from the Jews from the second century BC onwards. It was later translated into Aramaic (whence the Samaritan Targum) and Arabic, and probably also Greek (τὸ Σαμαρειτικόν).

The pre-Samaritan text which was adapted to suit the theology of the Samaritans represents by comparison to what is later preserved in the Masoretic tradition an updated form of the text. It is characterized by replacing archaic forms, grammar, and vocabulary in Hebrew with those of a later linguistic tradition. Exegetical and historical difficulties have been removed and parallel texts are harmonized. Thus, comparison between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the later Masoretic Text shows that many differences between the two represent a modernizing of the former in terms of grammar and spelling.¹⁸ The pre-SP is a modernization of the proto-MT. The Samaritan Pentateuch is thus a strong witness to the antiquity and purity of the tradition in the Masoretic Text since the proto-Masoretic text had to be modernized and popularized in the second century BC so that it could be understood.

Old Greek and Later Greek Versions

Old Greek or Septuagint refers to a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures

into Greek. The Pentateuch was translated early in the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-240 BC) in Alexandria, Egypt. The Prologue to Greek Ben Sira suggests that the rest of the books were translated by 130 BC. The name *septuaginta*, which means “Seventy,” is adapted from a piece of propaganda that the Torah was translated by seventy-two scholars from Palestine (*Aristeas*).

Individual books vary in character and quality of translation and exhibit a full spectrum from extreme formal correspondence and literal translation to dynamic and functional translation and even radical paraphrase.¹⁹ Sometimes the translation is an abbreviation of the source text and at other times there are additions, as for example in Daniel and Esther. The Septuagint is important because it witnesses to a Hebrew parent text older than our other witnesses, including the Dead Sea Scrolls and in large part it is identical to the later Masoretic Text.

To complicate matters, long before all the books had been translated, revisions were already being made of existing translations. The process of revising one text on the basis of another, called a recension, continued from possibly 200 BC through 200 AD. We know of the *καίτε* recension from the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever and the later Jewish revisions of Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus. The precise line between original Greek translations and later revisions in this corpus of texts has, in fact, not yet been clearly established.²⁰ Scholars are still working to prepare editions of these translations based upon study of all available evidence in Greek manuscripts, daughter translations, and quotations by church fathers.

Latin Versions

Two Latin versions witness to the OT Text. The Old Latin originated in Italy and North Africa ca. 150 AD. It is a translation of the Septuagint and not of the Hebrew. Possibly it represents a plurality of versions. No complete manuscript survives. Scholars still seek to provide an adequate explanation for agreements with MT against the LXX, although most of them derive through Hebraizing recensions of the Old Greek.²¹

The Latin Vulgate is a translation made by Jerome between 391 and 405 AD and commissioned by Pope Damasus I. Jerome began learning Hebrew during a stay in the desert of Chalcis 375–377 and devoted further study during his stay in Rome 382–385.²² He continued to consult Jewish teachers

when he lived in Bethlehem and worked on the Vulgate from 390 to 405.²³ The Vulgate is translated from the Hebrew with influence from the Septuagint and Jewish revisers, especially Symmachus. In general it is a clear witness to the proto-Masoretic text of that time.

Syriac Peshitta

Peshitta means “simple [translation]” and is the name given the standard translation of the Bible into Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic. The early history of the translation is unknown. It probably originated in Edessa and was almost certainly completed by the third century AD since it is quoted by fourth century writers.²⁴

Translation technique varies from book to book, from literal to paraphrase. The parent text of the Peshitta is close to the proto-Masoretic Text. It offers less variants than the Septuagint, but more than the Targums or Vulgate. Agreements between the Peshitta and Septuagint or Peshitta and Targums can be explained for the most part by common approaches to translation and common access to the same interpretive traditions of Second Temple Judaism. In some books (Genesis, Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve, Psalms, Proverbs, Song, Qoheleth, Ruth and Daniel) clear cases of non-systematic dependence on the Septuagint can be found.²⁵

Aramaic Targums

The word *targûm* means translation. It was customary in Talmudic times (third-fourth century AD) to translate biblical readings in synagogue simultaneously from Hebrew into Aramaic (*m. Meg.* 4:4, 6). Tradition traced this practice back to Ezra’s public reading of the Law described in Nehemiah 8:8 (*y. Meg.* 74d).²⁶ The real reason, however, for the origin of the Targums must have been the fact that increasingly in the postexilic period Aramaic replaced Hebrew as the spoken language of Palestinian Jews. Étan Levine argues that the Targums originated in an academic setting and asserts that at no stage can they be envisaged as spontaneous translations although doubtless they influenced synagogue worship.²⁷ The earliest evidence are the literal targums from Qumran and exegetical traditions in the NT (e.g., names of Jannes and Jambres, mentioned in 2 Tim 3:8).²⁸

The Targums usually reflect the proto-Masoretic Text. Deviations are based mainly on exegetical traditions, not on deviating texts. Four approaches

to combining interpretation and text are used in targums: (1) some offer a literal translation with substitutions that explain the text; (2) some offer a literal translation with additions that can be bracketed without disturbing the flow of thought; (3) some offer a free translation and the additions actually replace parts of the original; and (4) some offer a midrashic rendering, i.e., a completely new story is created out of the original text.²⁹ All four approaches embellish using Jewish interpretative traditions, explain figurative language, and modernize geographical names.³⁰

THE CHARACTER OF OUR EARLIEST WITNESSES

Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has highlighted the fact that before the second century AD. differences are attested between our earliest preserved copies of the text as well as between the parent texts of the earliest translations. What are these differences like and what do they tell us about the history of the transmission of the text?

