THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND THE TEXT OF THE HEBREW BIBLE AND HISTORY OF JUDAISM

Bastiaan Van Elderen

Introductory observations

1. The major contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the study of the Hebrew Bible has been in the study and establishment of its text (**Part 1**).

2. Regarding Judaism, the scrolls have provided data about a religious movement in 1st century Palestine. This added dimension of 1st century Judaism supplements significantly the information found in other sources, such as Josephus, the New Testament, and rabbinic literature. These are documents coming directly from the 1st century, whereas other sources are available only in copies from subsequent centuries of these earlier documents (**Part 2**).

PART 1: THE TEXT OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

I. *The problem of the text of the Bible*

    A. Since to date no original copies (*autographa*) of any portion of the Bible have been preserved, the biblical text must be recovered and established from copies (*apographa*) of the original text.

    B. Furthermore, during the long period of transmission, especially prior to the discovery of printing about AD 1450, corruptions have crept into the text, both intentionally and unintentionally. With the recent discovery of older manuscripts it is possible to identify these corruptions and changes (omissions, interpolations, substitutions, and transpositions).

    C. The science of *Textual Criticism* seeks to determine as closely as possible what the original text was as written by the biblical authors. The task of the textual critic is to discover textual corruptions and by the scientific means known to modern scholars to establish a text as close to the original as possible.

    D. For the New Testament there is an immense collection of manuscripts to use for the establishment of the text. In Old Testament studies the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has added valuable new materials for the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible.

        1. In the past research on the text of the Hebrew Bible was very limited because of the lack of very much material. There were only a few manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible (and none of significance prior to the 9th century AD). In addition, very little consideration was given to the versions.

        2. As a result of advances in the study and establishment of the text of the Hebrew Bible brought about by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, recent translations of the Bible have made a number of changes and improvements in the text.

II. *The status of the text of the Hebrew Bible before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls*

    A. Prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls the oldest Hebrew Bibles dated from the 9th/10th century AD (Leningrad Codex,[1] Aleppo Codex).

        1. The text tradition in these manuscripts is known as the Masoretic Text (MT), the traditional Hebrew text.

---

[1] A facsimile edition of the Leningrad Codex has recently been published (Beck, Freedman, and Sanders 1998).

2. The Masoretes were Jewish scholars who added the vowels to the earlier consonantal Hebrew, because people were having difficulty reading this consonantal text (also known as the "unpointed text"). The Masoretes did this work in the 5th to the 9th centuries AD by placing dots and dashes in, above, or under the original Hebrew consonants.

3. This is the text upon which basically nearly all the English (and other) translations are based.

B. Very few earlier portions or fragments of the Hebrew Bible had been preserved before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

III. *Some early translations of the Hebrew Bible*

A. Ancient **Greek** translations of the Hebrew Bible

1. The Septuagint (LXX)

a. In the Intertestamentary Period a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible was made at Alexandria. This is called the Septuagint (LXX).

b. Extensive copies of the LXX date from the middle of the 4th century AD (*e.g.,* Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus). Some fragments of the LXX can be dated as early as the 1st century AD.

c. The text of the LXX differs in many respects from the MT -- and hence it was generally considered of little or no value for the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible. This version included the apocryphal books,[2] except 2 Esdras but including 3 and 4 Maccabees, with the books of the Hebrew Bible.

d. This version and/or its text tradition was widely used by the early Christian church. Almost all of the quotations from the Hebrew Bible found in the New Testament were derived from the LXX or its text tradition.

2. Aquila

a. In the middle of the 2nd century AD Aquila, a proselyte from Christianity to Judaism, prepared a literalistic translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek.

b. This was the official Greek Bible of the Jews until the 7th century.

3. Theodotion

a. In the latter part of the 2nd century AD Theodotion, a proselyte Jew, prepared a translation of the Hebrew Bible that was more literal than the LXX.

b. This translation was used extensively by the church fathers of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

4. Symmachus, an Ebionite Christian, in late 2nd century AD, prepared a Greek version of the Hebrew Bible that was more literary the Aquila's version.

5. In the past these Greek versions[3] were used in a very limited way in the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible.

---

[2] The standard list of the apocrypha contains 1 Esdras, 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach), Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh, 1 Maccabees, and 2 Maccabees.

[3] In addition to these four versions which Origen (AD 184-254) included in his synopsis in parallel columns of versions of the Hebrew Bible (called the *Hexapla*), he also had access to two other unpreserved anonymous Greek versions identified as Fifth Edition and Sixth Edition, which were found in the 3rd century AD near Jericho and Nicopolis in northern Greece respectively.

       a.   The LXX was judged to contain many errors, paraphrasings, and arbitrary changes, since it differed at times from the MT.

       b.   The versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus had rather limited circulation and were closer to the MT than to the LXX.

B.   The **Latin** translations of the Hebrew Bible.

   1.   In the early centuries AD the Hebrew Bible was translated into Latin. Only small portions and fragments of these old Latin versions have been preserved.

