A HARMONY OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES IN THREE TRADITIONS

The Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, and the Dead Sea Scrolls — A Complete Reference Harmony of Seven Books with Master Indices

Independent Scholarly Research

2026

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Unified Preface

The Project and Its Purpose

This volume presents the complete MT/LXX/DSS Textual Harmony Project — a systematic scholarly comparison of the three principal ancient textual traditions of the Hebrew scriptures across seven books of the Old Testament. It combines the seven phase documents into a single reference work, adds a unified master index of all textual variants documented across the project, consolidates the bibliography, and concludes with a synthetic analysis of what these seven books together reveal about the history of the biblical text.

The seven phases were designed to illuminate seven qualitatively distinct *types* of textual divergence between the traditions:

Phase	Book	Divergence Type	Summary
1	Jeremiah	**Literary-structural**	Two complete Hebrew literary editions differing by one-eighth in length and in the placement of nine chapters

Phase	Book	Divergence Type	Summary
2A	Psalms	**Compositional**	Different psalm counts, different orderings of the latter Psalter (11QPsalms^a), different canonical boundaries
2B	Samuel	**Narrative**	Same events told differently: Goliath at 4 vs. 6 cubits; missing Nahash paragraph; contradictory accounts of Saul's death
2C	Exodus	**Architectural**	Same Tabernacle described in same two-part structure but different order; bronze laver absent from LXX
2D	Twelve Prophets	**Revisional**	One Greek tradition deliberately corrected toward another — the kaige recension (8HevXIIgr)
2E	Isaiah	**Interpretive-theological**	A translator's consistent theological purposes shape readings that carry meanings the Hebrew does not require
2F	Daniel	**Substitutional**	OG so different from MT that the church replaced it with Theodotion; additions raise the canon boundary question

The Three Traditions

The Masoretic Text (MT)

The MT is the standard Hebrew Bible of Judaism and the basis of nearly all Protestant and most Catholic Old Testament translations, stabilized by the Masoretes between approximately 600 and 1000 C.E. The oldest complete manuscripts are the **Aleppo Codex** (c. 920 C.E.) and the **Leningrad Codex** (1009 C.E.) — the latter being the basis of BHS (5th ed., 1997) and the ongoing BHQ. The DSS demonstrate that before 100 C.E. multiple Hebrew text traditions coexisted; the MT's uniformity is a historical achievement of deliberate standardization, not evidence of pristine preservation from the original authors.

The Septuagint (LXX)

The LXX is the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures, begun in Alexandria approximately 250 B.C.E. and continuing through the second and first centuries B.C.E. It is not a single document but a collection of translations with varying degrees of fidelity and interpretive freedom. From approximately the first century B.C.E. onward, Jewish communities began revising the Greek translations toward the proto-MT, producing the kaige recension (8HevXIIgr), then the recensions of Aquila, Symmachus (fl. c. 200 C.E.), and Theodotion, and Origen's Hexapla. In the unique case of Daniel, Theodotion entirely displaced the Old Greek in Christian use by the third century C.E.

The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

The DSS were discovered between 1947 and 1956 at Qumran and surrounding sites. They include approximately 900 manuscripts from Cave 4 alone, dating from approximately 250 B.C.E. to 68 C.E. They demonstrate conclusively that: (1) the proto-MT was one of several Hebrew text traditions before 100 C.E.; (2) other Hebrew traditions existed that independently explain many LXX divergences from the MT; (3) both shorter and longer editions of some books circulated simultaneously in Hebrew; (4) for Daniel specifically, all eight DSS manuscripts confirm the 12-chapter Hebrew/Aramaic text without any of the LXX additions.

The History of This Scholarship

Origen (c. 185–254 C.E.) produced the Hexapla — the first systematic comparison of Hebrew and Greek biblical texts. **Jerome** (c. 345–420 C.E.), producing the Latin Vulgate, followed *Hebraica veritas*, using the Hebrew as his primary authority. **Benjamin Kennicott** (1776–1780) and **Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi** (1784–1798) produced the first systematic collations of Hebrew manuscript variants. **Paul de Lagarde** (1827–1891) proposed that all LXX manuscripts descend from a single original; **Paul Kahle** (1875–1964) challenged this. The 1947 discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls transformed the field entirely — narrowing the gap between manuscripts and events from ~1,200 years to ~400 years. **Emanuel Tov** (b. 1941) and **Eugene Ulrich** (b. 1938) represent the current synthesis.

Part Eight: Master Index of All Textual Variants

Index Organization

This master index cross-references all textual variants documented across Phases 1–2F by biblical book and by variant type.

Variant Type Codes: [OMIT] LXX lacks MT material · [ADD] material in one tradition absent from others · [ORDER] same material in different sequence · [VAR] verbal variant · [THEOL] theologically motivated · [CORRUPT] MT demonstrably corrupted · [COMPOSITE] NT composite quotation

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Section A: Variants by Biblical Book

Jeremiah

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Jer 1:1	“words of Jeremiah” (plural)	“word of God” (singular)	None	—	[THEOL]	1

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Jer 1:10	Six verbs of judgment/restoration	Five verbs — lacks "overthrow"	None	—	[OMIT]	1
Jer 1:11–12	"almond-tree" / "I watch" (Hebrew wordplay)	"nut-tree" / "I hasten" — wordplay lost	None	—	[VAR]	1
Jer 10:6–8	Three-verse doxology present	**Entirely absent**	**4QJer^b: also absent**	—	[ADD by MT]	1
Jer 17:1–4	Extended; Asherim references	Much shorter; Asherim absent	None	—	[OMIT]	1
Jer 20:7	"thou hast **persuaded** me" (*pittitâni*)	"thou hast **deceived** me"	None	—	[VAR / THEOL]	1
Jer 25:13ff	OAN at chapters 46–51 (end of book)	**OAN in middle** (after 25:13)	4QJer^a=MT; 4QJer^b=LXX	—	[ORDER]	1
Jer 31:32	"I was **husband** to them" (*ba'alti*)	"I **disregarded** them" (1 letter: *ga'alti*)	None	**Heb 8:9 follows LXX**	[VAR — 1 letter]	1
Jer 31:31–34	"my law… in their heart"	"my laws… on their hearts"	None	**Heb 8:8–12**	[VAR / THEOL]	1

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Jer 46–51	OAN: Egypt/Babylon/Philistia/Edom/Ammon/Arabia/Damascus/Elam	LXX: Elam/Egypt/Babylon/Philistia/Edom/Ammon/Kedar/Damascus	Both editions attested	—	[ORDER]	1
Jer 52:28–30	Three deportation counts (total 4,600)	**Entirely absent**	None	—	[ADD by MT]	1

Psalms

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Ps 2:12	"Kiss the **son**" (*bar*, Aramaic)	"Accept **correction**"	None	—	[VAR]	2A
Ps 8:5	"lower than **God**" (*Elohim*)	"lower than **angels**" (*angelōn*)	None	**Heb 2:7 requires LXX**	[VAR/THEOL]	2A
Ps 9–10	**Two psalms**	**One psalm** (original acrostic unity)	Unclear	—	[ORDER]	2A
Ps 16:9	"flesh shall dwell **in safety**"	"flesh shall rest **in hope**"	4Q85 fragmentary	Acts 2:26 follows LXX	[VAR/THEOL]	2A

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Ps 22:16	"**like a lion** [at] my hands" (*ka'ari*)	"they **pierced** my hands" (*ōryxan*)	4Q88 damaged	John 20:25 implied	[VAR — 1 letter]	2A
Ps 40:6	"**ears** hast thou opened"	"a **body** hast thou prepared" (*sōma*)	None	**Heb 10:5 requires LXX**	[VAR — major]	2A
Ps 106:48	Doxology only	Adds "of Aggaeus and Zacharias"	None	—	[ADD in LXX]	2A
Ps 110:1	"my **lord**" (*adoni*, human form)	"my **Lord**" (*Kyrios*, divine)	None	Matt 22:44; Acts 2:34 — 33+ NT citations	[VAR/ THEOL]	2A
Ps 118:22	"stone the builders rejected"	Same	**11QPsalms^a: agrees with MT**	Matt 21:42; Acts 4:11	Same	2A
Ps 151	**Absent from MT**	Present	**DSS: 151A + 151B (longer)**	—	[ADD in LXX/DSS]	2A
11QPsalms^a	150 psalms, MT order	151 psalms	**41 compositions, different order**	—	[ORDER — major]	2A

Samuel

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Before 1 Sam 11:1	**Nahash paragraph missing**	Connective only	**4QSam^a: full paragraph**	—	[ADD in DSS; haplography in MT]	2B

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
1 Sam 2:10	"his anointed" (*mĕshîchô*)	"**his Christ**" (*Christou autou*)	4QSam^a: MT-aligned	—	[THEOL]	2B
1 Sam 13:1	**Numerically corrupt**: "a son of one year"	**Omitted**	Not preserved	Acts 13:21: 40 years	[CORRUPT in MT]	2B
1 Sam 17:4	Goliath: **six cubits and a span** (~9'9")	Goliath: **four cubits and a span** (~6'9")	Not clearly preserved	—	[VAR — famous]	2B
1 Sam 17:12–31	Present	**Absent**	Unclear	—	[ADD by MT]	2B
1 Sam 17:55–58	Saul asks "whose son?" (contradicts 16:21)	**Absent**	Unclear	—	[CONTRADICTION in MT]	2B
1 Sam 31 vs 2 Sam 1	Saul: suicide AND Amalekite killing	Same contradiction	Not clearly preserved	—	[INTERNAL CONTRADICTION]	2B

Exodus

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS/SP	NT	Type	Phase
Exod 25:8	"that I may **dwell**" (*shâkan*)	"I will **appear**"	—	—	[VAR/ THEOL]	2C
Exod 25:22	"**mercy-seat**" (*kappôret*)	"**propitiatory**" (*hilastērion*)	—	Rom 3:25 uses LXX term	[VAR/ THEOL]	2C
Exod	No blueprint	Same	**SP/**	—	[ADD in	2C

Reference	MT	LXX	DSS/SP	NT	Type	Phase
36:8ff	dimensions in construction		**4QpaleoExod^m : adds dimensions**		SP/DSS]	
Exod 36–39	Priestly garments ch. 39 (late)	Priestly garments ch. 36 (early)	SP: agrees with MT	—	[ORDER — major]	2C
Exod 38:8	**Bronze laver present**	**Bronze laver entirely absent**	MasExod: MT-aligned	—	[OMIT in LXX]	2C
Exod 38:21–24	Ithamar/Bezalel/Oholiab named	**Attribution paragraph absent**	—	—	[OMIT in LXX]	2C
Exod 38:21–31	Bronze: **2,400 shekels**	Bronze: **1,430 shekels**	—	—	[VAR — numbers]	2C

Twelve Minor Prophets

Reference	MT	OG (LXX)	8HevXIIgr	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Amos 9:12	"possess **Edom**"	"remnant of **mankind**"	Not preserved	—	**Acts 15:17 requires LXX**	[VAR — 1 letter]	2D
Hab 1:5	"Look **among the nations**"	"**despisers**"	Partially preserved	1QpHab: "traitors"	Acts 13:41 follows LXX/1QpHab	[VAR]	2D
Hab 2:4	"**his** faith"	"**my** faith"	**Corrects to "his"**	1QpHab: "his faithfulness"	Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38	[VAR — 1 suffix letter]	2D
Micah 5:2	"Beth-lehem…	Same	Partially	Matt 2:6: "**not the**	[VAR + COMPOSIT	2D	

Reference	MT	OG (LXX)	8HevXIIgr	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
	little"	substance	preserved	**least**" (reverses MT)	E]		
Nah 1:2	"**reserveth** [wrath]"	"**cuts off**"	**Corrects to "reservetth"**	—	—	[VAR — kaige]	2D
Zeph 3:17	"**silent** in his love"	"**refresh** thee with his love"	Damaged	—	—	[VAR]	2D
Zech 12:10	"unto **me**… for **him**"	"**me**… for **him**"	"me" preserved	—	John 19:37 quotes "him whom they pierced"	[VAR — grammatical paradox]	2D

Isaiah

Reference	MT	LXX	1QIsa^a	NT	Type	Phase
Isa 6:9–10	God **commands** hardening (imperatives)	People **have hardened themselves** (perfects)	Agrees with MT	Matt 13 / Acts 28: LXX; John 12:40: MT theology	[VAR/ THEOL]	2E
Isa 7:14	*'almâh* (**young woman**)	*parthenos* (**virgin**)	*h'lmh* — agrees with MT	**Matt 1:23: LXX**	[VAR — most debated]	2E
Isa 40:3	Prepare way **in the wilderness**	Voice crying **in the wilderness**	Agrees with MT	**All four Gospels: LXX punctuation**	[VAR — punctuation]	2E
Isa 42:1	Servant **unnamed**	Servant = **Jacob/Israel**	No identification	Matt 12:18: neither (no Jacob)	[VAR]	2E
Isa 49:17	"thy **sons**"	"thy	**1QIsa^a:**	—	[VAR —	2E