We can classify our earliest witnesses to the text according to two types: (1) manuscripts or translations that represent a simple, straightforward copying and transmitting of the text exactly and precisely as received, and (2) manuscripts and translations that represent scribes revising and updating the text to make it relevant and understood to the current circumstances/generation. James A. Sanders labels the former the **repetition** factor and the latter the **resignification** factor.³¹

Such a classification is extremely helpful in evaluating the apparent chaos in the witnesses. Andrew Teeter uses the terms conservative and facilitating to describe the two types of approaches taken by copyists and translators. Allow me to quote his description of the evidence:

The evidence from the period demonstrates a general distinction between two scribal models, defined by the effort either to produce an exact copy (the primary goal being fidelity to the letter), or to produce a copy which facilitates understanding (the primary goal being readability or comprehension of meaning, a goal which authorizes a certain latitude with regard to textual intervention, above all in matters of linguistic updating and interpretive expansion). A spectrum of manuscripts produced by both models coexisted in Palestine in the late Second Temple period. [Both were in widespread use, demonstrated on the one hand by

the broad attestation of exact or conservative manuscripts among the discoveries at various sites in the Judean Desert, including Qumran; and, on the other hand, by the facilitating texts represented by *msa*, *6*, other scriptural manuscripts and citations within the literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls, by the *Vorlagen* of several “rewritten Bible” compositions (e.g., Chronicles, Jubilees, the Temple Scroll, the Genesis Apocryphon, 4QRP, 4Q252, etc.), by various NT attestations, as well as by a variety of echoes in rabbinic tradition (e. g., the Severus scroll or the “Three Scrolls in the Temple Court” stories; perhaps also certain *ʿal tiqrè* interpretations, targumic variants, etc.).³²

Let us take time to grasp and illustrate both of these approaches or scribal models. First, an example of a conservative or repetition approach, which copies the parent text exactly and precisely in every way: the Masada Psalms Scroll from the last third of the first century BC.

The Masada Psalms Scroll has a precise format and layout.³³ As we all know, the book of Psalms is written in poetry, and Hebrew poetry is based on couplets of parallel lines. Each column of this scroll has approximately 29–30 lines and one couplet is placed on each line, with an appropriate space between the parallel lines of the couplet. Only about ten of the manuscripts from the Judean Desert are carefully laid out in this way. The one manuscript at Qumran which most closely resembles MasPs^a is 4QPs^b although it has only half a couplet per line in the column of text and it has only 16–17 lines per column compared to 29–30 lines in MasPs^a. The format and text of 4QPs^b are also not as close to the later MT as MasPs^a. MasPs^a is a model scroll.

We can compare MasPs^a with both earlier and later traditions. First, the text of MasPs^a agrees almost completely with the Aleppo Codex, and the divisions marked by blank spaces and line breaks in MasPs^a agree very closely with the Masoretic terminal markers (accents and pausal forms). The Aleppo Codex also employs a system of division by blank spaces, but this does not correspond well with meaningful breaks or the pattern in MasPs^a. This suggests that the Masoretic tradition of the Psalter retained the visual concept of the line layout of earlier scribal praxis, but without necessarily preserving the ancient content divisions. The differences in layout between MasPs^a and the Aleppo Codex are largely due to changing the book format from scroll to codex and using additional symbols for accents and vowels to mark what was indicated earlier by spacing in the manuscripts. Otherwise the

text 1,000 years later is identical. There is a scroll of Ben Sira at Masada no more than 150 years later than the original text, but it already has mistakes and shows that the text of 1,000 years later was not copied as carefully as the OT.³⁴

The stichometry or layout of parallel lines of poetry in MasPs^a agrees closely with the layout of lines evident in the Greek codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. This proves a common tradition going back much earlier than MasPs^a at least to the third century BC. Therefore, the textual tradition in MasPs^a is old.

Next are examples of the facilitating scribal model which is engaged in revising the text. These are changes made in the copying process to help a community, a next generation, or reader understand the text. Such changes might involve revising or updating the script. They might entail linguistic updating in terms of grammar, spelling, and vocabulary. Geographical names can change over time and places are called by a new name. Aesthetic or stylistic improvements might be made. Expansions are frequently inserted or parallel passages are harmonized.

Many of these types of changes have been made to the King James Version since it was first published in 1611.

First, consider the change in script from 1611 to the script we use today. They use a symbol like an “f” for an “s.” Some words are in smaller letters that look much more like what we use today. What does this mean? Spelling is also different.

Second, consider how Psalm 4:2 looks in the 1769 Edition often reprinted. We are familiar with this kind of type, but the language is archaic and old. No one says “ye” anymore. And what does it mean to seek after “leasing.” It turns out that this is a word that meant “lying” in 1611. It has nothing to do with renting a car or house. See the New KJV of 1982 where this archaic language is modernized.

Let us consider one more example from English literature before looking at examples from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Consider *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer written between 1387 and 1400. The current text is based on eighty-four manuscripts and four incunabula (early books printed before c. 1540). Fifty-five of these manuscripts are thought to have been complete and twenty-eight are extremely fragmentary. Variants are due to copyists’ errors in some cases, in others they are due to revisions by Chaucer himself. Here is a quote from “The Merchant’s Prologue.”