   2.   The principal Latin version is the Vulgate.

       a.   Jerome completed this translation in AD 405 while residing in Bethlehem. He worked basically from a Hebrew text (similar to the MT) with some occasional use of the Greek versions. Most of Jerome's work was included in later editions of the Vulgate. Jerome followed the Hebrew canon and classified the additional books in the LXX as *apocrypha* (*Quidquid extra hos* [*i.e.,* the canonical books] *inter Apocrypha ponendum*). In spite of this classification by Jerome, the books which he called *apocrypha* were held in high regard in many parts of the church in succeeding centuries.

       b.   This Latin Bible was the recognized version of the medieval church and given official status by the Council of Trent in 1546.

C.   The **Samaritan** Pentateuch (SamPent) is the sacred writings of the Samaritans, a religious community in central Palestine which dates back to the 7th century BC.[4] The SamPent, possibly dating as early as the 5th century BC, represents another text tradition of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible written in the Samaritan dialect. Since it contains about 6000 textual variants from the MT and because of its so-called sectarian character, scholars seldom considered it in the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible.

D.   Other early translations of the Hebrew Bible:

   1.   **Coptic**: With the rise of Christianity in Egypt the Greek Bible was soon translated into Coptic, the alphabetized form of ancient Egyptian.

   2.   **Syriac**: With the spread of Judaism and Christianity to Syria and Mesopotamia the Hebrew Bible was translated into Syriac in the 1st or early 2nd century AD. Later, in the late 4th or early 5th century this translation was standardized as the Peshitta.

IV.   *Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible*

A.   The antiquity of the new discoveries: The Dead Sea Scrolls contain copies of portions of the Hebrew Bible dating from the 1st century BC and 1st century AD -- over a thousand years earlier than the existing manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible.

B.   There are 205-207 biblical scrolls (many fragmentary) identified in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Tov 2001:67-84). These display a variety of text types:

   1.   Masoretic text (MT) tradition (the traditional Hebrew text).

   2.   Septuagint text (LXX) tradition.

   3.   Samaritan text tradition.

   4.   Text tradition peculiar to the Dead Sea Scrolls.

---

[4] Today there still exist Samaritan communities in Palestine, numbering about 600 persons. The major settlement with its temple is in the town of Nablus. Each spring on nearby Mt. Gerizim the Samaritans celebrate their annual Passover festival according to the ancient ritual.

C. The contents of the Hebrew Bible in the traditional MT and as found in Protestant Bibles consists of 39 books (in Hebrew 22 or 24 books resulting from differing combinations).[5] The Dead Sea Scrolls include some non-canonical (both apocryphal and pseudepigraphal) writings: Tobit, Wisdom of Ben Sira (Sirach or Ecclesiasticus), Letter of Jeremiah, Psalm 151A and B, Psalm 154 and 155 (Syriac Psalms II and III), 1 Enoch, Jubilees, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Writings associated with Daniel (Flint 2001:80-126). The scriptural (or canonical) status of these writings at Qumran is disputed. P. Flint (2001:121) conservatively suggests that Daniel, Psalm 151A, Psalm 151B, Psalm 154, Psalm 155, the canticle (Sir 51.13-30) found in 11QPs[a], 1 Enoch, and Jubilees had scriptural status at Qumran.

D. In addition, the Dead Sea Scrolls have created a new situation in the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible. As a result, textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible is an emerging discipline with interesting and challenging possibilities.

V. *Some illustrations of the contributions of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the text of the Hebrew Bible*

A. Recent translations[6] have been influenced by the Dead Sea Scrolls. The RSV, published in 1952, adopted 13 readings in Isaiah on the basis of the scrolls, and the NIV, published in 1978, adopted 9 readings in Isaiah on the basis of the scrolls. The NRSV, published in 1990, based over 20 of its readings in Isaiah[7] and 39 readings in 1 and 2 Samuel on the scrolls.[8]

B. Some examples of passages where the Dead Sea Scrolls have provided a preferred and more meaningful reading of the passage:

Isa 3.24 --

MT   כי־תחת יפי ("for instead of beauty")[9]
NAB -- "Then, instead of beauty:…"

1QIsa[a]   כי־תחת יפי בשׁת ("for instead of beauty, shame")[10]
RSV, NRSV -- "…instead of beauty, shame"
NLT -- "Their beauty will be gone. Only shame will be left to them"

---

[5] These books are identified as "canonical," whereas the additions in the LXX are called "apocrypha" (Catholics who include these additions [listed in fn. 2 above] prefer to identify these as "deuterocanonical"). In addition, there are documents called "pseudepigrapha," documents written largely in the Intertestamentary Period but ascribed to earlier saints in the Hebrew Bible to give status to the writing.

[6] English translations cited (with abbreviations) are:

KJV -- King James Version (1611)	RSV -- Revised Standard Version (1952)
ASV -- American Standard Version (1901)	NRSV -- New Revised Standard Version (1990)
NASB -- New American Standard Bible (1977)	NIV -- New International Version (1978)
NAB -- New American Bible (1970)	NLT -- New Living Translation (1996)
JB -- Jerusalem Bible (1966)	REB -- Revised English Bible (1989)
NJB -- New Jerusalem Bible (1990)	

[7] In addition to the examples considered below, the Isaiah scrolls from Qumran have also influenced the following translations in the NRSV: Isa 8.2; 9.17; 14.30; 15.9; 18.7; 45.8; 49.12; 53.9; 56.12. Furthermore, these scrolls (and/or the LXX) have clarified the meaning of the Hebrew text in the NRSV in Isa 2.16; 10.34; 15.4; 16.10; 17.2,9; 19.14; 22.3; 23.10; 38.17; 47.13; 48.11; 57.11; 64.7; 65.7; 66.18*bis*.