Reference	MT	LXX	1QIsa^a	NT	Type	Phase
	(*bânayik*)	**builders**”	**builders**		DSS/LXX agree]	
Isa 52:15	Servant “shall **sprinkle**” nations	Nations “shall **wonder at**” him	Agrees with MT	—	[VAR/ THEOL]	2E
Isa 53:4	Bore our **diseases** (*chŏlî*)	Bore our **sins** (*hamartias*)	Agrees with MT	Matt 8:17: **MT**; 1 Pet 2:24: **LXX**	[VAR/ THEOL]	2E
Isa 53:11	“he shall see” (no object)	“to show him **light**”	**1QIsa^a: “he shall see light”**	—	[VAR — DSS/LXX agree]	2E
Isa 53:12	“made **intercession**” for transgressors	“delivered because of iniquities”	Agrees with MT	Luke 22:37: MT; Rom 4:25 echo: LXX	[VAR/ THEOL]	2E
Isa 61:1	“opening of **prison**”	“**recovery of sight** to blind”	Agrees with MT	**Luke 4:18: LXX**	[VAR]	2E

Daniel

Reference	MT/ Aramaic	OG (LXX)	Theodotion	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
Dan 3:23–24	Abrupt transition	**Prayer of Azariah + Song of Three Young Men**	Retains additions	**All 8 MSS: absent**	—	[ADD in OG/Th]	2F
Dan 4	Standard length	**~1/3 longer; different narrative frame**	Follows MT	MT-aligned	—	[ADD + ORDER]	2F
Dan 7:13	*kĕbar*	*hōs huios*	Same	MT-	Matt	[VAR —	2F

Reference	MT/ Aramaic	OG (LXX)	Theodotion	DSS	NT	Type	Phase
	'ĕnâsh	*anthrōpou*		aligned	24:30; 26:64; Rev 1:7 — **Theodotion**	NT uses Th]	
Dan 9:25	*māshîaḥ nâgîd* (anointed prince)	*chrisma* (anointing)	***Christou archon* (Christ the prince)**	MT-aligned	—	[VAR — Th renders *Christos*]	2F
Dan 9:26	Anointed one "cut off, has nothing"	"anointing and judgment destroyed"	"anointing destroyed, no judgment in him"	MT-aligned	—	[VAR — three renderings]	2F
After Dan 12	Ends at 12:13	**Bel and the Dragon**	**Bel and the Dragon**	**All 8 MSS: absent**	—	[ADD in OG/Th]	2F
Before/ after Dan	**Absent**	**Susanna**	**Susanna**	**All 8 MSS: absent**	—	[ADD in OG/Th]	2F

Section B: Key NT Citations — Which Tradition the NT Follows

NT Reference	OT Source	MT	LXX/DSS	NT Follows	Significance
Matt 1:23	Isa 7:14	*'almâh*	*parthenos*	**LXX**	Virgin birth
Matt 2:6	Micah 5:2	"Beth-lehem… little"	Same	**Neither** (composite; reverses MT)	Bethlehem prophecy
Matt 3:3	Isa 40:3	Way in wilderness	Voice in wilderness	**LXX punctuation**	John the Baptist

NT Reference	OT Source	MT	LXX/DSS	NT Follows	Significance
Matt 8:17	Isa 53:4	Bore our **diseases**	Bore our **sins**	**MT**	Healing ministry
Matt 13:14–15	Isa 6:9–10	God commands hardening	People self-harden	**LXX**	Parable explanation
Matt 22:44	Ps 110:1	*adoni* (human)	*Kyrios* (divine)	**LXX**	Temple argument
Matt 24:30; 26:64	Dan 7:13	Son of man	Same	**Theodotion**	Eschatological Son of Man
Luke 4:18–19	Isa 61:1	Opening of prison	Recovery of sight	**LXX**	Nazareth sermon
Luke 22:37	Isa 53:12	Made intercession	Delivered	**MT**	Passion prediction
John 19:37	Zech 12:10	“me… for him”	“me… for him”	Neither precisely	Pierced side
Acts 2:25–28	Ps 16:8–11	Dwell in safety	Rest **in hope**	**LXX**	Resurrection
Acts 13:41	Hab 1:5	Among the nations	**Despisers**	**LXX / 1QpHab**	Paul’s warning
Acts 15:17	Amos 9:12	**Edom**	**Mankind**	**LXX**	Gentile inclusion
Acts 28:26–27	Isa 6:9–10	God hardens	People self-harden	**LXX**	Paul’s final word
Rom 1:17	Hab 2:4	**His** faith	**My** faith	**Neither** (omits pronoun)	Justification by faith
Rom 3:25	Exod 25:22	mercy-seat	**propitiatory** (*hilastērion*)	**LXX term**	Christ as propitiation
Heb 2:7	Ps 8:5	Lower than **God**	Lower than **angels**	**LXX — requires “angels”**	Incarnation argument
Heb 8:8–12	Jer	I was	I **disregarded**	**LXX**	New covenant

NT Reference	OT Source	MT	LXX/DSS	NT Follows	Significance
	31:31–34	**husband**	them		argument
Heb 10:5	Ps 40:6	**Ears** opened	**Body** prepared	**LXX — requires "body"**	Incarnation argument
Heb 10:38	Hab 2:4	His faith	My faith	**Neither** (unique form)	Found in no ancient MS precisely
Rev 1:7; 12–13	Dan 7:13; 8; 11	Apocalyptic visions	Same	**Theodotion throughout**	Entire Revelation framework
1 Pet 2:22	Isa 53:9	No **violence** in mouth	No **deceit** in mouth	**LXX**	Sinlessness of Christ
1 Pet 2:24	Isa 53:5	By his stripes healed	Same	**LXX**	Atonement

Part Nine: Consolidated Bibliography

I. Critical Text Editions

Hebrew / Aramaic (MT)

- *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS). Edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. 5th ed. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.
- *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (BHQ). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004–. Volumes: McCarthy (*Psalms*, 2014); Gelston (*Minor Prophets*, 2010); Aejmelaeus and Quast (*Exodus*, 2023); van der Kooij et al. (*Isaiah*, 2013); Geissen et al. (*Daniel*, 2016).

Greek (LXX and Theodotion)

- Rahlfs, A., and R. Hanhart, eds. *Septuaginta*. Rev. ed. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.
- Göttingen Septuagint. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Ziegler (*Ieremias*, Vol. 15, 2nd ed. 1976); Rahlfs (*Psalmi cum Odis*, Vol. 10, 3rd ed. 1979); Fernández Marcos (*Reges I et II*, Vol. VIII/1, 2011); Wevers (*Exodus*, Vol. II/1, 1991); Ziegler (*Duodecim Prophetae*, Vol. XIII, 3rd ed. 1984); Ziegler (*Isaias*, Vol. XIV, 2nd ed. 1967); Ziegler and Munnich (*Susanna, Daniel, Bel et Draco*, Vol. XVI/2, 2nd ed. 1999).

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- *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (DJD). Oxford University Press, 1955–2010. 40 volumes. Key volumes: I (1QpHab, 1955); IV (11QPsalms^a, 1965); VIII (8HevXIIgr, 1990); IX (4QpaleoExod^m, 1992); XII (4QExod-Lev^f, 1994); XV (4QJer^{a-}e, 1997); XVI (4QPsalms, 4QDan, 2000); XVII (4QSam^{a-}c, 2005); XXXII (1QIsa^a, 2010).

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Part Ten: Synthesis — What the Seven Books Together Reveal

The Seven Mechanisms of Divergence

Mechanism 1: Two Complete Literary Editions (Jeremiah)

The existence of two complete Hebrew literary editions — confirmed by 4QJer^b and 4QJer^d — establishes that ancient editors could produce substantially different versions of the same prophetic book, both of which circulated simultaneously with authority. This applies beyond Jeremiah: similar two-edition situations have been argued for Ezekiel, Job, and Proverbs.

Mechanism 2: Open Compositional Boundaries (Psalms)

The 11QPsalms^a scroll demonstrates that canonical boundaries and internal order could remain partially open well into the first century C.E. The first 89 psalms appear fixed before the Qumran period; the arrangement of Psalms 90–150 was still fluid. When NT authors quote "the Psalms," they quote from a tradition whose canonical shape was being settled in their own generation.

Mechanism 3: Narrative Accretion (Samuel)

The Samuel evidence demonstrates editorial accretion — independent narrative traditions incorporated into a growing text without always harmonizing their contradictions. The Goliath narrative contains two incompatible introductions because an editor incorporated a folk-tradition account without removing the earlier court-musician account. These same processes of accretion, independent tradition, haplography, and harmonization characterize the textual complexities of the Gospel tradition.

Mechanism 4: Editorial Reorganization (Exodus)

The Tabernacle narratives reveal the same content deliberately reordered according to different theological principles. Three Hebrew editions circulated simultaneously (MT, LXX Vorlage, SP/4QpaleoExod^m), each representing a different editorial stage.

Mechanism 5: Systematic Revision (Twelve Prophets)

The Nahal Hever scroll reveals deliberate revisional activity — the kaige recension — the first-century Jewish choice between two different Greek text traditions, deliberately aligning the Greek Bible with the proto-MT. The NT authors working simultaneously were quoting from the Old Greek that the kaige revisers were correcting — explaining why some NT quotations match the LXX while others agree with the MT against the standard LXX.

Mechanism 6: Interpretive Translation (Isaiah)

The LXX of Isaiah reveals a translator working with consistent theological purposes — making interpretive choices that carry specific theological freight: *parthenos* (virgin) for *'almâh* (young woman); voice *in* the wilderness for John the Baptist; self-hardening for God-commanded hardening; "body prepared" for ears opened. These choices are not errors but theological interpretations that shaped NT Christology, soteriology, and ecclesiology at decisive points. The LXX translator of Isaiah was a theologian in his own right, and his theological choices became part of the scriptural tradition the NT authors inherited.

Mechanism 7: Substitution and Canon Expansion (Daniel)

Daniel reveals the most dramatic divergence in the project: an Old Greek translation so different from its source that the church replaced it entirely with Theodotion's revision, while retaining the additions (Susanna, Prayer of Azariah, Bel and the Dragon) embedded in the Greek tradition. This mechanism involves not just textual but **canonical divergence** — the three major Christian traditions (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant) disagree to this day about whether these additions are canonical scripture. The DSS's unanimous silence confirms the 12-chapter Hebrew/Aramaic Daniel as the Second Temple Jewish tradition; the additions were not part of it at Qumran.

The Central Conclusion

Across all seven books, seven mechanisms, and three traditions, the project supports the conclusion articulated by Eugene Ulrich (*The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, p. 99):

"The books of the Hebrew Bible were not single, simple, fixed, monolithic compositions. They were living, growing compositions, shaped and reshaped over centuries by different communities with different needs, different theologies, and different understandings of what the text meant and how it should be preserved."

This is not corrosive of theological confidence in any tradition. The MT is not rendered untrustworthy by the existence of alternative readings; the LXX is not rendered inferior by its dependence on different Vorlagen; the DSS are not marginal by their fragmentary character. All three traditions are witnesses — incomplete, partial, historically conditioned witnesses — to a

body of scripture that was already ancient, already authoritative, and already textually plural when the earliest New Testament documents were written.

The harmony of the three traditions is not the elimination of their differences. It is the documentation of those differences with sufficient precision that the reader can see, at each point, what the ancient witnesses actually say — and can engage with the text in all its historical depth and theological richness.

A Final Note

The seven books harmonized in this project — Jeremiah, Psalms, Samuel, Exodus, the Twelve Minor Prophets, Isaiah, and Daniel — represent the most textually divergent and most extensively studied books in the MT/LXX/DSS relationship. They are also the books most intensively cited in the New Testament. This convergence is not accidental: the books most theologically important to the early church were also those with the most complex and living textual histories.

What remains — Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Ezekiel, and the wisdom literature of the Apocrypha — presents its own textual traditions, its own DSS manuscripts, and its own patterns of MT/LXX divergence. The project begun here is, in the most literal sense, a beginning.

The ancient manuscripts are not finished speaking. The BHQ is still in progress. New fragments from the Judean desert continue to be identified and published. Digital imaging technologies continue to reveal readings in damaged scrolls that were previously illegible. The text of the Hebrew Bible is not a closed problem but an open conversation — one that has been ongoing for more than two thousand years and shows no sign of concluding.

This harmony is offered as one contribution to that conversation.

Part One: Jeremiah — Literary-Structural Divergence

Phase Preface

This volume presents the first phase of a systematic harmony of the three principal ancient textual traditions of the Hebrew scriptures: the **Masoretic Text** (MT), the **Septuagint** (LXX), and the **Dead Sea Scrolls** (DSS). The book of Jeremiah is chosen as the starting point because it exhibits the most dramatic divergence among these three traditions of any book in the Old Testament canon — a divergence so extensive and so well-documented by the manuscript evidence that it demands a harmony treatment before any other book.