<p><i>‘Wepying and waylyng, care and oother sorwe I knowe ynogh, on even and a-morwe,’ Quod the Marchant, ‘and so doon oother mo That wedded been.’</i></p>	<p>‘Weeping and wailing, care and other sorrow I know enough, in the evening and in the morning,’ said the Merchant, ‘and so do many others who have been married.’</p>
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Here I have not shown what an early printed typeface would have looked like or what the original spelling might have been. Even using a modern typeface the language is almost unintelligible. It is easier to understand if one hears it read aloud according to the pronunciation of Chaucer’s period and time as well as his particular dialect. Nonetheless, some kind of explanation and paraphrase is necessary.

Now if we have difficulty reading an English text from only 500 years ago, remember that parts of the Hebrew Scriptures were already a 1,000 years old by the second century BC. Many copies of the biblical text entail updating in script or spelling or changes in forms, syntax and vocabulary.

A minimal type of updating involved changing the script from the Phoenician style used in the time of Hezekiah to the Aramaic square script beginning to be used in the fifth century BC. At some point, a scribe said to himself, “If I don’t change the Bible from the script I learned in school to the script my children are using in school, my children won’t be able to read the Bible.” About a dozen or so of the scrolls from the Judaean Desert are in the old-style script, most of them scrolls of the Torah.

While many differences are due either to copying mistakes or due to revision and updating involved in resignifying the text, some types of facilitating or resignifying were more radical.

Sidnie White Crawford in *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (2008) characterizes texts at Qumran on a continuous spectrum from biblical texts of the Pentateuch in the pre-Samaritan tradition, to a text that is called Reworked Pentateuch, to the Book of Jubilees, the Temple Scroll, the Genesis Apocryphon and finally to 4QCommentary on Genesis A.³⁵ This spectrum moves from conflation, harmonization, and modification, through new compositions closely related to the source text, to commentary involving citation plus comment.

She concludes that both canon and text were fluid and not standardized at this time. What is helpful is that her study shows the graduated continuum from biblical text to paraphrase to commentary. Her conclusions, however, do not follow from analysis of the evidence. The evidence from Qumran must be put within the larger picture of all the scrolls from the Judean Desert—the evidence of one sect within the widely variegated Judaism of the Second Temple. In the larger picture there is a central stream dominated by the proto-Masoretic texts.³⁶ The fact that most of the texts described by Crawford employ as a base a modernized text similar to that in the pre-Samaritan tradition is revealing: she is describing the path of resignification at this time, but this is only part of the larger picture. This is no different from a Christian or Jewish bookstore today and should not be interpreted to show that the text was fluid or non-standardized. Here is a list of Bibles in a modern bookstore (2008):

The New Student Bible
Life Application Bible (Take The Next Step)
Psalty's Kids' Bible
NIV Young Discoverer's Bible
The Adventure Bible
The Full Life Study Bible
Disciple's Study Bible
Women's Devotional Bible
The Family Worship Bible
The Dramatized Bible
Youth Bible
The Discovery Bible
The Daily Bible
The One Year Bible
The Spirit Filled Life Bible
The Orthodox Study Bible
Rainbow Bible
Precious Moments Bible for Expectant Mothers
Mother's Love NT and Psalms

The same categories used to classify texts at Qumran exist in Bible editions currently published: Bibles that offer a standard text unadorned and uninterpreted, and Bibles that adorn and decorate, paraphrase, interpret, and re-arrange the text for the audience and culture of our times. Do we conclude from this that both canon and text are fluid? Hardly.

THE FUNCTION OF TEXTS

Scholars studying the ancient scrolls have not paid sufficient attention to the function of these texts. There are many reasons why a person might resignify the biblical text.

An example is 4QDeut-n.³⁷ This is an excerpted and harmonized text. The term excerpted means that certain passages have been taken out of the biblical text and put together for another purpose. This manuscript has the text of the Ten Commandments. Now as you may know, the text of the Ten Commandments is slightly different in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. In particular, the reason for the Sabbath differs in these two texts. The reason in Exodus 20 is that God created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. The reason in Deuteronomy 5, however, is that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt and God gave them rest from slavery so they should give rest to their slaves as well. In 4QDeut-n the person who extracted this text to teach the Ten Commandments harmonized both texts and then used Deuteronomy 8 as a Historical Introduction to his Bible Study Pamphlet. This clearly shows it was not a Bible.

Deuteronomy 5:12 – 15 MT

¹² **Guard** the sabbath day **to sanctify it**, as the LORD YOUR GOD COMMANDED YOU.

¹³ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD YOUR GOD; you shall not do any work, you and your son and your daughter and your male servant and your female servant and your ox and your donkey and any of your cattle and your resident alien who is in your gates, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest like you. ¹⁵ And you shall **remember** that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.

Exodus 20:7 – 11 MT

⁸ **Remember** the sabbath day, **to sanctify it**. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; you shall not do any work, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and your cattle and your resident alien who is in your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and **sanctified it**.

Text of 4QDeut-n

¹² Guard the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD YOUR GOD COMMANDED YOU. ¹³ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD YOUR GOD; you shall not do in it any work, you, your son, your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, your ox and your donkey and your cattle, your resident alien who is in your gates, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest like you. ¹⁵ And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to guard the sabbath day, **to sanctify it**. [Exod 20:11] For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day **to sanctify it**.

The scribe employed repeated words (in bold) to mark the edits.

With conservative copying on the one hand and facilitating texts on the other, it is possible that both types of texts preserve original readings.