[8] For a more extensive discussion of the influence of the Dead Sea Scrolls on modern translations, *cf.* Scanlin 1993.

[9] The traditional translation is based on an interpretation of כי (*ki*) as "scar from burning," rather than its usual meaning "since," "for." This is the only occurrence of this meaning for כי in the Hebrew Bible and is the basis for the following translations:

     KJV -- "and burning instead of beauty"
     ASV, NASB -- "and branding instead of beauty"
     NIV -- "instead of beauty, branding."

[10] The entire phrase is omitted in the LXX and the Vulgate.

Isa 11.6 --

In line 3 1QIsaᵃ reads "the calf and the young lion *will feed* (ימרו) together" (*cf.* LXX; JB, REB, NLT, NIVmg, NASBmg). MT and 4QIsaᶜ read "the calf and the young lion and *the fatling* (or *yearling*) (ומריא) together" (KJV, ASV, RSV, NIV, NASB, NRSV). The 1QIsaᵃ reading is superior: it maintains the poetic parallelism in the three lines.

Isa 14.4 --

MT	מדהכה (unknown word in Hebrew)
	KJV, ASV -- "the *golden city* ceased"

1QIsaᵃ	מרהבה ("insolence")[11]
	NIV -- "his *fury* has ended"
	NASB -- "...*fury* has ceased"
	NRSV -- "his *insolence* has ceased"
	NLT -- "your *insolence* is ended"

Isa 21.8 --

MT	אריה ("lion")
	KJV -- "and he cried, A *lion,*...I stand...upon the watchtower"
	ASV -- "and he cried as a *lion*:...I stand...upon the watchtower"

1QIsaᵃ	ראה ("seeing")[12]
	NIV -- "and the *lookout* shouted, '...I stand on the watchtower' "
	NASB -- "then the *lookout* called, '...I stand...on the watchtower' "
	NRSV -- "then the *watchman* called out: 'Upon a watchtower I stand' "
	NAB -- "then the *watchman* cried, 'On the watchtower...I stand' "
	NLT -- "then the *watchman* called out, 'Day after day I have stood....' "

Isa 23.2 --

MT	סחר צידון עבר ים מלאוך ("merchants of Sidon, the ones crossing the sea made you full")[13]
	KJV, ASV -- "thou whom the merchants of Sidon, *that pass over the sea have replenished*"
	NIV -- "you merchants of Sidon, *whom the seafarers have enriched*"

1QIsaᵃ	סחר צידון עברו ים מלאכיך ("merchants of Sidon, your messengers crossed the sea")
	NRSV -- "O merchants of Sidon, *your messengers crossed over the sea*" (similarly, RSV, NASB, NAB)
	NLT -- "...and you merchants of Sidon. *Your traders crossed the sea*"

---

[11] The LXX reads ὁ ἐπισπουδαστής (*epispoudastēs,* "one who presses on a work," "compeller"), possibly a translation of this Hebrew word מרהבה in 1QIsaᵃ.

[12] The LXX sentence structure differs from the Hebrew but Οὐρίας (*Ourias,* "Uriah") apparently translates this Hebrew word.

[13] Similarly, the Vulgate reads: *negotiatio Sidonis transfertantes marem repleverunt te* ("the business of Sidon, the ones transporting by sea have replenished you"). The LXX reads: μεταβόλοι Φοινίκης διαπερῶντες τὴν θάλασσαν (*metaboloi Phoinikēs diaperōntes tēn thalassan,* "the merchants of Phoenicia, the ones passing over the sea").

Isa 24.6 --

MT   חרו (from חרה -- "become hot")[14]
         KJV, ASV, NASB -- "the inhabitants of the earth *are burned*"
         RSV -- "the inhabitants of the earth *are scorched*"
         NIV -- "earth's inhabitants *are burned up*"
         NLT -- "they are…*destroyed by fire*"

1QIsa^a   חורו (from חור -- "grow pale")
         NAB -- "they who dwell on earth *turn pale*"

Isa 33.8 --

MT   ערים ("cities")
         KJV, ASV -- "he hath despised the *cities*"
         NASB -- "he has despised the *cities*"

1QIsa^a   עדים ("witnesses")
         RSV, NIV -- "its *witnesses* are despised"
         NRSV -- "its *oaths* are despised"
         NLT -- "…care nothing for the promises they made before *witnesses*"

Isa 37.28 --

MT   ושבתך וצאתך ובואך ידעתי (similarly LXX)
         KJV, ASV -- "But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in"
         RSV -- "I know your sitting down, and your going out and coming in"
         NIV -- "But I know where you stay and when you come and go"
         NLT -- "But I know you well -- your comings and goings and all you do"

1QIsa^a   קומכה ושבתכה וצאתכה ובואכה ידעתיא
         NRSV -- "I know *your rising up* and your sitting down, your going out and coming in"
         NAB -- "I am aware whether *you stand* or sit; I know whether you come or go"

Isa 40.6-8 --

Vs. 7 is omitted in 1QIsa^a (first hand) and the LXX (also omitted in the quotation of Isa 40.6-8 in 1 Pt 1.24f). Vs. 7 is added by a second hand in 1QIsa^a, as in MT (and in all translations). A photocopy of the column in 1QIsa^a containing vss. 6-8 is found in *Appendix 2* on page 16.