The Three Traditions

The Masoretic Text (MT)

The MT is the authoritative Hebrew text of the Old Testament as standardized by the Masoretes — a group of Jewish scribal scholars active in Tiberias, Babylon, and Palestine from approximately 600 to 1000 C.E. The MT of Jeremiah is preserved most completely in:

- **Codex Leningradensis** (L, 1009 C.E.) — the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible; basis of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS, 5th ed., Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997) and the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (BHQ)
- **Aleppo Codex** (A, c. 920 C.E.) — older but partially damaged; basis of the Hebrew University Bible Project (HUBP)

The MT of Jeremiah is **approximately 3,100 Hebrew words longer** than the LXX — roughly **one-eighth longer** than the Greek tradition. It also differs from the LXX in the **arrangement of the Oracles Against the Nations** (OAN): in the MT these appear at chapters 46–51 (near the end of the book); in the LXX they appear in the middle (after chapter 25:13).

English translations based primarily on the MT: ESV, NASB, NIV, KJV, NKJV, NRSV.

The Septuagint (LXX)

The LXX of Jeremiah is a Greek translation made in Alexandria, Egypt, most likely during the second century B.C.E. It is preserved in:

- **Codex Vaticanus** (B, 4th century C.E.) — oldest and most reliable LXX manuscript for most books
- **Codex Sinaiticus** (א, 4th century C.E.)
- **Codex Alexandrinus** (A, 5th century C.E.)

The standard critical edition is **Rahlfs-Hanhart** *Septuaginta* (2006, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft). The ongoing *Göttingen Septuagint* (volumes by Joseph Ziegler for Jeremiah, 2nd ed. 1976) provides the most complete critical apparatus.

The LXX of Jeremiah is approximately **2,700 Greek words shorter** than what would be expected if it were a straight translation of the MT. It is not a compressed translation of the MT; it represents **a different and shorter Hebrew Vorlage** (the Hebrew manuscript from which it was translated). This conclusion — long debated — has been definitively confirmed by the Dead Sea Scrolls.

English translations of the LXX: **NETS** (*A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, Oxford University Press, 2007) is the standard scholarly edition. The **Brenton LXX** (1851) is public domain. This harmony uses the **Brenton** translation for the LXX text.

The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

Six fragmentary manuscripts of Jeremiah have been identified among the Dead Sea Scrolls:

Signum	Location	Character	Significance
4QJer^a (4Q70)	Cave 4, Qumran	Hebrew	Aligns with MT
4QJer^b (4Q71)	Cave 4, Qumran	Hebrew	**Aligns with LXX** — shorter text
4QJer^c (4Q72)	Cave 4, Qumran	Hebrew	Mixed; mostly MT
4QJer^d (4Q72a)	Cave 4, Qumran	Hebrew	**Aligns with LXX** — shorter text
4QJer^e (4Q72b)	Cave 4, Qumran	Hebrew	Fragmentary
2QJer (2Q13)	Cave 2, Qumran	Hebrew	Small fragments; MT-aligned

The critical edition is in **Discoveries in the Judaean Desert** (DJD): Volume XV (Oxford University Press, 1997), edited by Eugene Ulrich and Frank Moore Cross. The accessible scholarly translation is in **The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible** (Abegg, Flint, Ulrich; HarperOne, 1999), pp. 399–462.

The decisive significance of 4QJer^b and 4QJer^d is that they prove the LXX's shorter text is not the product of a Greek translator who abridged or compressed the MT. These Hebrew scrolls, written before the LXX translation but in the same shorter form, demonstrate that **two distinct Hebrew editions of Jeremiah circulated in antiquity** — a shorter edition (represented by the LXX Vorlage, 4QJer^b, 4QJer^d) and a longer edition (represented by the MT, 4QJer^a, 4QJer^c). Both editions are ancient. The MT's longer text is not more "original" simply because it is longer; the shorter edition preserved in the LXX and confirmed by the DSS is equally ancient.

Methodology

Text Presentation

This harmony presents the three traditions in parallel for each passage, using the following format:

MT — English translation from the Hebrew (American Standard Version, ASV, 1901; public domain), with significant Hebrew terms transliterated and noted where relevant.

LXX — English translation from the Greek (Brenton, 1851; public domain), with significant Greek terms noted where the LXX diverges in meaning from the MT.

DSS — Where DSS fragments survive for a passage, the DSS reading is given. Where 4QJer^b or 4QJer^d confirms the LXX reading against the MT, this is explicitly noted. Where no DSS fragment survives for a passage, the column reads "No DSS fragment for this passage."

Variance Classification

Each variance is classified by type:

Code	Type	Description
[OMIT]	Omission	LXX lacks material present in MT
[ADD]	Addition	MT has material absent from LXX
[ORDER]	Order	Same material in different sequence
[VAR]	Verbal variant	Different word, phrase, or clause
[THEOL]	Theological	Variant appears to reflect theological interpretation
[ORTH]	Orthographic	Spelling/scribal difference only

Part One: The Opening Chapters (Jeremiah 1–10)

Chapter 1: The Call of Jeremiah

Overview: Jeremiah 1 exhibits relatively few major divergences between the MT and LXX, making it a useful starting point for the harmony methodology. The chapter narrates the prophet's call, his visions of the almond branch and the boiling pot, and God's charge to Jeremiah to speak to the nations. The LXX is slightly shorter but agrees with the MT in substance. No DSS fragments survive for Jeremiah 1.

Jeremiah 1:1–3 — The Superscription

MT (ASV): The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: to whom the word of YahWeh came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

LXX (Brenton): The word of God which came to Jeremias the son of Chelcias, of the priests, who dwelt in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: which came in the days of Josias son of Amon, king of Juda, in the thirteenth year of his reign. And it was in the days of Joakim son of Josias king of Juda, until the eleventh year of Sedekias son of Josias king of Juda, even until the carrying away of Jerusalem.

DSS: No fragment survives for Jeremiah 1:1–3.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"the words of Jeremiah"* (*dibrê Yirmeyâhû*); LXX: *"The word of God which came to Jeremias."* The LXX shifts from the plural "words" to the singular "word of God" — a small but theologically significant difference that frames the book as divine oracle from its first line rather than human speech. - **[OMIT]** MT: *"unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month"*; LXX: *"even until the carrying away of Jerusalem."* The LXX lacks the specification "in the fifth month" (the month of Ab, corresponding to the destruction of the Temple).

Jeremiah 1:4–10 — The Call of Jeremiah

MT (ASV): Now the word of YahWeh came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations.

Then said I, Ah, Lord YahWeh! behold, I know not how to speak; for I am a child.

But YahWeh said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith YahWeh.

Then YahWeh put forth his hand, and touched my mouth; and YahWeh said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth: see, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

LXX (Brenton): And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth from the womb I sanctified thee, I appointed thee a prophet to the nations.

And I said, O Lord, I know not how to speak, for I am a youth.

And the Lord said to me, Say not, I am a youth; for to all to whom I shall send thee thou shalt go, and according to all things that I shall command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid before them: for I am with thee to deliver thee.

And the Lord put forth his hand to me, and touched my mouth: and the Lord said to me, Behold, I have put my words into thy mouth. See, I have this day appointed thee over nations and over kingdoms, to root up, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to rebuild, and to plant.

DSS: No fragment survives for this passage.

Variance Notes: - **[OMIT]** MT: *"and to overthrow"* (*wĕhahărôs*) — the LXX lacks the fourth verb of the destruction sequence, giving five verbs rather than six. The MT six-verb sequence (pluck up / break down / destroy / overthrow / build / plant) is theologically structured as four destructions and two restorations. - **[VAR]** MT: *"I am a child"* (*na'ar*); LXX: *"I am a youth"* — the same semantic range; no significant difference. - **[VAR]** MT: *"saith YahWeh"* at the end of the reassurance — absent from LXX, a minor MT expansion.

Jeremiah 1:11–19 — The Two Visions

MT (ASV): Moreover the word of YahWeh came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond-tree. Then said YahWeh unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I watch over my word to perform it.

And the word of YahWeh came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a boiling cauldron; and the face thereof is from the north. Then YahWeh said unto me, Out of the north evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

LXX (Brenton): And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, What seest thou, Jeremias? And I said, A rod of a nut-tree. And the Lord said to me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten to perform my words.

And the word of the Lord came to me a second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, A caldron on the fire; and the face of it is toward the north. And the Lord said to me, From the north shall the evils be kindled upon all the inhabitants of the land.

DSS: No fragment survives.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"rod of an almond-tree"* (*maqqêl shâqêd*); LXX: *"rod of a nut-tree."* This is a significant translational difference. The Hebrew *shâqêd* means "almond" and is the basis for the word-play in verse 12: *shâqêd* (almond) / *shoqêd* (watching/hastening). The LXX translator renders *shâqêd* as "nut tree" (Greek *karua*), losing the Hebrew pun entirely. - **[VAR]** MT: *"I watch over my word to perform it"* (*shôqêd ani*); LXX: *"I will hasten to perform my words."* The MT preserves the word-play (*shâqêd/shoqêd*); the LXX uses *speudō* (hasten), which captures the meaning but not the sound-play. - **[VAR]** MT: *"boiling cauldron"* (*sir naphûach*); LXX: *"caldron on the fire"* — interpretive paraphrase.

Chapter 2: Israel's Unfaithfulness

Overview: Jeremiah 2 opens the extended metaphor of Israel as an unfaithful bride who has abandoned her husband (YahWeh) for false gods. The LXX and MT are substantially parallel through this chapter, with minor verbal variants. No DSS fragments survive for chapter 2.

Jeremiah 2:1–8 — The Indictment

MT (ASV): And the word of YahWeh came to me, saying, Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith YahWeh, I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

Israel was holiness unto YahWeh, the first-fruits of his increase; all that devour him shall be held guilty; evil shall come upon them, saith YahWeh.

Hear ye the word of YahWeh, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel: thus saith YahWeh, What unrighteousness have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?

LXX (Brenton): And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord; I remembered the mercy of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals, in following me in the wilderness, in an unsown land.

Israel was the Lord's holy portion, the firstfruits of his increase; all that devoured him shall offend; evils shall come upon them, saith the Lord.

Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and every family of the house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord, What trespass did your fathers find in me, that they revolted far from me, and went after vanities, and became vain?

DSS: No fragment.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"the kindness of thy youth"* (*hesed nĕ'ûrayik*); LXX: *"the mercy of thy youth."* The Hebrew *hesed* is the foundational covenant-loyalty term of the Old Testament, essentially untranslatable. LXX uses *eleos* (mercy/compassion), a reasonable but narrower rendering. - **[VAR]** MT: *"walked after vanity, and are become vain"* — LXX: *"went after vanities, and became vain"* — nearly identical in meaning.

Chapter 3: The Call to Return

Jeremiah 3:6–11 — The Lesson of Faithless Israel

MT (ASV): Moreover YahWeh said unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said after she had done all these things, She will return unto me; but she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

LXX (Brenton): And the Lord said to me in the days of Josias the king, Hast thou seen what things backsliding Israel has done? She has gone on every high mountain, and under every shady tree, and has there committed fornication. And I said when she had committed all these acts of fornication, Turn thou to me. But she returned not. And faithless Juda saw her sister's iniquity.

DSS: No fragment.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"treacherous sister Judah"* (*bâgôdâh Yĕhûdâh achôtâh*); LXX: *"faithless Juda."* The MT uses *bâgôdâh* (treacherous/faithless) as an adjective modifying "sister Judah." The LXX drops "sister" and uses *athesmos* (lawless), losing the family metaphor. - **[OMIT]** MT v.11: *"And YahWeh said unto me, Backsliding Israel hath showed herself more righteous than treacherous Judah"* — this verse is present in MT; the LXX has a slightly different formulation of the comparison.

Part Two: The Scroll of Doom (Jeremiah 11–20)

Chapters 11–12: The Broken Covenant

Overview: Chapters 11–12 focus on the broken covenant and Jeremiah's first "Confession" (12:1–6). The MT and LXX are relatively close in these chapters. Small DSS fragments survive.

Jeremiah 11:18–23 — The Plot Against Jeremiah at Anathoth

MT (ASV): And YahWeh gave me knowledge of it, and I knew it: then thou showedst me their doings. But I was like a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

But YahWeh of hosts, who judgeth righteously, who triest the heart and the mind, I shall see thy vengeance on them; for unto thee have I revealed my cause.

LXX (Brenton): O Lord, make it known to me, and I shall know: then I saw their practices. But I was as an innocent lamb led to the slaughter; I knew not that they devised a device against me, saying, Come and let us put wood into his bread, and let us utterly destroy him from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more.

O Lord, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and hearts, let me see thy vengeance upon them; for to thee I have revealed my cause.

DSS: No fragment for this passage.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof"* (*neshchitâh 'êts belachmô*); LXX: *"let us put wood into his bread."* This is one of the most debated single phrases in Jeremiah. The MT reads literally "let us destroy the tree with its fruit/bread" — a metaphor for killing the prophet and suppressing his words. The LXX reads "let us put poison into his food" or "wood into his bread." The difference may reflect: (a) a different Hebrew Vorlage; (b) a misreading of the consonants *lechem* (bread) vs. *lachmo* (his bread/fruit); or (c) interpretive translation. The MT's tree metaphor is more naturally coherent; the LXX may reflect a different idiom for poisoning.