The Great Isaiah Scroll

One example is the Isaiah Scroll from Qumran Cave 1. In comparison with MT, many of the variants represent linguistic modernizing and updating.³⁸ Although it does not lay out the text in parallel poetic lines in a precise manner as we saw in MasPs^a, in one place it uses special spaces to show this and here the lines of poetry match the later Masoretic text perfectly.³⁹ There are also places where it preserves the original reading and the later MT does not (e.g., Isa 53:8).⁴⁰

Psalms Scroll—Qumran Cave 11

Another example is 11QPs-a. This scroll is best described as a compilation.⁴¹ It is a selection of biblical psalms arranged with non-biblical hymns and songs, probably for use as a liturgy in synagogue worship. It is not a Bible. It does not lay out parallel lines in couplets with appropriate spaces. It runs everything together as in prose texts. Yet in Psalm 145 it contains a verse missing from the later Masoretic text. We know MT is missing a verse because Psalm 145 is an acrostic poem. Each verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew Alphabet. And in the MT, the verse beginning with the letter ‘n’ is missing. The Septuagint has this missing verse. But now, a manuscript from Qumran that is not particularly carefully written also has the missing verse.

Psalm 145 (144 LXX):13

cor add	נֶאֱמַן יְהוָה בְּדַבְרָיו / וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו The Lord is faithful in his words, and loyal in all his works.
11QPs ^a	נאמן אלוהים בדבריו וחסיד בכול מעשיו
Ken 142 ^{mg}	נֶאֱמַן יְהוָה בְּכָל־בְּדַבְרָיו וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו
LXX	πιστὸς κύριος ἐν τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁσῖος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ
Gall	fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis
Pesh	ܢܝܡܢ ܝܗܘܘܗ ܒܕܒܪܝܘ ܘܚܫܝܕ ܒܟܠܡܥܫܝܘ אוגם חלום ܘܚܫܝܕ ܒܟܠܡܥܫܝܘ
MT	omit (cf. Talmud Babli <i>Berakhot</i> 4b, R. Yohanan, c. 250 A.D.)
ὁ ἔβραϊος	omit ⁴²

οἱ λοιποὶ	omit (i.e. Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion)
Jerome	omit (<i>Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos</i>)
Targum	omit

Psalm 145 (144 LXX):13 is a clear case where the Septuagint has a superior text to that of MT. The Psalm is an alphabetic acrostic. The *nun* strophe is lacking in MT, but extant in the Septuagint and Syriac (Peshitta) and now also attested by 11 QPs^a. The evidence from Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus shows that the verse had already disappeared from the proto-Masoretic text at an early stage, doubtless due to mutilation of a scroll at the bottom or top of the text. Explanation based on copyist error due to parablepsis is not suitable.

Different Texts for Different Audiences and Different Functions

It is important to recognize, then, that different publications or texts have different functions within the community of faith.

In a forthcoming publication, Drew Longacre builds on his proposed model for stylistic analysis of the ancient Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic scripts.⁴³ He classifies the Dead Sea Psalms scrolls according to book size, script, and textual contents. Comparison shows correlations between these classifications, with more formal scripts typically being used for large copies of known versions of the Davidic psalter and less formal scripts frequently being used for smaller, textually divergent manuscripts. The data suggest three different functional registers for various types and levels of handwriting in the period: (1) formal, professional, calligraphic, and (in late stages) ornate literary book scripts in two levels (1a—the highest level—is rectilinear; 1b is elegant but curvilinear with wavy strokes); (2) common, everyday personal or scholarly hands; and (3) professional documentary scripts. Recognition of these conventional registers aids in the interpretation of the forms and functions of the Dead Sea Psalms scrolls and highlights exceptional cases worthy of further investigation.

SEPTUAGINT

We do not have space or time for a detailed treatment of the Septuagint, such as I gave in 2008 at the Evangelical Theological Society.⁴⁴ Since translation, by definition, is focused on explaining a text, it is natural to use a facilitating text as a Hebrew parent text for the Septuagint. This also explains why there are many agreements between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint.

COMPLEMENTARITY

Both conservative and facilitating scribal models coexisted in Palestine. In fact, recent research on the handwriting of the scribes has shown that the same scribe produced both types of manuscripts. Both types of texts came from the same scribe.⁴⁵ This demonstrates that the two models are complementary. The desire to transmit the ancient form of the text requires facilitating texts if the faithful are to understand and in turn, the facilitating texts presuppose a standard.⁴⁶

Other explanations of the pluriformity in the late Second Temple period cannot be substantiated.

Lange and Tov classify manuscripts by comparing them to the MT, SP, and LXX.

	Pent (Lange)	Proph/ Writings (Lange)	Pent (Tov)	Proph/ Writings (Tov)
Non-aligned	52.5%	51%	39%	49%
Pre-SP	5%		11%	
Pre-LXX	5%	4%	2%	7%
= MT / SP	27.5%			
semi-MT	5%	35%	48%	44%
proto-MT	5%	10%		

Two reasons demonstrate that this analysis is misleading. First, Lange and Tov are basing analysis on comparison of DSS to MT, LXX, and SP. The central issue, however, is whether or not the text in MT, LXX, SP, or DSS represents a conservative approach or a facilitating approach or a mixture

of the two. If one of the DSS supports the LXX, this may indicate only that both are facilitating texts. In any case, both approaches are complementary and presuppose a standard text. Second, as Lange himself admits,⁴⁷ this comparison is only preliminary and will be replaced by analysis of all variants. The first thorough treatment of the variants is by Anthony Ferguson.⁴⁸ What does analysis of the variants show? Ferguson classified all variants into three categories. Variants in category 1 are variants that do not necessitate any change in meaning. These include synonymous constructions and vocabulary. Variants in category 2 are variants that can be reasonably explained as deriving from the MT although the readings are not synonymous with it.