Isa 45.2 --

1QIsa^a reads "*and* (level) *the mountains*" (והררים) (LXX, similarly 1QIsa^b; JB, RSV, NIV, NRSV, NAB, NLT). MT reads והדורים (word of uncertain meaning, perhaps "swellings"). *Cf.* "crooked places" (KJV), "rough places" (ASV, NASB), "the swelling hills" (REB), "the heights" (JB).

---

[14] Some suggest a second root חרה ("disappear," "become few in number"), for this hapax legomenon of this root. This is the interpretation of the Hebrew text underlying the NRSV translation: "the inhabitants of the earth dwindled."

Isa 49.24 --

MT   צדוק ("righteous")
KJV, ASV -- "or the *lawful* captives be delivered?"

1QIsa^a   עריץ ("tyrant") (similarly Syriac, Vulgate; *cf.* LXX)
RSV, NRSV -- "or the prey of the *tyrant* be rescued?"
NIV -- "or captives rescued from the *fierce*?"
NASB -- "Or the captives of a *tyrant* be rescued?"
NAB -- "and booty be rescued from a *tyrant*?"
NLT -- "Who can demand that a *tyrant* let his captives go?"

Isa 51.19 --

MT   מי אנחמך ("how shall I comfort you?")
KJV -- "By whom shall I comfort thee?"
ASV, NASB -- "How shall I comfort you?"

1QIsa^a   מי ינהמך ("who will comfort you?")
LXX -- τίς σε παρακαλέσει; (*tis se parakalesei?,* "who will comfort you?")
RSV, NRSV -- "who will comfort you?"
NIV -- "who can console you?"
NAB -- "Who is there to comfort you?"
NLT -- "Who is left to comfort you?"

Isa 53.11 --

1QIsa^a, 1QIsa^b, and LXX add "light" (אור, φῶς) as the object of the verb "see" (JB, NAB, NRSV; RSV reads "fruit"; NLT reads "all"). NIV reads "light" and adds "of life" to the text. MT has no object for the verb "see" (likewise KJV, ASV). NASB supplies "it" as the object.

Isa 60.19 --

1QIsa^a and LXX add "by night" (בלילה, τὴν νύκτα) in line 2 to maintain the parallel-ism with line 1 (Old Latin, RSV, NAB, NRSV). KJV, JB, NIV, NASB follow the MT in omitting the words.[15]

Jer 3.8 --

4QJer^a, LXX, Syriac read "*and she saw* (ותרא)" at the beginning of the verse (NRSV, NAB, REB, NLT [in JB and RSV before the publication of 4QJer^a]). This reading, in-stead of "*and I saw* (וארא MT)," fits the context better. The NIV follows the MT but rearranges the verse.[16]

Ps 145 --

This psalm is an acrostic poem in which each line begins with a different letter of the He-brew alphabet. In MT there is no line for the Hebrew letter *nun* (נ = N). This line is

---

[15] The NLT destroys the parallelism by reducing it to "No longer will you need the sun or moon to give you light."

[16] The LXX text of Jeremiah lacks words, phrases, sentences, and entire sections found in the MT and consequently is about one-sixth shorter than the MT text. 4QJer^{b,d} reflect this shorter text tradition and 4QJer^b shows the same internal arrangement in chapter 10 as the LXX. These differences suggest that the LXX and 4QJer represent an earlier edition of the book than the MT (Tov 1981:190-92, 264, 296-98; 1992:319-27). No modern translation reflects this shorter version of Jeremiah.

found between vss. 13 and 14 in 11QPs[a],[17] LXX, and the Syriac version. It is added in NIV, NLT, and NRSV, but omitted in KJV, ASV, and NASB. In the NRSV this line reads: "The Lord is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds."

Ps 151 --

This psalm in 11QPs[a], commemorating David's victory over Goliath, is also found in a slightly different recension in LXX, Old Latin, and Syriac. This has not been included in any of the modern English translations.[18]

Hab 2.16[19] --

MT   והערל ("and be uncircumcised")
KJV -- "and let thy foreskin be uncovered" (similarly ASV)
NASB -- "and expose your own nakedness"
NIV, NLT -- "and be exposed"

1QpHab   והרעל ("and stagger")[20]
NRSV, NAB, REB -- "and stagger"

1 Sam 1.24[21] --

4QSam[a], LXX, NIV, NASB, REB, NAB, NRSV, and NLT read "three year old bull." MT, KJV, and ASV read "three bulls."