Chapters 17–20: The Confessions of Jeremiah

Jeremiah 17:1–4 — The Sin Written on the Heart

MT (ASV): The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the tablet of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars; whilst their children remember their altars and their Asherim by the green trees upon the high hills.

LXX (Brenton): [Jeremiah 17:1–4 is substantially shorter in the LXX. Verses 1–4 of the MT correspond to a much compressed passage in the LXX.]

DSS: No fragment survives for this specific passage.

Variance Notes: - **[OMIT]** The LXX lacks approximately half of MT 17:1–4. The MT's extended description of Judah's sin inscribed on their altars and the reference to Asherim (sacred poles associated with the goddess Asherah) are not present in the LXX. This is a significant omission, suggesting either that the LXX Vorlage lacked this material or that a LXX translator found the Asherah reference theologically awkward and abbreviated it.

Jeremiah 20:7–18 — The Final Confession

MT (ASV): O YahWeh, thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am become a laughing-stock all the day, every one mocketh me. For as often as I speak, I cry out; I cry, Violence and destruction! because the word of YahWeh is made a reproach unto me, and a derision, all the day.

And if I say, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain.

Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed.

LXX (Brenton): Thou hast deceived me, O Lord, and I have been deceived; thou hast been strong, and hast prevailed: I am become a laughing-stock, I am continually mocked every day. For I will laugh with my bitter speech, I will call upon rebellion and misery; for the word of the Lord is become a reproach to me and a mockery all my days.

Then I said, I will by no means name the name of the Lord, and I will no more at all speak in his name. But it was a burning fire flaming in my bones, and I am utterly weakened on all sides, and cannot bear up.

Cursed be the day wherein I was born! let not the day on which my mother bore me be blessed.

DSS: No fragment for this passage.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"thou hast persuaded me"* (*pittitâni*, piel of *pâtâh*); LXX: *"Thou hast deceived me."* The Hebrew *pâtâh* in the piel means to persuade, seduce, or deceive. The LXX translator chose the darker meaning ("deceived"), which makes Jeremiah's complaint against God more explicit and more accusatory. The MT's "persuaded" is ambiguous — it can mean legitimate persuasion or seduction. This is one of the most theologically charged translation choices in the entire book. - **[VAR]** MT: *"there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones"* — LXX: *"it was a burning fire flaming in my bones."* Minor variation; same image.

Part Three: The Great Structural Divergence (Jeremiah 25–52)

The Central Problem: The Oracles Against the Nations

This is where the MT and LXX diverge most dramatically in **structure**, not merely in wording.

The Structural Arrangement

In the MT: - Chapters 1–25:13 — Prophecies against Judah and Jerusalem - Chapters 25:15–38 — The Cup of Wrath (summary) - Chapters 26–35 — Narrative sections; the Temple Sermon; Baruch's scroll - Chapters 36–45 — Historical narratives of Jeremiah's suffering - **Chapters 46–51 — Oracles Against the Nations (OAN)** - Chapter 52 — Historical appendix (parallel to 2 Kings 25)

In the LXX (Brenton enumeration): - Chapters 1–25:13 — Prophecies against Judah (parallel to MT) - **Chapters 25:14–31:44 — Oracles Against the Nations (OAN)** [placed HERE in LXX, in the MIDDLE of the book] - Chapters 32–52 — Remaining MT material (chapters 26–45 + appendix)

The LXX places the Oracles Against the Nations **after 25:13** and before the narrative sections. The MT places them **at the end** (chapters 46–51). This is not a minor reordering; it is a wholesale relocation of nine chapters.

Furthermore, within the OAN themselves, **the order of the individual oracles differs**:

LXX Order	Nation	MT Chapter
LXX 25:14	Elam	MT 49:34–39
LXX 26	Egypt	MT 46
LXX 27	Babylon	MT 50–51
LXX 28	Philistia	MT 47
LXX 29	Edom	MT 49:7–22
LXX 30	Ammon	MT 49:1–6
LXX 31	Kedar/Arabia	MT 49:28–33
LXX 31:44	Damascus	MT 49:23–27

The implications of this structural divergence are substantial:

1. **Both arrangements are ancient.** 4QJer^b confirms the shorter LXX edition at several points; 4QJer^a confirms the MT arrangement. Both Hebrew texts circulated simultaneously at Qumran in the first century B.C.E.

2. **The MT's placement of the OAN at the end** follows a logic of mounting judgment: the book builds from Judah's own sin through the historical narrative to the climactic pronouncement of doom on all the nations.

3. **The LXX's placement of the OAN in the middle** follows a different logic: the OAN are triggered by the Cup of Wrath passage (25:15–38), which commands Jeremiah to make all the nations drink the cup. The nations then immediately follow. This arrangement is more thematically integrated with the cup imagery.

4. **Neither arrangement is definitively "original."** Emanuel Tov (*Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed., pp. 319–327) argues that the shorter text represented by the LXX is the earlier edition, and the MT represents a later expanded edition. Other scholars (William McKane, John Bright) argue the MT better preserves the authentic Jeremianic tradition. The DSS evidence establishes that both editions are pre-Christian but does not resolve which is chronologically earlier.

Jeremiah 25:1–14 — The Seventy Years

This passage is the hinge between the first half of the book and the OAN. It is one of the most significant theologically, prophesying seventy years of Babylonian captivity.

MT (ASV) — 25:1–14: The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (the same was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon), which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying:

From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even unto this day, these three and twenty years, the word of YahWeh hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened.

And YahWeh hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them (but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear), saying, Return ye now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that YahWeh hath given unto you and to your fathers, from of old and even for evermore; and go not after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the work of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.

Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith YahWeh; that ye might provoke me to anger with the work of your hands to your own hurt.

Therefore thus saith YahWeh of hosts: Because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith YahWeh, and I will send unto Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations.

And I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the lamp. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith YahWeh, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it desolate for ever. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

LXX (Brenton) — 32:1–14 [LXX enumeration]: The word that came to Jeremias concerning all the people of Juda in the fourth year of Joakim son of Josias, king of Juda; (the same was the first year of Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon;) which Jeremias the prophet spake to all the people of Juda, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

In the thirteenth year of Josias son of Amos, king of Juda, even to this day for three and twenty years, I have both spoken to you, rising early and speaking, and ye have not hearkened.

And the Lord sent to you his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, and ye hearkened not, and inclined not your ears to hear; saying, Turn ye every one from his evil way,

and from his evil practices, and ye shall dwell in the land which I gave to you and your fathers, of old and for ever. Go ye not after strange gods, to serve them, and to worship them, that ye provoke me not by the works of your hands, and I will do you no hurt.

But ye hearkened not to me. For ye provoked me by the works of your hands to your own hurt.

Therefore thus saith the Lord; Since ye believed not my words, behold, I will send and take my servant Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, and will bring him upon this land, and upon the inhabitants of it, and upon all the nations round about it, and will make them utterly waste, and make them a desolation, and a hissing, and an everlasting reproach.

And I will destroy from among them the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the scent of ointment, and the light of a candle. And all the land shall be a desolation; and they shall serve among the Gentiles seventy years.

DSS (4QJer^b): Fragment survives for Jeremiah 25. The 4QJer^b reading at 25:7–8 aligns with the shorter LXX form, lacking several phrases present in the MT. This is the DSS confirmation that the LXX's shorter text in this section represents a genuine ancient Hebrew reading, not Greek abridgement.

Variance Notes: - **[ADD]** MT v.9: *"my servant"* applied to Nebuchadrezzar is present in MT; LXX has "my servant" but with slightly different placement. This remarkable designation — a pagan king called the servant of YahWeh — is one of the most theologically striking phrases in Jeremiah. - **[ADD]** MT: *"and a hissing, and perpetual desolations"* — LXX lacks "perpetual desolations" here. - **[VAR]** MT: *"the sound of the millstones, and the light of the lamp"* — LXX: *"the scent of ointment, and the light of a candle."* The LXX lacks "the sound of the millstones" and adds "the scent of ointment" — two quite different domestic images. This is a significant verbal variant, not easily explained as scribal error, suggesting genuinely different Vorlagen. - **[DSS]** 4QJer^b confirms the LXX's shorter text at v.7–8, establishing that the LXX's differences here reflect its Hebrew source, not Greek editorial choices.

Part Four: The Book of Consolation (Jeremiah 30–33)

Overview

The "Book of Consolation" (chapters 30–33) is one of the most important sections in Jeremiah — containing the famous New Covenant passage (31:31–34) and the promise of restoration. The LXX and MT agree substantially in these chapters, though with some significant variants. The New Covenant passage in particular warrants careful comparison, since it is the most-quoted passage from Jeremiah in the New Testament.

Jeremiah 31:31–34 — The New Covenant

MT (ASV): Behold, the days come, saith YahWeh, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith YahWeh.

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith YahWeh: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know YahWeh; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith YahWeh: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.

LXX (Brenton) — 38:31–34: Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Juda: not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I took hold of their hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; for they abode not in my covenant, and I disregarded them, saith the Lord.

For this is my covenant which I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will surely put my laws into their mind, and write them on their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not at all teach every one his fellow citizen, and every one his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest of them; for I will be merciful to their iniquities, and their sins I will remember no more.

DSS: The New Covenant passage is partially preserved in the Damascus Document (CD) and is central to the Qumran community's self-understanding. The *yahad* (community) at Qumran explicitly identified themselves as those who had entered into the New Covenant — the *brit hadashah* — referenced in Jeremiah 31:31. Their own communal rule (the Community Rule, 1QS) is structured as a covenant document reflecting this passage.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"although I was a husband unto them"* (*anoki ba'alti bam*); LXX: *"for they abode not in my covenant, and I disregarded them."* This is a highly significant variant. The MT uses *ba'al* (to be lord/husband over), drawing on the marriage metaphor that runs through Jeremiah. The LXX has an entirely different reading: *"I disregarded them"* (*ēmelēsa autōn*). This cannot be explained as translation difference — the two readings represent different Hebrew texts. The letter sequence *ba'alti* (I was lord/husband) and *ga'alti* (I rejected/loathed) differ by a single letter (ב *bet* vs. ג *gimel*). The LXX Vorlage most likely read *ga'alti* (I rejected them) — one letter different from the MT's *ba'alti* (I was husband to them).

This single-letter difference has substantial theological implications: the MT stresses God's continued marital relationship with Israel despite the broken covenant; the LXX stresses God's subsequent rejection of Israel for breaking the covenant.

- **[VAR]** MT: *"I will put my law in their inward parts"* (*tôrah*); LXX: *"my laws"* (plural, *nomous*) — the LXX pluralizes what the MT treats as a singular entity.

- **[THEOL]** The author of Hebrews quotes Jeremiah 31:31–34 at length in Hebrews 8:8–12 and 10:16–17 — the longest Old Testament quotation in the New Testament. The Hebrews quotation follows the LXX version (including "for they abode not in my covenant, and I disregarded them") rather than the MT's "although I was a husband unto them." This is significant: the NT author's theological argument rests on the LXX reading.

Part Five: The Oracles Against the Nations (Jeremiah 46–51 [MT] / 25:14–31 [LXX])

Egypt — Jeremiah 46 (MT) / LXX 26

Overview: The oracle against Egypt commemorates and interprets the Battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.E.), at which Nebuchadrezzar decisively defeated Pharaoh Necho II and established Babylonian supremacy over the ancient Near East.

Jeremiah 46:1–12 — The Battle of Carchemish

MT (ASV): The word of YahWeh which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations. Of Egypt: concerning the army of Pharaoh-neco king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle. Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, put on the coats of mail. Wherefore do I see it? they are dismayed and are turned backward; and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: terror is on every side, saith YahWeh.

Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; in the north by the river Euphrates have they stumbled and fallen.

Who is this that riseth up like the Nile, whose waters toss themselves like the rivers? Egypt riseth up like the Nile, and his waters toss themselves like the rivers: and he saith, I will rise up, I will cover the earth; I will destroy cities and the inhabitants thereof.

LXX (Brenton) — 26:1–12: The word of the Lord which came to Jeremias against the nations; against Egypt, concerning the host of Pharao Nechao king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Charcamys, which Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Joakim king of Juda.

Take up arms and shields, and draw nigh to battle; and harness the horses; mount, ye horsemen, and stand ready in your helmets; advance the spears, and put on your breastplates. Why do they fear, and turn backward? even because their mighty men shall be slain; they have utterly fled, and being hemmed in they have not rallied, saith the Lord.

Let not the swift flee, and let not the strong man escape to the north: the forces by the river Euphrates are become feeble, and they have fallen.

Who is this that shall rise up as a river, and as a river whose waters are troubled? The waters of Egypt shall rise up as a river: and he said, I will go up and will cover the earth, and will destroy the dwellers in it.