These variants typically involve a slight change in meaning or perspective. They usually elaborate or simplify the meaning of the MT so that the text is more explicit or less explicit. Moreover, these differences can usually be explained as cases of harmonization to the surrounding context or to parallel passages. Variants in category 3 are variants that imply a meaning irreconcilable to the MT. These variants cannot be reasonably explained as deriving from the MT. The categorization of variants into these three categories illustrates that most of the differences between the non-aligned texts and the MT are insignificant variants that can reasonably be attributed to the scribal process (category 1 and 2 variants). Only a few differences belong to category 3: the most reliable category for identifying separate textual traditions. Thus, the high percentage of variants from category 1 and 2 and the low percentage of variants from category 3 prove that these texts can be reasonably ascribed to the Masoretic tradition.

Instead of comparing the DSS with MT, LXX, and SP, we should assess the extent to which any of the witnesses represents a conservative or a facilitating model of scribal copying. Using extremely rough percentages, this could be shown as follows:

	Conservative	Facilitating
MT	95%	05%
LXX (Septuagint)	70%	30%
Samaritan Texts	70%	30%
Dead Sea Scrolls	50%	50%

Ulrich explains variation in the manuscripts in terms of different editions in the literary development of biblical books.

Grouping of MSS according to Editions						
Edition						
n+1 ⁴⁹	G-Exod	M-Num	4QJosh ^a , Josephus	G-Jer	M-Dan	M-Pss
n+2	M-Exod	4QNum ^b	[SamPent, OL]	M-Jer	G-Dan	11QPs ^a
n+3	4QpaleoExod ^m		G-Josh			
n+4	SamPent-Exod		M-Josh			

Recent research by Andrew Teeter has shown that a genealogical and linear relationship between these texts has not been demonstrated or established in spite of Ulrich claiming this as an explanation for over thirty years. Earlier we noted that the Hellenistic literary model of *imitatio* or *mimesis* is an adequate description for phenomena that are sometimes assigned to different literary stages or rewritten scripture.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE TARGUMS

After the Fall of Jerusalem, in the Hebrew textual transmission there was only repetition and no longer any resignification. This gives the impression that the text was standardized at this time, but in fact, this is an incorrect conclusion. Let me be absolutely clear: the consensus view that the text was standardized in the first century AD is wrong. Rather, what was dominant before the Fall of Jerusalem in terms of repetition, was likewise dominant after the destruction of Jerusalem—the proto-Masoretic text. Since there was no longer any resignification, it only appears that the text is now standard and not before this time. Two important reasons support this reconstruction. First, after the destruction of Jerusalem, Judaism was no longer variegated but rather dominated by one sect, the Pharisees, the precursors of the rabbinic tradition. Their approach to the text restricted transmission to repetition. Second, the period from the first to fourth centuries AD is the period in which the Aramaic Targums

developed. Hebrew was no longer a living language by the second century AD Jewish people spoke Aramaic. They continued to provide facilitating texts, but they were in Aramaic and no longer in Hebrew. From the description of the Targums we can see that they exhibit exactly the same types of resignification that we saw earlier at Qumran. Thus, there was resignification after the Fall of Jerusalem, but it was in Aramaic and in the targumic tradition and therefore separate from the textual transmission of the Hebrew Text.⁵⁰

Analysis of the surviving witnesses, then, shows complementary approaches to copying the text: conservative and facilitating. A conservative approach requires producing facilitating texts and in turn, facilitating texts presuppose a standard. The evidence of the Targums explains why no facilitating texts in Hebrew are found after the Fall of Jerusalem. There was a standard text all along.