1 Sam 10.27 --

4QSam[a] adds after vs. 27:

> "Now Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had been grievously oppressing the Gadites and the Reubenites. He would gouge out the right eye of each of them and would not grant Israel a deliverer. No one was left of the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not gouged out. But there were seven thousand men who had escaped from the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead." (NRSV)

Scholars in the past noted the difficult transition from 1 Sam 10.27 to 11.1 which introduced Nahash. The addition in 4QSam[a] provides a coherent account (as in NRSV). The

---

[17] This manuscript from Cave 11 contains 36 canonical psalms and eight non-canonical compositions. Some scholars (*i.e.,* Schiffman 1994:164-69, 178-80) contend that 11QPs[a] is a liturgical test and not a biblical text. E. Ulrich (1999:116-20) argues that it is a biblical text and the Masoretic version is a liturgical text.

[18] For a discussion of the contributions of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the text of the book of Psalms in the Hebrew Bible, *cf.* Flint 1997.

[19] One of the scrolls from Cave 1 is a commentary on Habakkuk (1QpHab) in which verses of the prophecy are followed by a paragraph of interpretation. Regarding the text of Habakkuk in 1QpHab, Wm. Brownlee writes: "Of 56 major variants in which questions of grammar and sense are involved, thirty have been judged to be superior readings -- that is deemed more likely to be original than those in our traditional text....about a third of these appreciably affect translation" (1964:21f; *cf.* Brownlee 1979).

[20] The LXX translates the 1QpHab reading as διασαλεύθητι καὶ σείσθητι (*diasaleuthēti kai seisthēti*, "shake and quake").

[21] Fragments of 1 Sam and 2 Sam were found in Cave 4 at Qumran (4QSam[a-c]). In many instances the text of these manuscripts agrees with the LXX over against the MT and clearly represents preferred readings to the traditional text in the MT. In 1 Sam and 2 Sam the NRSV has based 34 readings on 4QSam[a-c] and the LXX, 5 readings on 4QSam[a-c], and 81 readings on the LXX. Similarly, the NAB has based 70 readings on 4QSam[a-c] and the LXX, 15 readings on 4QSam[a], 6 readings on 4QSam[b], and 157 on the LXX.

same episode is also reported by Josephus (*Antiquities* 6.68-72). Thus, 4QSam^a pre- serves the original longer text after 1 Sam 10.27 and before 11.1.

Deut 32.8 --

MT בני ישראל ("sons of Israel")
KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV -- "*sons of Israel*"

4QDeut^q בני אל ("sons of God")
REB, NAB -- "*sons of God*" (RSV and JB before the publication of 4QDeut^q)

4QDeut^j בני אלים ("sons of gods")
NRSV -- "*sons of gods*"

LXX reads ἀγγέλων θεοῦ ("angels of God," its translation of the Hebrew בני־האלהים ("sons of God") in Gen 6.2, 4; Job 1.6; 2.1).[22]

Deut 32.15 --

At the beginning of the verse 4QDeut^q, LXX, and SamPent add: "Jacob ate his fill" (REB, NAB, NRSV. This is omitted in the MT (NASB, NIV, NLT).

Deut 32.43 --

This verse has four lines in the MT (KJV, ASV, RSV, NIV, NASB). In 4QDeut^q it has six lines (REB, NRSV). In the LXX it has eight lines (JB [before publication of 4QDeut^q]). NAB has four lines (the first three and the last lines of 4QDeut^q). NLT has five lines (omitting the fifth line of 4QDeut^q; a questionable text critical decision). One line (not in MT) is quoted in Hebrews 1.6. English translations of the readings in MT, LXX, and 4QDeut^q are found in *Appendix 1* on page 15.

Ex 1.5 --

MT שבעים נפש ("seventy souls")
All translations -- "seventy [souls]"

4QEx^a חמש ושבעים נפש ("seventy-five souls")
LXX -- ψυχαὶ πέντε καὶ ἐβδομήκοντα ("seventy-five souls")

The number "seventy" is also in the Hebrew text of Gen 46.27 and Deut 10.22. The number "seventy-five" is also found in the LXX of Gen 46.27 and Dt 10.22 (Codex Al- exandrinus). In the LXX of Gen 46.20 five additional descendants of Joseph are listed. It appears that Stephen in Acts 7.14 is following this text of "seventy-five" which now also is found in 4QEx^a.

VI. *Suggested history of the development and transmission of the text of the Hebrew Bible*

A. The above discussion demonstrates how the Qumran texts have contributed significantly to the establishment and improvement of the text of the Old Testament.

B. Contributions of the new documents from Qumran and environs to the history of the Hebrew text:

1. In the 1st century BC and 1st century AD there were at least four text traditions of the Old Testament in Palestine: proto-MT, LXX, Samaritan, and Qumran.

---

[22] NLT reads "of angelic beings" with the footnote: "As in Dead Sea Scrolls, which read *of the sons of God,* and the Greek version, which reads *of the angels of god*: Masoretic Text reads *of the sons of Israel*."

2.   The Qumran manuscripts represent these various text traditions -- 60 percent reflect the proto-MT, some texts are close to the LXX, and a few agree with the pre-Samaritan tradition. In addition, some readings are peculiar to Qumran.

3.   It is now obvious that the LXX translators worked directly from a Hebrew *Vorlage* (other than the MT) and cannot be accused of bad translation techniques to account for the variations from the MT.