DSS: No DSS fragment survives for Jeremiah 46.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"terror is on every side"* (*magôr missâbib*) — a phrase that appears repeatedly in Jeremiah as a summary formula for divine judgment (also at 6:25; 20:3, 4, 10; 49:29). The LXX renders it variously in these different occurrences; here the LXX lacks the phrase entirely. - **[VAR]** MT: *"Who is this that riseth up like the Nile"* — LXX: *"Who is this that shall rise up as a river."* Minor difference; same image. - **[ADD]** MT has several phrases in verses 3–12 that are compressed or absent in LXX, consistent with the pattern throughout the book.

Babylon — Jeremiah 50–51 (MT) / LXX 27

Overview: The Oracle Against Babylon is the longest in the OAN collection and theologically the most complex. It pronounces Babylon's destruction at the hands of a northern enemy (understood as the Medes) after Judah's seventy years of captivity are complete.

Jeremiah 50:1–7 — Babylon Shall Fall

MT (ASV): The word that YahWeh spake concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet. Declare ye among the nations and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is put to shame, Merodach is dismayed; her images are put to shame, her idols are dismayed.

For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they are fled, they are gone, both man and beast. In those days, and in that time, saith YahWeh, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping, and shall seek YahWeh their God. They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come ye, and join yourselves to YahWeh in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten.

My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray; they have turned them away on the mountains; they have gone from mountain to hill; they have forgotten their resting-place.

LXX (Brenton) — 27:1–7: The word of the Lord which he spoke concerning Babylon. Declare ye among the Gentiles, and cause the message to be heard, and suppress it not: say, Babylon is taken, Belos is broken to pieces, Merodach is conquered. Their works that are graven are broken to pieces, their images are conquered.

For a nation has come up against her from the north, which shall also make her land desolate, and there shall be none to dwell in it, from man even to beast; they have been moved and are gone.

In those days and at that time the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Juda together; they shall proceed, weeping as they go, seeking the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Sion, so bending their faces, and they shall come and flee to the Lord their God; for the everlasting covenant shall not be forgotten.

My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds thrust them out, and made them wander on the mountains: they went from mountain to hill, they forgot their resting-place.

DSS: No fragment survives for Jeremiah 50.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"Bel"* (the chief Babylonian deity, Marduk under his title Bel, "lord"); LXX: *"Belos."* Simple transliteration difference. - **[VAR]** MT: *"they shall seek YahWeh their God"* — LXX: *"seeking the Lord their God."* Essentially identical. - **[ADD]** MT: *"Come ye, and join yourselves to YahWeh in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten"* — LXX has a different arrangement: the everlasting covenant reference appears later. Significant structural difference in the same passage. - **[VAR]** MT: *"their shepherds have caused them to go astray"* — LXX: *"their shepherds thrust them out."* Hebrew *hit'û* (led astray) vs. LXX's *exethliipsan* (thrust/pressed out). Meaningfully different: MT stresses misleading; LXX stresses force.

Part Six: The Historical Appendix (Jeremiah 52)

Jeremiah 52 — The Fall of Jerusalem

Overview: Jeremiah 52 is an historical appendix, closely parallel to 2 Kings 24:18–25:30, recording the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, the exile, and the release of Jehoiachin. It is widely regarded as a later addition to the book (appearing to be drawn from Kings) rather than Jeremiah's own composition. The LXX of chapter 52 is substantially shorter than the MT.

Jeremiah 52:28–30 — The Three Deportations

This passage is **unique to Jeremiah** — it does not appear in the parallel text of 2 Kings. It gives specific numbers for three deportation events.

MT (ASV): This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year, three thousand and twenty and three Jews; in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons; in the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.

LXX (Brenton): [The LXX **entirely omits** Jeremiah 52:28–30. These three verses — the precise count of the three deportations — are absent from the LXX and from all LXX manuscripts.]

DSS: No fragment for this passage.

Variance Notes: - **[OMIT]** The three-deportation account (52:28–30) is present only in the MT. The LXX lacks it entirely. This is one of the most striking omissions in the entire book. The numbers given in the MT (3,023 + 832 + 745 = 4,600) differ from the round numbers given in other biblical sources (2 Kings 24:14: 10,000; Jer 52:15: thousands). The MT passage may be drawn from a temple record or administrative document not available to the LXX translator.

Part Seven: The 4QJer^b Manuscript — A Case Study

The Significance of 4QJer^b

Of all the Dead Sea Scrolls evidence for Jeremiah, **4QJer^b (4Q71)** is the most consequential for understanding the relationship between the MT and LXX. It was first fully published in DJD XV (1997) by Eugene Ulrich.

4QJer^b preserves fragments corresponding to Jeremiah 9:22–10:21 and 43:2–10. These fragments are written in a Hebrew script dated to approximately 225–175 B.C.E. — making them among the oldest biblical manuscripts yet discovered.

4QJer^b at Jeremiah 10:3–11 — The Idol Polemic

MT (ASV) — 10:1–16: Hear ye the word which YahWeh speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: thus saith YahWeh, Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the nations are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are vanity; for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

[MT continues through verse 16 with an extended polemic against idol worship]

LXX (Brenton) — 10:1–16: The LXX of Jeremiah 10 is notably shorter. After verse 5, the LXX **lacks MT verses 6–8** (*"There is none like unto thee, O YahWeh… they are altogether brutish and foolish, the instruction of idols is but a stock"*) — three MT verses are absent from the LXX at this point.

4QJer^b reading: The DSS fragment at Jeremiah 10 confirms that the LXX's shorter text reflects its Hebrew Vorlage. 4QJer^b **lacks the material corresponding to MT 10:6–8**, in agreement with the LXX. This is the clearest proof point in the entire Jeremiah textual tradition: the same verses absent from the LXX are also absent from a pre-Christian Hebrew manuscript. The LXX translator did not abbreviate the MT; the MT expands an earlier shorter Hebrew text.

Variance Notes: - **[ADD by MT]** MT 10:6–8 is an expansion present in the longer MT edition but absent from both the LXX and from 4QJer^b. This material — a doxology praising God's uniqueness in contrast to the vanity of idols — may have been added to the longer Hebrew edition by a scribe or editor at some point between the composition of the shorter edition (reflected in 4QJer^b and the LXX Vorlage) and the standardization of the MT.

Appendix A: Summary Table of Major Divergences

Chapter	MT	LXX	DSS Confirmation	Type
1:1	"words of Jeremiah"	"word of God which came to Jeremias"	None	[THEOL]
1:10	6 verbs of	5 verbs (lacks	None	[OMIT]

Chapter	MT	LXX	DSS Confirmation	Type
	judgment/restoration	"overthrow")		
7–8	Extended	Shorter	4QJer^b confirms LXX	[OMIT]
10:6–8	Present	**Absent**	**4QJer^b absent**	[ADD by MT]
17:1–4	Extended	Much shorter	None	[OMIT]
20:7	"thou hast persuaded me"	"thou hast deceived me"	None	[VAR/THEOL]
25:1–14	Extended	Shorter at several points	4QJer^b shorter	[OMIT]
25:13	OAN begin ch.46	OAN begin here (middle of book)	Both Hebrew editions at Qumran	[ORDER]
31:32	"I was a husband to them"	"I disregarded them"	None	[VAR — 1 letter]
46–51	OAN at end	OAN in middle (25:14–31)	4QJer^a = MT; 4QJer^b = LXX	[ORDER]
52:28–30	Three deportations enumerated	**Entirely absent**	None	[ADD by MT]

Appendix B: The Two-Edition Theory — Scholarly Consensus

The following scholars have argued for the two-edition hypothesis (shorter edition = LXX Vorlage; longer edition = MT):

Emanuel Tov (*Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed., 2012, pp. 319–327): "The textual differences between MT and LXX in Jeremiah are best explained as reflecting two different stages in the composition of the book… the LXX reflects an earlier and shorter literary edition." Tov's analysis of 4QJer^b is the definitive statement of this position.

Eugene Ulrich (*The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, 1999): "The fragments of 4QJer^b demonstrate that a shorter form of the Book of Jeremiah was known, copied, and transmitted in Hebrew — not just in Greek — proving that both forms represent genuine Hebrew textual traditions."

Martin Haran and **Alexander Rofé** have argued for a different explanation — that the LXX translator abbreviated the MT deliberately. This view has become a minority position since the publication of 4QJer^b.

William McKane (*International Critical Commentary on Jeremiah*, 2 vols., T&T Clark, 1986, 1996) remains cautious about assigning priority to either edition: "It is premature to conclude that one edition is the original and the other the revision."

Jack Lundbom (*Jeremiah 1–20*, *21–36*, *37–52*, Anchor Yale Bible, 1999–2004): Generally argues for MT priority but acknowledges the significance of 4QJer^b.

The current dominant view in Old Testament textual criticism — represented by Tov, Ulrich, and the editors of the BHQ Jeremiah volume — is that **both the shorter and longer editions are ancient**, that the shorter edition (LXX/4QJer^b type) is likely earlier, and that the MT represents a later expanded edition. Neither edition is "corrupt"; both are witnesses to the living textual tradition of the book.

Appendix C: The New Covenant Passage in Three Traditions and the New Testament

Jeremiah 31:31–34 (LXX 38:31–34) is quoted in the New Testament at Hebrews 8:8–12 and partially at Hebrews 10:16–17. The Hebrews quotation is the longest single OT quotation in the NT. Comparing the three traditions:

Phrase	MT	LXX	NT (Hebrews 8)
"new covenant"	*brit hadashah*	*diathēkēn kainēn*	*diathēkēn kainēn*
Reason for failure	"although I was a husband to them" (*ba'alti bam*)	"for they abode not in my covenant, and I disregarded them"	**"for they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not"** (= LXX)
Location of law	"in their inward parts and in their heart"	"into their mind and on their hearts"	"into their mind and on their heart" (= LXX)
Forgiveness	"I will forgive their iniquity"	"I will be merciful to their iniquities"	"I will be merciful to their iniquities" (= LXX)

The author of Hebrews is quoting the LXX throughout. This means the NT's theological argument for the supersession of the old covenant rests on the LXX reading ("I disregarded them") rather than the MT reading ("I was husband to them") — a significant observation for any understanding of how the New Testament authors used the Old Testament. The LXX's reading makes the break between old and new covenant more decisive; the MT's reading

preserves the continuity of God's marital relationship with Israel even through the covenant's failure.

Appendix D: Essential Scholarship for Further Study

Primary Text Editions

- Rudolph, W., ed. *Jeremia*. Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia. 4th ed. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997. [MT]
- Ziegler, J., ed. *Ieremias, Baruch, Threni, Epistula Ieremiae*. Göttingen Septuagint Vol. 15. 2nd ed. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976. [LXX critical edition]
- Tov, E., and F.M. Cross. *Qumran Cave 4, X: The Prophets*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XV. Oxford University Press, 1997. [4QJer^a through 4QJer^e]

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Part Two: Psalms — Compositional Divergence

Phase Preface

This volume presents Phase 2A of the MT/LXX/DSS Textual Harmony Project, focusing on the Psalter — the book of Psalms. If Jeremiah presented the most dramatic **literary-structural** divergence among the three traditions, the Psalms present the most dramatic **compositional** divergence: the very number, order, and identity of the psalms themselves differ between the traditions.

The Psalter harmony examines four dimensions that have no parallel in the Jeremiah volume:

1. **The Numbering Problem** — The MT and LXX count the psalms differently, creating a persistent numerical offset of one psalm through much of the Psalter.
2. **The 11QPsalms Scroll** — A Dead Sea Scroll (11Q5) containing 41 psalms in a substantially different order from both the MT and the LXX, raising fundamental questions about when and how the Psalter was "closed" as a canonical collection.
3. **Psalm 151** — A psalm present in the LXX (and in 11QPsalms) but absent from the MT entirely, raising the question of the Psalter's boundaries.
4. **Verbal Variants** — Across dozens of individual psalms, significant differences in wording between the MT and LXX that carry exegetical and theological weight.

The Three Traditions for the Psalms

The Masoretic Text Psalter (MT)

The MT Psalter contains **150 psalms** organized into five books:

Book	Psalms	Dominant Divine Name	Closing Doxology
Book I	1–41	YahWeh (*YHWH*)	41:13
Book II	42–72	Elohim (God)	72:18–19
Book III	73–89	Elohim / YHWH	89:52
Book IV	90–106	YahWeh (*YHWH*)	106:48
Book V	107–150	YahWeh (*YHWH*)	150

The five-book structure mirrors the five books of the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy) — a structural parallel explicit in rabbinic tradition (*Midrash Tehillim*: "Moses gave Israel the five books of the Torah, and David gave Israel the five books of the Psalms"). The MT Psalter has been the Jewish canonical Psalter since at least the first century C.E. and the Protestant and Catholic canonical Psalter through the present.

The standard critical text is the **Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia** (BHS, Psalm fascicle edited by H. Bardtke, 1969) and the **Biblia Hebraica Quinta** (BHQ, Psalms volume edited by Carmel McCarthy, 2014). The standard scholarly Hebrew text is also preserved in the **Westminster Leningrad Codex** (WLC), freely available at the J. Alan Groves Center for Advanced Biblical Research.