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1. "Sacred words," February 21-22, 2020, Text and Canon Institute, Phoenix Seminary.
 2. Nahum M. Sarna, "The Order of the Books," in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kiev* (ed. Ch. Berlin; New York: KTAV, 1971), 407-13, esp. 411 and 413, n. 15.
 3. According to 2 Maccabees 2:13-15, Judas collected the books *as a library* after the war, to be kept once more in the temple, but he was only following the example of Nehemiah before him.
 4. See <http://dcc.dickinson.edu/bede-historia-ecclesiastica/intro/life-and-work>. Accessed January 4, 2020. The number 200 may not be correct. Codex Amiatinus required 1029 "large format" number parchment (animal skin) folios measuring c. 19.9 × 13.4 inches, i.e. approximately 515 calf skins. See Celia Chazaelle, *The Codex Amiatinus and its "Sister" Bibles: Scripture, Liturgy, and Art in the Milieu of the Venerable Bede* (Commentaria 10; Leiden: Brill, 2019), 6. Three bibles such as this would require perhaps 2000 rather than 200 head of cattle? The historical sources describe being given portions of land, see Bede, *Historia abbatum* 15.
 5. Image of goatskin by Michal Mañas - Own work, CC BY 2.5, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3157961>. Accessed 12 February, 2020.
 6. Library Signature: Jerusalem, Makhon Ben-Zvi le-Heqer Qehillot Yisra'el ba-Mizrah MS No 1.
 7. Armin Lange, "History of Research," in *Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible*, 1A (ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov; Leiden: Brill, 2016), 88.
 8. Armin Lange, "Ancient and Late Ancient Hebrew and Aramaic Jewish Texts," in *Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible*, 1A, 117-120. Cf. Malachi Beit-Arié, Colette Sirat and Mordechai Glatzer, eds., *Codices hebraicis litteris exarati quo tempore scripti fuerint exhibentes* (Monumenta Paleographica Medii Aevi: Series Hebraica, 3 vols.; (Turnhout, Belgium, Brepols Publishers for the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, CNRS Paris; Jerusalem: Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1997). Dated codices are listed up to 1020 A.D. in Volume 1, 1021-1079 in Volume 2, and 1085-1140 in Volume 3. The number of manuscripts containing biblical text in these three volumes is 11, 5, and 3 respectively, for a total of 19. For medieval manuscripts, see Francisco Javier del Barco del Barco et al., *Catálogo de Manuscritos Hebreos de la Comunidad de Madrid*, 3 vols. (Madrid: C.S.I.C., 2003-2006). The number of manuscripts comprising complete or incomplete bibles in these three volumes is 18, 23, and 3, respectively, for a total of 44. Also idem, *Catálogo de Manuscritos Hebreos de la Biblioteca de Montserrat* (Barcelona: C.S.I.C., 2008), which lists 36 biblical manuscripts. For further research on Hebrew manuscripts, see Benjamin Richler, *Guide to Hebrew Manuscript Collections*, 2nd rev. ed. (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2014) and Colette Sirat, *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages* (ed. and trans. Nicholas de Lange; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

9. Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah* (ed. and trans. E. J. Revell; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1980), 29.
10. These manuscripts have not been consulted systematically since B. Kennicott (1776-1780) and G. B. de Rossi (1784-1788). Kennicott notes variants from more than six hundred manuscripts and fifty-two editions and de Rossi from 1,475 manuscripts plus editions. See Benjamin Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum variis lectionibus*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1776-1780) and Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti, ex immensa MMS. Editorumq. Codicum Congerie haustae et ad Samar. Textum, ad vetustiss. versiones, ad accuratiores sacrae criticae fontes ac leges examinatae opera ac studio Johannis Bern. de Rossi*, 4 vols. (Parma: Regius 1784-1788. Reprinted with 1798 Supplement, 5 vols. in 2, Amsterdam: Philo, 1969-1970). Cf. also E. Würthwein, *The Text Of The Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 40.
11. Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah, 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 3.
12. Torleif Elgvin, Kipp Davis, and Michael Langlois, *Gleanings from the Caves: Dead Sea Scrolls and Artefacts from the Schoyen Collection* (Library of Second Temple Studies 71; London: T&T Clark, 2016).
13. M. C. Davis, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections. Volume 1. Taylor-Schechter Old Series and other Genizah Collections in the Cambridge University Library* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1978), idem, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections. Volume 2. Taylor-Schechter New Series and Westminster College Collection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1980), M. C. Davis and Ben Outhwaite, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections. Volume 3. Taylor-Schechter Additional Series 1-31* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 2003), idem, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections. Volume 4. Taylor-Schechter Additional Series 32-255 with addenda to previous volumes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 2003).
14. Colette Sirat, *Les Papyrus en Caractères Hébraïques Trouvés en Égypte* (Paris: CNRS, 1985).
15. Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992). Translation, revision and enlarged edition by the author of *Biqqoret Nusa ha-Miqra'—Pirqè Mabo'*, *The Textual Criticism of the Bible, An Introduction* (The Biblical Encyclopaedia Library IV; Mosad Bialik: Jerusalem, 1989).
16. Michèle Dukan, *La Bible Hébraïque: Les codices copiés en Orient et dans la zone séfarade avant 1280* (Bibliologia 22; Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).
17. See Drew Longacre, OTTC: A Blog for Old Testament Textual Criticism, April 26, 2019, <http://oldtestamenttextualcriticism.blogspot.com/2019/04/new-fragments-of-ms-london-ashkar.html>. Accessed 27 January, 2020.
18. For this characterization, see Bruce K. Waltke, "Samaritan Pentateuch," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 5:932-40. See also Stefan Schorch, "The Septuagint and the Vocalization of the Hebrew Text of the Torah," in *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Leiden, 2004* (ed. Melvin K. H. Peters; SCS 54; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 41-54 and Robert T. Anderson and Terry Giles, *The Samaritan Pentateuch: An Introduction to Its Origin, History, and Significance for Biblical Studies* (SBL Resources for Biblical Study 72; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012).
19. Cf. Bruce K. Waltke, "The Reliability of the Old Testament Text," in *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (ed. W. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 1:51-67.
20. See Peter J. Gentry, "Old Greek And Later Revisors: Can We Always Distinguish Them?" in *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Rajia Sollamo* (ed. Anssi Voitila and Jutta Jokiranta; Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 126; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 301-327.
21. See N. Fernández Marcos, *Scribes and Translators: Septuagint & Old Latin in the Books of Kings* (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, 54; Leiden: Brill 1994), idem "The Old Latin of Chronicles between the Greek and the Hebrew," in *IX Congress of the IOSCS, Cambridge 1995* (SCS 45; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press 1997), 123-136, and M. Kraus, "Hebraisms of the Old Latin Version of the Bible," in *VT* 53 (2003): 487-513.
22. See especially Michael Graves, *Jerome's Hebrew Philology: A Study Based on his Commentary on Jeremiah* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, 30; Leiden: Brill, 2007). Note also Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesis* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997), 41.
23. Jerome, *Ep.* 84.3.
24. See Michael P. Weitzman, *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56; Cambridge: University Press, 1999), 2. Cf. Sebastian Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 2nd rev. ed. (Gorgias Press Handbooks; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006), 23.
25. See Michael P. Weitzman, "Peshitta, Septuagint and Targum," in *VI Symposium Syriacum 1992: University of Cambridge, Faculty of Divinity, 30 August-2 September, 1992* (ed. René Lavenant; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1994), 51-84 and idem, *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56; Cambridge: University Press, 1999).