4.   Documents from the Murabba'at caves and Nahal Hever (dating from the Second Jewish Revolt -- AD 132-135) have a text identical with that of the MT. These 2nd century texts also have the script that became canonized as proper for biblical texts. This suggests that by the end of the 1st century the text of the Old Testament was being stabilized and standardized according to the MT text tradition.[23]

C.   According to the Mishnah, at the Academy of Jamnia near the end of the 1st century AD, Rabbi Aqiba and his associates fixed the Old Testament consonantal text -- according to the MT tradition. The Murabba'at evidence indicates that the Rabbis effectively suppressed the other text traditions, including the LXX *Vorlage*.

D.   The Old Testament text used by the early church was the LXX text tradition.

1.   Most of the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament are from the LXX.

2.   The council held at Jamnia was a Jewish council, not Christian; in fact, it appears to have been anti-Christian in perspective.

3.   The Jews tried to suppress and discredit the use of the LXX (as used by Christians) by preparing new Greek translations (Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus).

4.   Hence, the Old Testament canon of the early church was broader than the Jewish canon of 22/24 books (39 books in the Protestant Bible), as fixed at the Council of Jamnia. This larger canon seems to be reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls (*cf.* above, p. 4).

VII.   *Greek manuscripts found at Qumran*

A.   Four manuscripts of the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible[24] have been identified in the texts from Cave 4: 4QLev^a gk, 4QpapLev^b gk, 4QNum gk, 4QDeut gk.[25]

1.   These texts, with some minor variants, agree with the LXX.

2.   These texts, along with other Hebrew manuscripts at Qumran which agree with the LXX, indicate the prevalence of the LXX text tradition in 1st century Palestine.

B.   Greek fragments have been found in Cave 7 (7QExod gr [7Q1], 7QEpJer gr [7Q2], 7QpapEn gr [7Q4, 8, 11-14] and unclassified fragments [7Q3, 5-7, 9-10, 15-18]). Some have attempted to identify some of these as New Testament fragments.[26] These identifications, especially 7Q5 = Mk 6.52f. have occasioned considerable discussion in New Testament studies, although very few scholars have accepted them. C. P. Thiede (1986, 1992, 1995) has continued to argue for the 7Q5 = Mk 6.52f. identification. R. Gundry (1999:698-707) has conclusively disproved this iden-

---

[23] *Cf.* Tov 1992:194f.

[24] These have been published in *DJD* 9 (1992).

[25] A Greek manuscript from Cave 4 (preserved in 80 fragments) appears to deal with the exodus (the names Moses, Egypt, Pharaoh have been identified) but cannot be identified with passages from Exodus. Hence, it is considered a paraphrase of Exodus and designated 4QpapExodpar gk (4Q 127), published in *DJD* 9 (1992).

[26] First suggested by J. O'Callaghan in 1992 in *Biblica* 33:91-100 (English translation by W. L. Holladay, Supplement to *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91/2 [1972], 1-14).

tification. The positive identification of other fragments in Cave 7 further question O'Callaghan's and Thiede's attempted identifications.

C.   At the site of Nahal Hever, south of En Gedi, in the "Cave of Horrors" a very important Greek manuscript of the Minor Prophets, HevXII gr, was found (published in *DJD* 8). This manuscript is dated late 1st century BC or early 1st century AD. Its text appears to be similar to a revision of the standard LXX text, known as the *kaige* recension (the Greek καί γε [*kai ge*] representing the Hebrew particle גַּ [*gam*] and σύν [*sun*] representing the Hebrew direct object marker אֵת [*eth*] in this revision -- features which appear in the later Aquila and Theodotion versions). Hence, this manuscript, containing portions of Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Zechariah, is very significant for the study of the Greek text of the Hebrew Bible.

D.   These Greek manuscripts suggest the use of the Greek language by some in the Qumran community and surrounding areas.

VIII.   *The present status of the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible*

A.   The Qumran literature has provided a variety of new witnesses to the text of the Hebrew Bible, dating a millennium or more earlier than previously existing texts.

B.   This new evidence clearly indicates that the MT does not always represent the most reliable text tradition and that readings from Qumran and/or the LXX deserve full consideration in the establishment of the text of the Hebrew Bible.

C.   These new developments suggest that at present an eclectic approach is necessary since no single text tradition appears wholly reliable.[27] This in some respects parallels developments in New Testament textual criticism over a century ago as the validity of the *Textus Receptus*[28] was questioned and eventually displaced.

PART 2: JEWISH HISTORY, RELIGION, AND CULTURE

I.   *Contributions to Jewish history*

A.   The Qumran community began in the latter part of the Maccabean Period (167-135 BC) and flourished in the Hasmonean Dynasty (135-63 BC).

1.   The Maccabean Revolt was occasioned by Antiochus IV Epiphanes' oppression of the Jews and his desecration of the temple in 169-167 BC. It was initiated by Mattathias and Judas Maccabaeus, his son, who took over Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, and on 25 Kislev 164 BC rededicated it (the origin of the Feast of Hanukkah ["dedication"]).