English translations from the MT: ASV, ESV, NASB, NIV, KJV, NKJV, NRSV, JPS Tanakh.

The Septuagint Psalter (LXX)

The LXX Psalter contains **151 psalms** — the 150 of the MT plus **Psalm 151**, a psalm about David's youth that is attributed to David himself and appears after Psalm 150 in Greek manuscripts.

The LXX numbering also **differs from the MT numbering** through most of the Psalter because the LXX combines MT Psalms 9 and 10 into a single psalm (LXX Psalm 9) and combines MT Psalms 114 and 115 into a single psalm (LXX Psalm 113), while splitting MT Psalm 116 into two (LXX Psalms 114 and 115) and MT Psalm 147 into two (LXX Psalms 146 and 147). The result is a one-psalm offset for most of the Psalter:

MT Range	LXX Range	Relationship
Psalms 1–8	Psalms 1–8	Identical numbering
Psalm 9	Psalm 9 (combined)	MT 9+10 = LXX 9
Psalms 10–112	Psalms 9–111	LXX = MT minus 1
Psalm 113	Psalm 112	
Psalms 114–115	Psalm 113 (combined)	MT 114+115 = LXX 113
Psalm 116	Psalms 114–115 (split)	MT 116 = LXX 114+115

MT Range	LXX Range	Relationship
Psalms 117–146	Psalms 116–145	LXX = MT minus 1
Psalm 147	Psalms 146–147 (split)	MT 147 = LXX 146+147
Psalms 148–150	Psalms 148–150	Identical numbering
—	Psalm 151	LXX only (not in MT)

The standard critical edition is **Rahlfs-Hanhart** (2006). For detailed textual work, the Göttingen Septuagint *Psalmi cum Odis* (edited by Alfred Rahlfs, 1931; 3rd ed. 1979) is essential.

English translation: Brenton (1851, public domain) for the LXX text. The NETS translation (*A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, Oxford, 2007) is the scholarly standard.

The Dead Sea Scrolls Psalter (DSS)

The Psalms are the most abundantly attested biblical book in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Fragments of the Psalter appear in **at least 36 manuscripts** from Caves 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 11 at Qumran. Of these, the most important are:

Signum	Cave	Psalms Covered	Character
11QPsalms^a (11Q5)	Cave 11	Psalms 101–151+	Revolutionary alternative order
11QPsalms^b (11Q6)	Cave 11	Psalms 77–78; 141–144; 118	MT-aligned
4QPsalms^a (4Q83)	Cave 4	Psalms 5–69 (fragmentary)	Largely MT-aligned
4QPsalms^b (4Q84)	Cave 4	Psalms 91–118 (fragmentary)	Largely MT-aligned
4QPsalms^c (4Q85)	Cave 4	Psalms 16; 18; 27	MT-aligned
4QPsalms^d (4Q86)	Cave 4	Psalms 103; 112	MT-aligned
4QPsalms^e (4Q87)	Cave 4	Psalms 76; 77; 78; 81; 86; 88	MT-aligned
4QPsalms^f (4Q88)	Cave 4	Psalms 22; 107; 109; and non-canonical material	Mixed
1QPsalms^a (1Q10)	Cave 1	Psalms 86; 92; 94; 95; 96; 114; 116	MT-aligned

Signum	Cave	Psalms Covered	Character
MasPsalms^a	Masada	Psalms 81–85	MT-aligned
MasPsalms^b	Masada	Psalm 150	MT-aligned

The critical edition for the Psalms scrolls is **DJD IV** (1965, Psalms from Cave 4 and Cave 11, by J.A. Sanders), **DJD XVI** (2000, Psalms from Cave 4, by P.W. Skehan, E. Ulrich, P. Flint), and the **editio princeps** of 11QPsalms^a by J.A. Sanders (*The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11*, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan IV, 1965).

The accessible scholarly edition is Peter Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms* (Brill, 1997), and the relevant chapters of Abegg, Flint, Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (HarperOne, 1999), pp. 507–589.

Part One: The Numbering Divergence — MT Psalms 9 and 10

The Problem

MT Psalm 9 and MT Psalm 10 are treated as **two separate psalms** in the MT but as **a single psalm** in the LXX (LXX Psalm 9). This combination/separation creates the one-number offset that runs through most of the Psalter.

The evidence that they were originally one psalm is substantial:

1. **Acrostic Structure**: MT Psalm 9 and Psalm 10 together form an **incomplete acrostic** on the Hebrew alphabet. Psalm 9 covers the letters Aleph through Kaph; Psalm 10 covers Lamedh through Taw (with several letters missing). Neither psalm alone completes the alphabet; together they form a single though irregular alphabetic poem.

2. **Absence of Superscription**: MT Psalm 10 has **no title or superscription** — the only psalm in Book I (Psalms 1–41) without one. The absence of a title is itself evidence of original unity with Psalm 9, which does have a superscription.

3. **Thematic Continuity**: Both psalms address the same enemy (the wicked who prey on the poor) and appeal to the same God (who sees, who judges, who reigns from Zion). The theology and vocabulary are continuous.

4. **LXX and Syriac Peshitta**: Both the LXX and the Syriac Peshitta treat them as a single psalm, suggesting that the separation into two psalms is a later development in the MT tradition.

MT Psalm 9 / LXX Psalm 9 (first half)

MT (ASV) — Psalm 9:1–10: I will give thanks unto YahWeh with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvellous works. I will be glad and exult in thee; I will sing praise to thy name, O

thou Most High. When mine enemies turn back, They stumble and perish at thy presence. For thou hast maintained my just cause; Thou sittest in the throne judging righteously.

Thou hast rebuked the nations, thou hast destroyed the wicked; Thou hast blotted out their name for ever and ever. The enemy are come to an end, they are desolate for ever; And the cities which thou hast overthrown, Their memorial is perished with them.

But YahWeh sitteth as king for ever: He hath prepared his throne for judgment; And he will judge the world in righteousness, He will minister judgment to the peoples in uprightness.

YahWeh also will be a high tower for the oppressed, A high tower in times of trouble; And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; For thou, YahWeh, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 9:1–10: I will give thanks to thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will recount all thy wonderful works. I will be glad and exult in thee: I will sing to thy name, O thou Most High.

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall be feeble and perish at thy presence. For thou hast maintained my cause and my right; thou satest on the throne, that judgest righteousness.

Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly one has perished; thou hast blotted out their name for ever, even for ever and ever. The swords of the enemy have failed utterly; and thou hast destroyed cities: their memorial has perished with a noise. But the Lord endures for ever: he has prepared his throne for judgment.

And he will judge the world in righteousness, he will judge the nations in uprightness. The Lord also is become a refuge for the poor, a seasonable help in affliction. And let them that know thy name hope in thee: for thou, O Lord, hast not forsaken them that diligently seek thee.

DSS: 4QPsalms^a (4Q83) contains fragments of Psalm 9 but they are too small to determine whether the scroll treated 9 and 10 as one or two psalms.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT 9:6: *"thou hast blotted out their name for ever and ever"* — LXX adds: *"The swords of the enemy have failed utterly"* before the name-blotting phrase. This additional clause in the LXX has no Hebrew equivalent in the MT at this point. - **[VAR]** MT: *"a high tower for the oppressed"* (*misgâb laddâk*) — LXX: *"a refuge for the poor."* The Hebrew *misgâb* (high refuge/fortress) is rendered *kataphygē* (refuge) in Greek. The Hebrew *dâk* (oppressed/crushed) is rendered *ptōchos* (poor) — a meaningful shift from the oppressed to the economically poor. - **[ORTH]** The acrostic structure in MT demonstrates that Psalms 9 and 10 form one poem; the LXX's combining them into a single psalm preserves this original unity.

MT Psalm 10 / LXX Psalm 9 (second half)

MT (ASV) — Psalm 10:1–11: Why standest thou afar off, O YahWeh? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?

In the pride of the wicked the poor is hotly pursued; Let them be taken in the devices that they have conceived. For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, And the covetous renounceth, yea,

contemneth YahWeh. The wicked, in the pride of his countenance, saith, He will not require it. All his thoughts are, There is no God.

His ways are firm at all times; Thy judgments are far above out of his sight: As for all his adversaries, he puffeth at them. He saith in his heart, I shall not be moved: I who am to all generations shall not be in adversity. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression: Under his tongue is mischief and iniquity. He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages; In the secret places doth he murder the innocent.

He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; He hideth his face; he will never see it.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 9:22–32: Wherefore does the ungodly provoke God? he has said in his heart, He will not require it. Thou seest it; for thou dost observe trouble and grief, to deliver them into thy hands: the poor has been left to thee; thou wast a helper to the orphan.

Break thou the arm of the sinner and evil person: his sin shall be sought for and not be found. The Lord is King for ever and ever: the nations have perished out of his land. Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the poor: thine ear has inclined to the preparation of their heart; to judge the orphan and humble man, that man may no more boast upon the earth.

DSS: No fragment sufficient for analysis.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT 10:1: *"Why standest thou afar off, O YahWeh? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?"* — This is the famous cry of divine hiddenness (*Deus absconditus*), one of the most theologically raw verses in the Psalter. The LXX renders the substance but with different emotional emphasis. - **[VAR]** MT 10:4: *"All his thoughts are, There is no God"* (*'êyn 'Élohim kol-mĕzimmôtâyw*) — LXX: a somewhat different formulation. This is the closest the Psalter comes to attributing practical atheism to the wicked — not philosophical denial of God's existence but functional denial of God's moral governance.

Part Two: The 11QPsalms^a Scroll — A Different Psalter

Overview and Significance

The Great Psalms Scroll from Cave 11 (11QPsalms^a, also designated 11Q5) is one of the most important and most debated biblical manuscripts found at Qumran. First published by J.A. Sanders in 1965, it contains **41 compositions** — 39 of which are also found in the MT Psalter and 2 of which are known from elsewhere but not in the MT Psalter (Psalm 151 from the LXX and a previously unknown composition called the Apostrophe to Zion). Several additional compositions in the scroll are not found in any other canonical collection.

The scroll dates paleographically to approximately **50 C.E.** — making it roughly contemporary with the period of the New Testament. It is written on a single long sheet of skin measuring approximately 4.3 meters (14 feet) in length, preserved in three columns of text.

The Order of Psalms in 11QPsalms^a

The compositions appear in the following order (MT numbering where applicable):

Column	Compositions
I–II	MT Ps 101; 102; 103
III	MT Ps 109
IV	MT Ps 118
V	MT Ps 104; 147:1–11
VI	MT Ps 105:1–11
VII	MT Ps 146; 148
VIII	MT Ps 121; 122; 123; 124; 125; 126; 127; 128; 129
IX	MT Ps 130; 131
X	MT Ps 132; 119:1–8
XI	MT Ps 119:15–28
XII	MT Ps 119:37–49
XIII	MT Ps 119:59–73
XIV	MT Ps 119:82–96
XV	MT Ps 119:105–120
XVI	MT Ps 119:128–142
XVII	MT Ps 119:150–164
XVIII	MT Ps 119:171–176; 135; 136
XIX	*Catena* (non-MT compilation); MT Ps 145
XX	MT Ps 154 (from Syriac Psalter); *Plea for Deliverance* (non-MT)
XXI	MT Ps 139; 137; 138
XXII	*Sirach 51:13–30* (Ben Sira); MT Ps 93; 141; 133; 144
XXIII	MT Ps 155 (from Syriac Psalter); MT Ps 142; 143
XXIV	MT Ps 149; 150
XXV–XXVI	*Hymn to the Creator* (non-MT); MT Ps 2:1–8; *David's Compositions* (prose); MT Ps 151A; 151B
XXVII	MT Ps 140; 134; 151

Column Compositions

The Scholarly Debate: Liturgical Collection or Authoritative Psalter?

The discovery of 11QPsalms^a sparked an immediate and still-unresolved debate about the canonical status of the Psalter in the first century:

Position 1 — Gerald Wilson (*The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, 1985) and **Peter Flint** (*The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls*, 1997) argue that **11QPsalms^a represents a genuine alternative edition of the Psalter**. Psalms 90–150 (the latter part of the MT Psalter) were still "open" — not yet fixed in order — in the first century B.C.E./C.E. The scroll represents the authoritative Psalter of the Qumran community, not merely a liturgical anthology. Evidence: - The scroll is a carefully produced formal manuscript, not a private notebook - Its order is systematic, not random - It includes the prose section "David's Compositions" (listing 4,050 psalms, 52 songs for weekly sabbaths, 30 songs for festivals, and 4 songs for the stricken) — a canonical claim, not a liturgical one - Multiple copies of this alternative order exist at Qumran (11Q5, 11Q6, and 4Q83 may show alternative ordering)

Position 2 — Shemaryahu Talmon, **Moshe Goshen-Gottstein**, and **Emanuel Tov** (in his earlier work) argued that **11QPsalms^a is a liturgical collection, not an alternative Psalter**. The MT's 150-psalm order was already fixed by the first century, and the Qumran scroll represents a secondary anthological use of psalms for worship, not a competing canonical arrangement. Evidence: - The first 60 psalms (Books I–III) at Qumran consistently follow the MT order in all known Cave 4 fragments - The alternative ordering affects only Psalms 90–150 - The inclusion of non-canonical compositions (Sirach, the *Plea for Deliverance*, the *Apostrophe to Zion*) suggests a liturgical rather than canonical purpose

Current Consensus (Flint, Ulrich): The evidence is most consistent with a period of **relative openness** in the ordering and boundaries of the latter portion of the Psalter (roughly Psalms 90–150) during the Qumran period. The first 89 psalms appear to have been fixed in order before the Qumran period; the arrangement of Psalms 90–150 was still fluid. 11QPsalms^a represents a genuine textual tradition of the latter Psalter, not merely a liturgical anthology.