26. y. Meg. 74d = Jacob Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: An Academic Commentary to the Second, Third, and Fourth Divisions. IX. Yerushalmi Tractate Megillah* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 123. For rabbinic law and lore on targum cf. m. Meg. 3:10; 4:4, 6, 9; y. Ber. 9c; Bik. 65d; Meg. 74d; 75a; Šabb. 15c; 16c; b. B. Bat. 134a; Ber. 27b; 45a; Meg. 3a; 8b, 9a; 17a, 21a; 23a, b; 25a, b; 32a; *Mo'ed Qat.* 3a; 21a; 28b; *Qidd.* 49a; Šabb. 115a b; 116a; *Sanh.* 84b; Soṭa 33a; 39a; 40a; 41a; *Sukk.* 28a; *Tem.* 14a, b; *Yebam.* 22a. See also *Sifre Deut* 161; *Tanhuma* II, 87f.; *Pesiq.* R. 14a-b; *Mek.* II 17:7; *Exod Rab.* 8:3; *'Abot R. Nat. B.*, XII; *Sop.* 5:15; 12:6; 15:2; 18:4.
27. Étan Levine, "The Targums: Their Interpretive Character and Their Place in Jewish Text Tradition," in *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation* (ed. Magne Sæbøl; vol. I, Part 1, #8.5, 323-331: Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1996), 324. Further, see Miguel Pérez Fernán-dez, "El Proceso Targúmico: La Sinagoga y la Academia," in "Let the Wise Listen and Add to Their Learning" (*Prov 1:5*): *Festschrift for Günter Stemberger on the Occasion of his 75th Birthday* (ed. Constanza Cordoni and Gerhard Langer; Studia Judaica Forschungen zur Wissenschaft des Judentums 90; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 75-93.
28. See R. le Déaut, *La nuit pascale* (Rome, 1963) and M. McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* (Analecta Biblica 27; Rome 1966).
29. This characterization is from Harry Sysling, "Translation Techniques in the Ancient Bible Translations: Septuagint and Targum," in *A History of Bible Translation* (ed. Philip A. Noss; Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2007), 279-305.
30. B. K. Waltke, "The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (ed. Frank E. Gaebel; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), 1:209-228.
31. James A. Sanders, *Canon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 22, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 11. This classification is not dissimilar from the description of B. K. Waltke who notes two tendencies at work in the early history of the transmission of the text, one to copy and preserve the text exactly and precisely as received and one to revise and update the text to make it understandable to the next generation. The *Tendenz* to revise and update may be limited to alterations to the form of the text such as switching from palaeo-Hebrew script to Aramaic square script and *plene* spelling, or may involve updating in geography, grammar, and lexicon, or may go as far as re-interpreting the text for a contemporary sub-community within Second Temple Judaism. Beyond the far end of the spectrum in resignification would be the so-called parabiblical texts found at Qumran (cf. Bruce K. Waltke, "Old Testament Textual Criticism," in *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation* [eds. David S. Dockery, Kenneth A. Mathews and Robert B. Sloan; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994]), 156-86.
32. David Andrew Teeter, *Scribal Laws: Exegetical Variation in the Textual Transmission of Biblical Law in the Late Second Temple Period* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 92; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 254-255.
33. To compare the "deluxe" format of MasPs^a to other scrolls from the Judean Desert, see Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah, 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 88, 96, 101-102, 105, 107, 126-128, 133, 163-164. This analysis of MasPs^a is based on Peter J. Gentry and John Meade, "MasPs^a and the Early History of the Hebrew Psalter," in *From Scribal Error to Rewriting: How Ancient Texts Could and Could Not Be Changed* (ed. A. Aejmelaeus, Drew Longacre and Natia Mirotdadze; DSI 12; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020), 113-145.
34. See Yigael Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada*, rev. ed. (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society/The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999), 161-169.
35. Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008). The notion of "rewritten scripture" as employed by Sidnie White Crawford needs to be complemented by other processes. See for example, Natalio Fernández Marcos, "Rewritten Bible or Imitatio? The Vestments of the High-Priest," in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (ed. Peter W. Flint, Emanuel Tov and James C. Vanderkam; Supplements to VT 101; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 321-336. Fernández Marcos shows that the Hellenistic literary model of *imitatio* or *mimesis* is an adequate description for phenomena that are sometimes assigned to different literary stages or rewritten scripture.
36. Armin Lange's perspective on canon and text is also skewed by failing to put the evidence from Qumran within the larger picture. See Armin Lange, "Pre-Maccabean Literature from the Qumran Library and the Hebrew Bible," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 13/3 (2006): 271-305, and idem, "From Literature to Scripture: The Unity and Plurality of the Hebrew Scriptures in Light of the Qumran Library," in *One Scripture or Many? Canon from Biblical, Theological, and Philosophical Perspectives* (ed. Christine Helmer and Christof Landmesser; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 51-107.
37. For publication of images and text see E. Ulrich, F. M. Cross, S. White Crawford, J. A. Duncan, P. W.