2.   The Maccabean rule was greatly extended and maintained by Simon (142-134 BC), John Hyrcanus (134-104 BC), Alexander Jannaeus (107-76 BC), and Salome Alexandra (76-67 BC).

3.   The Qumran community appears to have been founded during the reign of John Hyrcanus. The Qumran people objected to and condemned the established priesthood in Jerusalem which in their judgment had become politicized and corrupt.

---

[27] For a survey of this ongoing discussion regarding the text of the Hebrew Bible, *cf.* Würthwein 1979; Tov 1992; Scanlin 1993; Ulrich 1999.

[28] This was the Greek text of the New Testament used as the text base for the KJV and other contemporary translations. This text tradition was displaced by the discovery of many earlier and more reliable manuscripts in the past 125 years.

4.   It is not clear how the Qumran community related to local authorities, but being virtually self-contained it no doubt had a large measure of independence. The presence of the defense tower in the ruins suggests the need for some kind of protection from attackers -- political and/or marauding.

B.   The Qumran community during the early Roman Period (63 BC to AD 70).

    1.   Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II, sons of Salome Alexandra, engaged in a power struggle. Both appealed to the Romans and eventually the Romans under the command of Pompey conquered the area in 63 BC. While the leaders in Rome were engaged in political rivalry, the Hasmonean factions continued their power struggle in Jerusalem. After Caesar's assassination in 44 BC Herod emerged as the dominant figure in the power struggle and in 40 BC the Roman Senate made him king of Judea. In 37 BC Herod consolidated his power and conquered Judea and Jerusalem. For his allegiance to Octavian Augustus, the new Roman emperor, Herod was given additional territory in Palestine. Herod and his successors extensively promoted Hellenistic culture, the Greek language, and pagan civilization in Palestine, especially in the building of Hellenistic cities and numerous building projects in existing cities, such as pagan temples, theaters, palaces, stadiums, baths, and gymnasiums.

    2.   The Qumran community flourished in the early decades of Roman rule, but was abandoned during the reign of Herod -- possibly occasioned by the earthquake in 31 BC (evident in the earthquake fault in the ruins).

    3.   Herod died in 4 BC and the Romans divided his territory amongst his three sons: Herod Antipas, Philip, and Archelaus. After the deposition of Archelaus in AD 6, Judea was placed under direct Roman rule under prefects (*e.g.,* Pilate) and governors (Felix, Festus, Albinus, Gessius, Florus). In the 50's and 60's AD the Roman officials had increasing difficulty controlling the Jews. In AD 66 Florus was defeated by the Jews as he withdrew from Jerusalem. This was the beginning of the First Jewish Revolt (AD 66-70), during which the Jews achieved a measure of independence.

    4.   The Qumran community was re-established about AD 6 and continued until about AD 68. There are some possible veiled negative references to the Romans in the Qumran literature, especially regarding their promotion of Hellenistic culture in Palestine. The Qumran people undoubtedly supported the Zealots during the First Jewish Revolt, although not militarily since they first expected the Messiah to appear. When the Romans conquered the Jordan Valley, they occupied Qumran in about AD 68 -- before the devastating siege of Jerusalem and its destruction in AD 70 by Titus. The Zealots continued their resistance to the Romans in the fortress at Masada, near the south end of the Dead Sea. The Romans conquered Masada in AD 73. The excavations at Masada recovered manuscripts of biblical and non-canonical texts. The biblical texts generally follow the MT -- perhaps reflecting the trend set by the Academy of Jamnia (*cf.* p. 10).

C.   During the Second Jewish Revolt (AD 132-135) the area along the western shore of the Dead Sea was occupied by a Messianic community which identified Bar Kokhba as the Messiah.[29] In AD 132 Bar Kokhba captured Jerusalem, resumed sacrifices at the High Altar on the Temple Mount and appointed Eleazar as high priest. During this revolt the Jews achieved sufficient independence to issue their own coins with a legend "To the liberation of Jerusalem."

    1.   Documents found in the four caves in the Wadi Murabba'at, located about 11 miles south of Qumran include letters sent by the leader of the Second Jewish Revolt, Bar Kokhba (in

---

[29] Even the prominent Rabbi Aqiba believed that Bar Kokhba was the promised Messiah.

the new documents Ben Kosiba). These provide some historical evidence regarding this semi-legendary figure.

2. Emperor Hadrian quelled this revolt in AD 135 and re-named Jerusalem Aelia Capitolina. This paganization of the area also quashed these Jewish messianic movements in southern Palestine.

II. *Contributions to Jewish religion*

A. The Qumran community illustrates the religious diversity in 1st century Judaism which was not as monolithic as subsequent rabbinic Judaism.

1. Although the Qumran community is generally identified with some form of the Essenes, it does represent a distinct religious movement in the 1st century.

2. The Qumran protest against the religious leaders in Jerusalem indicates divergent views regarding the priesthood and the religious establishment there.

B. The Qumran documents represent a vast body of literature regarding a distinct religious movement. These documents are contemporaneous with the existence of the movement -- unparalleled in size and date of any other religious movement in the 1st century Palestine.