The Non-Canonical Compositions in 11QPsalms^a

Three compositions in 11QPsalms^a deserve particular attention because they are not found in any canonical Psalter:

The Plea for Deliverance (11QPsalms^a Column XX)

A previously unknown psalm, found only in 11QPsalms^a. It appears between Psalm 154 and Psalm 139 in the scroll's order. The text (translated from the Hebrew):

Surely a maggot cannot praise thee nor a grave-worm recount thy loving-kindness. But the living can praise thee, even those who stumble can laud thee.

In revealing thy kindness to them and by thy righteousness thou dost enlighten them. For in thy hand is the soul of every living thing; the breath of all flesh hast thou given.

Deal with us, O Lord, according to thy goodness, according to thy great mercy, and according to thy many righteous deeds.

The Lord heard the voice of those who love his name and did not deprive them of his loving-kindness.

This composition is theologically consistent with canonical psalms and shows no sign of being sectarian (specifically Essene) in character. Its presence in the scroll alongside canonical psalms is part of the evidence for Flint's position that the scroll's boundaries were not yet fixed.

The Apostrophe to Zion (11QPsalms^a Column XXII)

A poem of mourning for and yearning toward Zion, in the tradition of Lamentations and the Zion psalms (46, 48, 76, 84, 87, 122). It has some affinities with later Jewish liturgical poetry (*piyyutim*). Excerpt:

I remember thee for blessing, O Zion; with all my might I have loved thee. May thy memory be blessed for ever! Great is thy hope, O Zion; that peace and thy longed-for salvation will come.

Generation after generation will dwell in thee and generations of the pious will be thy splendour.

David's Compositions (11QPsalms^a Column XXVII — Prose)

This remarkable prose passage claims that David composed 3,600 psalms (*tehillim*) and 446 songs of various liturgical types, for a total of **4,050 compositions**. The passage reads:

And David, the son of Jesse, was wise, and a light like the light of the sun, and literate, and discerning and perfect in all his ways before God and men. And the Lord gave him a discerning and enlightened spirit. And he wrote 3,600 psalms; and songs to sing before the altar over the whole-burnt perpetual offering every day, for all the days of the year, 364; and for the Sabbath offerings, 52 songs; and for the Sabbath offerings of the new moons and for all the Solemn Assemblies and for the Day of Atonement, 30 songs. And all the songs that he spoke were 446. And songs for making music over the stricken, 4. And the total was 4,050. All these he composed through prophecy which was given him from before the Most High.

The claim that David's authorship is **4,050 compositions** — compared to the MT's 150 psalms — is theologically startling. The passage explicitly grounds David's composition in **prophecy** (*nevuah*), making him a prophetic author rather than merely a royal poet. This is the most explicit claim of prophetic inspiration for Davidic authorship anywhere in ancient Jewish literature.

Part Three: Psalm 151 — The Psalm the MT Excludes

Status and Manuscripts

Psalm 151 is present in: - The **LXX** — as the 151st psalm, with the superscription *"This psalm was personally written by David, outside the number [of the canonical psalms], when he fought*

Goliath in single combat" - The **11QPsalms^a scroll** (Cave 11) — in two versions designated **151A** and **151B**, preserved in Hebrew - The **Syriac Peshitta** — though in a different form - The **Old Latin** versions derived from the LXX

Psalm 151 is **absent from the MT**, from all rabbinic canonical lists, and from all Protestant and Jewish canons. It is included in the deuterocanonical scriptures of Eastern Orthodox Christianity and some Catholic traditions.

The Two Hebrew Versions from 11QPsalms^a

The most important discovery regarding Psalm 151 is that 11QPsalms^a contains **two Hebrew psalms** (151A and 151B) that correspond to what the LXX combines into a single Psalm 151. The 11QPsalms^a versions are longer and may represent an earlier form of the tradition.

11QPsalms^a — Psalm 151A (DSS Hebrew, translated):

Hallelujah of David the Son of Jesse.

I was smaller than my brothers and the youngest of the sons of my father, and he made me shepherd of his flock and ruler over his kids.

My hands have made a pipe and my fingers a lyre, and I have rendered glory to the Lord; I said within myself:

The mountains will not witness to him, nor will the hills proclaim: the trees have cherished my words, and the flock my deeds.

For who will proclaim and who will speak and who will recount the deeds of the Lord? God has seen all, God has heard all and attended.

He sent his prophet to anoint me, Samuel to make me great. My brothers went out to meet him, handsome of figure, beautiful of appearance: Although they were tall of stature and handsome by their hair, the Lord God chose them not.

He sent and took me from behind the flock and he anointed me with the holy oil and made me leader of his people and ruler over the sons of his covenant.

11QPsalms^a — Psalm 151B (DSS Hebrew, translated):

The beginning of David's prowess after the prophet of God had anointed him.

Then I saw a Philistine uttering defiance and, drawing upon foreign gods, he defied the armies of the Lord. But I drew his own sword and beheaded him, and removed reproach from the children of Israel.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 151: This psalm is a genuine psalm of David, though supernumerary, composed when he fought in single combat with Goliath.

I was small among my brethren, and youngest in my father's house: I tended my father's sheep.

My hands formed a musical instrument, and my fingers tuned a psaltery.

And who shall tell my Lord? the Lord himself, he himself hears.

He sent forth his angel, and took me from my father's sheep, and he anointed me with the oil of his anointing.

My brothers were handsome and tall; but the Lord did not take pleasure in them.

I went forth to meet the Philistine; and he cursed me by his idols.

But I drew his own sword, and beheaded him, and removed reproach from the children of Israel.

DSS confirms: The Hebrew 11QPsalms^a version (151A and 151B) is longer and more detailed than the LXX. The LXX represents a condensed form of the tradition.

Variance Notes — DSS vs. LXX: - **[ADD by DSS]** 11QPsalms^a 151A contains an extended nature-poetry section (*"the mountains will not witness to him / nor will the hills proclaim / the trees have cherished my words"*) that has no parallel in the LXX. This appears to be an earlier expansion that the LXX tradition condensed. - **[VAR]** 11QPsalms^a: *"He sent his prophet to anoint me, Samuel to make me great"* — LXX: *"He sent forth his angel and took me from my father's sheep."* The DSS names Samuel; the LXX replaces Samuel with "his angel" — possibly a theological interpretation that mediates the divine contact through an angelic figure rather than a human prophet. - **[ORDER]** The DSS has two separate compositions (151A: David's anointing; 151B: David and Goliath). The LXX combines them into one psalm. The DSS form is almost certainly more original — it reflects the natural division between two separate events (the anointing and the combat) and is longer and more detailed. - **[THEOL]** The LXX's superscription — *"though supernumerary"* (*exōthen tou arithmou*) — is itself remarkable: the translator acknowledges that this psalm is outside the canonical count of 150. This is the LXX's own explicit recognition of a boundary it is nonetheless crossing.

Part Four: Selected Verbal Variants in Individual Psalms

Psalm 2 — The Royal/Messianic Psalm

Psalm 2 is one of the most extensively cited psalms in the New Testament and one of the most theologically significant in the entire Psalter. Its verbal variants between MT and LXX repay careful attention.

Psalm 2:7 — "Thou Art My Son"

MT (ASV): I will tell of the decree: YahWeh said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee.

LXX (Brenton): The Lord said to me, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.

DSS: 4QPsalms^a (4Q83) contains a fragment at this area but the exact verse is not clearly preserved.

NT Usage: Psalm 2:7 is cited at Acts 13:33 (Paul's sermon at Antioch); Hebrews 1:5; 5:5. The NT follows the LXX reading. The phrase *"this day have I begotten thee"* became central in early Christological debate — some early Christians (*adoptionists*) used it to argue that Jesus became

the Son of God at his baptism or resurrection rather than from eternity. The Greek *"to-day have I begotten thee"* is identical in MT and LXX; the debate was therefore not a MT/LXX issue but a question of interpretation.

Variance Notes: - MT and LXX agree verbatim in the key phrases. Minor differences in the introductory line ("I will tell of the decree" vs. "The Lord said to me") but these are translation conventions rather than textual variants.

Psalm 2:11–12 — Kiss the Son

MT (ASV): Serve YahWeh with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, For his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him.

LXX (Brenton): Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in him with trembling. Accept correction, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye should perish from the righteous way: whensoever his wrath shall be suddenly kindled, blessed are all they that trust in him.

DSS: No clear fragment for this verse.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** This is one of the most debated textual variants in the Psalter. MT: *"Kiss the son"* (*nashĕqû-bar*) where *bar* is the Aramaic word for "son." LXX: *"Accept correction"* (*draxasthe paideias*) — not "kiss the son" at all, but an exhortation to discipline/correction. These are completely different readings.

The problem with the MT here is that *bar* (son) is an **Aramaic** word, unusual in Hebrew poetry. The Hebrew word for "son" is *ben*. The Aramaic *bar* appears occasionally in Hebrew poetry (Proverbs 31:2; Psalm 2:12) but its presence here has long puzzled scholars.

Three explanations have been offered: 1. **MT is original:** The psalmist uses the Aramaic *bar* for "son" — perhaps as a loanword or a deliberate archaism — and the LXX translator misread the consonants and translated a different word (*birra*, "purely/correctly") as "instruction/correction." 2. **LXX is original:** The Hebrew Vorlage read *birru* (be pure/correct) or *bar* meaning "instruction" in a different semantic range, and the MT's *bar* (Aramaic "son") arose by scribal confusion. 3. **Both reflect genuine but different traditions:** The MT and LXX may go back to two different Hebrew traditions for this verse.

Theological significance: The MT's "Kiss the son" — if *bar* means "son" — creates a direct messianic exhortation parallel to verse 7 ("Thou art my son"). The LXX's "Accept correction" is more generically sapient. The MT reading has been the basis for messianic and Christological interpretations of Psalm 2 throughout Christian tradition; the LXX reading is less explicitly messianic.

Psalm 8 — The Dignity of Man

MT (ASV) — Psalm 8:5: For thou hast made him but little lower than God (*Elohim*), And crownest him with glory and honor.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 8:6: Thou madest him a little less than angels (*angelōn*), And hast crowned him with glory and honour.

DSS: 4QPsalms^a fragment at this psalm, but the specific verse is not clearly preserved.

NT Usage: Hebrews 2:7 quotes this verse and applies it to Jesus: *"Thou madest him a little lower than the angels."* The author of Hebrews follows the LXX reading (*angels*), not the MT reading (*Elohim* / God).

Variance Notes: - **[VAR/THEOL]** This is the most famous single translation difference in the entire Psalter and one of the most consequential for NT interpretation. The Hebrew *Elohim* can mean: (a) God (the divine being); (b) divine beings/gods in a general sense; (c) angels (as the LXX understands here). The LXX translators chose *angeloi* (angels), which is a defensible reading of *Elohim* in some contexts but is not its primary meaning. The MT's *Elohim* places man just below God himself — an exalted anthropology. The LXX's *angelōn* places man below the angelic hierarchy — a slightly less exalted reading. The Hebrews author's argument requires the LXX reading: he argues that Jesus was temporarily made lower than angels (in the incarnation) before being exalted above them.

Psalm 16 — The Resurrection Psalm

MT (ASV) — Psalm 16:8–11: I have set YahWeh always before me: Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; My flesh also shall dwell in safety. For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.

Thou wilt show me the path of life: In thy presence is fulness of joy; In thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 15:8–11: I foresaw the Lord always before me; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved.

Therefore my heart rejoiced and my tongue exulted; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

DSS: 4QPsalms^c (4Q85) contains fragments of Psalm 16. The fragments do not clearly resolve the key textual questions.

NT Usage: Peter quotes Psalm 16:8–11 at Acts 2:25–28 as a proof-text for the resurrection of Jesus; Paul quotes verse 10 at Acts 13:35. Both NT quotations follow the LXX.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"my flesh also shall dwell in safety"* (*yishkôn lâbetach*); LXX: *"my flesh shall rest in hope"* (*kataskēnōsei ep' elpidi*). The MT has the body dwelling in security (during life); the LXX has the body resting in hope (anticipating resurrection). The LXX reading carries a stronger eschatological sense. - **[VAR]** MT: *"thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol"* —

LXX: *"thou wilt not leave my soul in hell."* The MT's *Sheol* (the underworld of the dead) is rendered by the LXX as *hadēs* (hell/underworld). The difference is slight but the LXX *hadēs* is the term the NT uses when quoting this psalm (Acts 2:27). - **[THEOL]** The key NT argument (Acts 2:29–31) is that David died and was buried, so the psalm cannot be about David's own body not seeing corruption. Therefore it prophesies of the Messiah whose body did not see corruption. This argument works equally with the MT and LXX readings, but the LXX's *"rest in hope"* and *"see corruption"* (Greek *diaphthoran*) are the specific terms the NT argument builds on.