- Skehan, E. Tov, and J. Trebolle Barrera, eds. *Qumran Cave 4: IX. Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings* (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XIV; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 117-128 and Plates XXVIII and XXIX. See also <https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/manuscript/4Q41-1>; accessed Sept. 29, 2020.
38. Paulson Pulikottil, *Transmission of Biblical Texts in Qumran: The Case of the Large Isaiah Scroll 1QIsa^a* (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 34; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001). According to Jerome A. Lund, “misrepresentation of previous research and tendentiousness seriously flaw Pulikottil’s work” (Unpublished review for RBL). Previously, cf. E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a)* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah, VI.; Leiden: Brill, 1974; Hebrew Original, Jerusalem, 1959). Elisah Qimron, *Indices and Corrections* (Leiden: Brill, 1979).
 39. See Isaiah 61:10-11, Plate L, in Donald W. Parry and Elisha Qimron, *The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a): A New Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1999). Cf. also <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah>; accessed Sept. 29, 2020.
 40. For details on Isaiah 53:8 see Peter J. Gentry, “The Text of the Old Testament,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52/1 (2009): 31-33.
 41. Armin Lange, “Ancient and Late Ancient Hebrew and Aramaic Jewish Texts,” in *Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible*, 1A, 129.
 42. A scholion attributed to Eusebius in the Palestinian Catena tradition reads as follows: ὁ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα στίχος δι’ οὗ εἰρηται πιστὸς κύριος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ὅτιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ, οὐ φέρεται οὔτε ἐν τῷ ἑβραϊκῷ, οὔτε παρὰ ποῖς λοιποῖς ἐρμηνευταῖς. διόπερ ὡς περιττὸς, ἀναρχικῶς ὠβέλισται. For the text, see D. Barthélemy, *Critique Textuelle de l’Ancien Testament*, 4, *Psalmes. Rapport final du Comité pour l’analyse textuelle de l’Ancien Testament hébreu institué par l’Alliance Biblique Universelle, établi en coopération avec Alexander R. Hulst, Norbert Lohfink, William D. McHardy, H. Peter Rüger, coéditeurs, James A. Sanders, coéditeurs* (ed. Stephen D. Ryan and Adrian Schenker; Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 50/4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 878. The manuscript sources are Milan, Bibl. Ambr. F 126 sup. fol. 382v and Patmos, St. Johannes 215 fol. 327v. See Ekkehard Mühlberg, *Psalmenkommentare aus der Katenenüberlieferung, Band III, Untersuchungen zu den Psalmekatenen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1978), 276.
 43. Drew Longacre, “Paleographic Style and the Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls: A Hand Fitting for the Occasion?” Forthcoming.
 44. See Peter J. Gentry, “The Text of the Old Testament,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52/1 (2009): 19-45. The fundamental points there concerning the textual value of the Septuagint are still valid. Further, see David J. Shepherd, Jan Joosten, and Michaël N. van der Meer, eds., *Septuagint, Targum and Beyond: Comparing Aramaic and Greek Versions from Jewish Antiquity* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 193; Leiden: Brill, 2019).
 45. Armin Lange, “Ancient and Late Ancient Hebrew and Aramaic Jewish Texts,” in *Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible*, 1A, 136-138.
 46. Armin Lange believes that the manuscripts from the First and Second Jewish Revolts are proto-Masoretic because the text was standardized in the Herodian Period. This conclusion is unwarranted. All of these manuscripts simply represent the conservative or repetition model current all along and now no longer preserved in the Jerusalem Temple. See Armin Lange, “Ancient and Late Ancient Hebrew and Aramaic Jewish Texts,” in *Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible*, 1A, 148-158.
 47. Armin Lange, “Ancient and Late Ancient Hebrew and Aramaic Jewish Texts,” in *Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible*, 1A, 127 and n. 89.
 48. Anthony M. Ferguson, “A Comparison of the Non-Aligned Texts of Qumran to the Masoretic Text,” PhD Diss. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018.
 49. Ulrich explains, “The ‘n+1’ type of designation for successive editions of a text assumes that there has been a series of editions during the composition of the text which constitutes its growth leading up to the first extant witness to a given book.” See Ulrich, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Biblical Text,” 85, n. 21.
 50. After presentation at the 2008 Plenary Session of the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society Stefan Schorch kindly pointed out that Abraham Tal had already propounded a similar view, see Abraham Tal, “Is There a Raison d’Être for an Aramaic Targum in a Hebrew-Speaking Society?” *Revue des Études Juives* 160 (2001): 357-78. Tal’s argument may be summarized as follows: the traditional view considering the Aramaic Targum as a social necessity aimed at the masses that no longer understood Hebrew was in active use among the common people by the time the first Targum was conceived. Tal submits the thesis that the Onqelos type Targum was not destined to expose the ignorant masses to the Law, whose language was inaccessible to them. It was rather directed against the tendency to “modernize” the text of the holy writ in accordance with contemporary linguistic habits and ideological trends. As we learn from the Dead Sea scrolls, the Samaritan Pentateuch and even rabbinical testimonies, such harmonizing

exemplars of the Law existed in the first centuries C.E. The use of the Targum along with the original made possible the modernization, without altering the sacred text. Andrew Teeter further supports this view, see *Scribal Laws*, 260-264.