C. The Qumran literature provides valuable data for and insights in the hermeneutical and exegetical methods employed by a group of 1st century Jews. This material is valuable for the Jewish interpretation of the Hebrew Bible and the Christian interpretation of the Old and New Testaments.[30]

D. The Qumran literature documents the Messianic expectation of the Jews in the 1st century.

1. The establishment of the Qumran community was motivated by a strong anticipation of the coming of the Messiah to deliver his people.

2. This Messianic anticipation parallels and confirms the Messianic motivation of the Jesus movement described in the New Testament.

E. The presence of apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature in Hebrew and Aramaic indicates the extensive use of this literature in Jewish circles.

III. *Contributions to Jewish culture*

A. The study of Semitic languages:

1. Various Semitic languages are represented in the Qumran texts: Biblical Hebrew (including paleo-Hebrew), Mishnaic Hebrew, Palestinian Aramaic, Christian Palestinian Aramaic.

2. Actual documents in these Semitic languages from the 1st century BC and 1st century AD were very sparse prior to the Qumran discoveries. Thus, these new documents are very valuable for grammatical and lexical studies of these languages, especially Hebrew and Aramaic.

3. The abundance of Hebrew texts in the Qumran literature indicates the rather extensive use of Hebrew in the 1st century (in addition to Aramaic). The use of Hebrew in non-biblical documents contributes significantly to the study of Hebrew syntax and vocabulary in the Hebrew Bible.

4. These are documents directly from the 1st century BC and 1st century AD (not subsequent copies) and thus give the languages as they were actually used in that period.

---

[30] *Cf.* Bruce 1959, Brooke 1985.

B. The large size of the Qumran library illustrates the literacy and literary interests in 1st century Palestine. These documents indicate that 1st century Palestine was a literate society which produced a variety of literary documents.

C. The presence of Greek documents in this Jewish community is striking. A culture is often transmitted through its language, although there is no indication of the impact of Hellenistic culture on the Qumran community. In any case, this does suggest the cultural diversity of 1st century Palestine.

REFERENCES

Beck, A., D. N. Freedman, and J. A. Sanders
    1998   *The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Brooke, G. J.
    1985   *Exegesis at Qumran: 4 QFlorilegium in the Jewish Context.* Sheffield: JSOT Press.

Bruce, F. F.
    1959   *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Brownlee. W.
    1964   *The Meaning of the Scrolls for the Bible.* New York: Oxford University Press.

    1979   *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk.* Missoula: Scholars Press.

Flint, P. W.
    1997   *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms.* Leiden: Brill.

    2001   "Noncanonical Writings in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Apocrypha, Other Previously Known Writings, Pseudepigrapha" in *The Bible at Qumran: Text, Shape, and Interpretation,* ed. P. W. Flint. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co. pp. 80-126.

Gundry, R.
    1999   "No Nu in Line 1 of 7Q5: A Final Disidentification of 7Q5 with Mark 6.52-53," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 118:698-707.

Scanlin, H.
    1993   *The Dead Sea Scrolls & Modern Translations of the Old Testament.* Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Schiffman, L. H.
    1994   *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls.* Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.

Thiede, C. P.
    1986   *Die älteste Evangelium-Handschrift? Das Markus-Fragment von Qumran und die Anfänge der christlichen Überlieferung des Neuen Testaments.* Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus.

    1992   *The Earliest Gospel Manuscript? The Qumran Papyrus (7Q5) and its Significance for New Testament Studies.* Exeter: Paternoster (ET of the above).

    1995   *Rekindling the Word: In Search of Gospel Truth.* Leominster, England: Gracewing.

Tov, E.

  1981   *The Textual Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research.* Jerusalem: Simor.

  1992   *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible.* Minneapolis: Fortress.

  2001   "A Categorized List of all the 'Biblical Texts' found in the Judaean Desert," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 8:67-84.

Ulrich, E.

  1999   *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origin of the Bible.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Würthwein, E.

  1979   *The Text of the Old Testament,* tr. E. F. Rhodes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Appendix 1

TEXT TRADITIONS OF DEUTERONOMY 32.43

Masoretic Text:

  1   Shout for joy, O nations, with his people
  2   For he will avenge the blood of his servants
  3   And will render vengeance to his adversaries
  4   And will purge his land, his people.

Qumran Text (4QDeut^q 32.42):

  1   Shout for joy, O heavens, with him
  2   And worship him, all you divine ones
  3   For he will avenge the blood of his sons
  4   And he will render vengeance to his adversaries
  5   And he will recompense the ones hating him
  6   And he purges the land of his people.

Septuagint Text:

  1   Shout for joy, O heavens, with him
  2   And let all the sons of God worship him
  3   Shout for joy, O nations, with his people
  4   And let all the angels of God be strong in him
  5   Because he avenges the blood of his sons
  6   And he will avenge and recompense justice to his enemies
  7   And he will recompense the ones hating
  8   And the Lord will cleanse the land of his people.

****

Hebrews 1.6 -- And let all the angels of God worship him.

COLUMN XXXIII OF 1QIsaᵃ (Isa 40.2-28)

	Verse
	40.2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7. 8
	9
	10
	11
	12
	13. 14
	15. 16
	17. 18
	19
	20
	21
	22
	23
	24
	25. 26
	27
	28