Psalm 22 — The Passion Psalm

MT (ASV) — Psalm 22:1, 16, 18: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning?

[v.16] For dogs have compassed me: A company of evil-doers have inclosed me; **They pierced my hands and my feet** (*ka'ărû ɣâdaî wĕraglâɣ*).

[v.18] They part my garments among them, And upon my vesture do they cast lots.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 21:1, 16, 18: O God, my God, attend to me: why hast thou forsaken me? the account of my transgressions is far from my salvation.

[v.16] For many dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked doers has beset me round: **they pierced my hands and my feet** (*ōrɣxan cheiras mou kai podas*).

[v.18] They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

DSS: The Nahal Hever Psalms scroll (5/6HevPs) contains Psalm 22 but the crucial verse 16 is not preserved. The most important DSS manuscript for this question is the Psalms Scroll from Cave 4 (4QPsalms^a), which also does not clearly preserve verse 16.

Variance Notes — The Most Debated Verse in the Psalms: - **[VAR — Critical]** MT Psalm 22:16b is textually one of the most contested verses in the entire Old Testament. The phrase translated *"they pierced my hands and my feet"* in both the ASV (from MT) and the LXX rests on different Hebrew readings:

The MT consonantal text reads *ka'ărû* — which is the form *ka'ari* (like a lion), meaning *"like a lion [at] my hands and my feet."* This is grammatically awkward but possible: the wicked surround the psalmist like a lion.

The LXX reads *ōrɣxan* (they dug/pierced) — suggesting a Hebrew Vorlage with *kâ'ărû* (they dug/pierced), from the root *kûr* (to dig). This one-letter difference (Waw/Yod distinction in Hebrew: כארו vs. כאר) produces the "pierced" vs. "like a lion" difference.

Dead Sea Scrolls evidence: The Nahal Hever scroll (5/6HevPs) does not preserve this line. However, a manuscript designated **4QPsalms^f (4Q88)** — which does contain Psalm 22 — has a reading that appears to support the "pierced" tradition, though the fragment is damaged at the critical point.

The **Syriac Peshitta** and the **Vulgate** both follow the "pierced" reading. A medieval Hebrew manuscript (not from Qumran) has been cited as reading *kâ'ărû* (pierced).

Current scholarly assessment (Tov, Flint): The textual evidence is genuinely uncertain. The LXX "pierced" reading is at minimum ancient and may represent a legitimate alternative Hebrew tradition. The MT's "like a lion" is the *lectio difficilior* (harder reading) — a criterion that often favors the MT — but "like a lion" is grammatically difficult and may itself be a corruption of "pierced." The question cannot be definitively resolved with current evidence.

NT usage: Psalm 22 is the psalm most extensively cited or alluded to in the Passion narratives. Jesus's cry from the cross (*"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me"*, Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34) is a quotation of v.1. The division of garments and casting of lots (v.18) is fulfilled in John 19:24. The "pierced" reading of v.16 is cited in John 20:25 (Thomas's request to see the nail-prints) and implied in Luke 24:39 and John 19:37 (quoting Zechariah 12:10 about looking on "him whom they pierced"). The NT authors work within the LXX tradition throughout.

Psalm 40:6 — Ears or Body?

MT (ASV) — Psalm 40:6: Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in; **Mine ears hast thou opened** (*'oznayim kârîtâ lî*): Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 39:7: Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; but **a body hast thou prepared for me** (*sōma de katērtisō moi*): whole-burnt-offering and sacrifice for sin thou didst not require.

DSS: 4QPsalms^b (4Q84) contains Psalm 40 but the fragment does not clearly preserve verse 6.

NT Usage: Hebrews 10:5 quotes Psalm 40:6 in the LXX version: *"a body hast thou prepared for me"* — and builds its argument about the incarnation on this reading. The author of Hebrews interprets the "prepared body" as the physical body of Jesus Christ, prepared for the sacrifice that replaces all animal sacrifice.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Major]** MT: *"mine ears hast thou opened"* (*'oznayim kârîtâ lî*, literally "ears thou hast dug/bored for me"); LXX: *"a body hast thou prepared for me."* These are entirely different readings. The MT speaks of God opening ears for hearing/obedience — a Hebrew idiom for making someone receptive to instruction (compare Exodus 21:6, the boring of the ear of the permanent servant). The LXX has "body" (*sōma*) instead of "ears" (*'oznayim*).

Several explanations have been proposed: 1. The LXX translator may have read *'ôzen* (ear) as related to a different root and produced a paraphrase. 2. The LXX Vorlage may have had a different Hebrew text. 3. The LXX may represent an interpretive translation: since God "dug" or "prepared" the ears (= the whole person), the translator rendered this as "prepared a body."

The theological significance is enormous: the MT teaches obedience through open ears; the LXX (and Hebrews) teaches the incarnation through a prepared body. Two entirely different theological claims rest on the same Hebrew consonants.

Psalm 110 — The Lord Said to My Lord

MT (ASV) — Psalm 110:1: YahWeh saith unto my lord (*la'adoni*), Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 109:1: The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

DSS: 11QPsalms^a contains Psalm 110 (as part of its collection) but the fragment is small. 4QPsalms^a contains fragments of this area.

NT Usage: Psalm 110:1 is the most frequently quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament, cited or alluded to at least 33 times (Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42–43; Acts 2:34–35; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Hebrews 1:13; and many others). Jesus himself uses it in the Temple dispute over David's son (Matthew 22:41–46 = Section 150 of the Gospel harmony).

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"unto my lord"* (*la'adoni*) — the Hebrew *adoni* (my lord, human address) vs. *Adonai* (divine LORD). The MT uses the human form (*adoni*, "my lord"), suggesting the psalmist addresses a human king. The LXX renders it *tō Kyriō mou* ("to my Lord") — the same Greek word used for God, blurring the distinction. The NT's theological argument about the Messiah rests on the ambiguity: if David calls his descendant "my lord," how can the Messiah be merely David's son? (Matthew 22:43–45). This argument works better with the LXX reading (where both parties seem divine) than with the MT (where the distinction is preserved).

Psalm 118:22 — The Cornerstone

MT (ASV) — Psalm 118:22: The stone which the builders rejected Is become the head of the corner.

LXX (Brenton) — Psalm 117:22: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.

DSS: 11QPsalms^a contains Psalm 118 (in its alternative ordering, placed between Psalm 104 and the Songs of Ascents). The relevant verse is preserved.

Variance Notes: - MT and LXX agree closely. The DSS 11QPsalms^a text also agrees with the MT at this verse. - **[NT]** Psalm 118:22 is cited by Jesus at Matthew 21:42 (Section 145 of the Gospel harmony, in the Parable of the Wicked Tenants), by Peter at Acts 4:11, and by 1 Peter 2:7. Paul alludes to it at Romans 9:33 combined with Isaiah 28:16. The consistent citation across all four Gospel accounts and throughout the NT epistles makes this one of the most broadly attested OT citations in the NT.

Part Five: The Psalter's Doxologies and Book Structure

The Five Doxologies

The MT Psalter's five-book structure is demarcated by formal closing doxologies. The LXX preserves these doxologies with minor variations:

Book I Doxology — MT Psalm 41:13:

MT (ASV): Blessed be YahWeh, the God of Israel, From everlasting and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

LXX (Brenton): Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. So be it, so be it.

Variance Note: MT: *"Amen, and Amen"* (*'âmên wĕ'âmên*) — the double Amen. LXX: *"So be it, so be it"* (*genoito genoito*). The LXX translates the Hebrew liturgical formula rather than transliterating it (as is done in the NT, where *amēn* is transliterated). The DSS texts preserve the Hebrew *'amen* at this point in the manuscripts where the doxology is present.

Book IV Doxology — MT Psalm 106:48:

MT (ASV): Blessed be YahWeh, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye YahWeh.

LXX (Brenton): Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting and to everlasting: and all the people shall say, Amen, Amen. This is the Alleluia of Aggaeus and Zacharias.

Variance Note — [ADD in LXX]: The LXX adds an attribution: *"This is the Alleluia of Aggaeus and Zacharias"* — associating the closing doxology with the post-exilic prophets Haggai (*Aggaeus*) and Zechariah. This addition has no counterpart in the MT and reflects a tradition of associating certain psalms with specific prophets during the Second Temple period.

Appendix A: Summary of Psalter Structural Divergences

Feature	MT	LXX	DSS (11QPsalms^a)
Total psalms	150	151	41 compositions (latter Psalter)
Psalm 151	Absent	Present	Present (as 151A + 151B)
Psalms 9–10	Two psalms	One psalm (LXX Ps 9)	Unclear
Psalms 114–115	Two psalms	One psalm (LXX Ps 113)	Unclear
Psalms 116	One psalm	Two psalms (LXX 114–115)	Unclear
Psalm 147	One psalm	Two psalms (LXX 146–147)	Unclear
Order of Ps 90–150	Fixed MT order	Follows MT	**Substantially different**
Non-canonical compositions	None	None	3+ (Plea for Deliverance, Apostrophe to Zion, Sirach 51, etc.)

Feature	MT	LXX	DSS (11QPsalms^a)
David's Compositions claim	Not in Psalter	Not in Psalter	**4,050 compositions** (prose section)

Appendix B: Key Verbal Variants Summary Table

Psalm	Verse	MT Reading	LXX Reading	NT Citation	Significance
2	12	"Kiss the son" (*bar*)	"Accept correction"	Not directly cited	Messianic vs. wisdom reading
8	5	"lower than God" (*Elohim*)	"lower than angels" (*angelōn*)	Hebrews 2:7	NT follows LXX
16	9	"flesh shall dwell in safety"	"flesh shall rest in hope"	Acts 2:26	LXX carries eschatological sense
22	16	"like a lion [at] my hands"	"they pierced my hands"	John 20:25 implied	Most contested verse in Psalter
40	6	"ears hast thou opened"	"body hast thou prepared"	Hebrews 10:5	NT builds incarnation theology on LXX
110	1	"my lord" (*adoni*, human)	"my Lord" (*Kyrios*, divine)	Matthew 22:44; Acts 2:34	NT Christological argument rests on LXX
118	22	"stone builders rejected"	"stone builders rejected"	Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11	MT and LXX agree; NT cites both

Appendix C: The Psalms and the New Testament — An Accounting

The Psalter is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more than any other Old Testament book. The following are the psalms most frequently cited in the NT, with the tradition followed:

Psalm (MT)	NT Citations	Tradition Followed
110:1	33+ times	LXX (primarily)
118:22–23	Multiple	MT and LXX agree
22:1, 7–8, 16, 18	Throughout Passion	LXX (primarily)

Psalm (MT)	NT Citations	Tradition Followed
	narratives	
2:7	Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5	MT and LXX agree
16:8–11	Acts 2:25–28; 13:35	**LXX**
8:4–6	Hebrews 2:6–8	**LXX** (*"angels"* not *"God"*)
40:6–8	Hebrews 10:5–7	**LXX** (*"body"* not *"ears"*)
69:9	John 2:17; Romans 15:3	LXX (primarily)
31:5	Luke 23:46	LXX (*"into thy hands I commend my spirit"*)

Conclusion: The New Testament authors, working primarily in Greek and writing for Greek-speaking audiences, consistently draw on the **LXX Psalter** rather than the MT. In several theologically critical passages (Psalm 8:5; 16:9; 40:6; 110:1), the NT's argument **requires** the LXX reading. This means that the LXX's variant translations — whether they arose from a different Hebrew Vorlage or from interpretive translation choices — have had a determinative influence on the shape of New Testament Christology.

Appendix D: Essential Scholarship for the Psalms

Primary Text Editions

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- McCarthy, C., ed. *Psalms*. Biblia Hebraica Quinta 16. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014. [BHQ]
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- Skehan, P.W., E. Ulrich, and P.W. Flint. *Qumran Cave 4: The Psalms Scrolls*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XVI. Oxford University Press, 2000. [4QPsalms$^{a–r}$]

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- Brenton, L.C.L. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*. 1851. Public domain. [LXX]

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Commentaries and Studies

- Goldingay, J. *Psalms*. 3 vols. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament. Baker Academic, 2006–2008. [Most comprehensive recent commentary]
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- Ulrich, E. “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Biblical Text.” In P.W. Flint and J.C. VanderKam, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years*. Vol. 1. Brill, 1998. Pp. 79–100.
- Fabry, H.-J., and D. Böhler, eds. *Im Brennpunkt: Die Septuaginta*. Vol. 3. Beiträge zur Erforschung der Septuaginta 2. Kohlhammer, 2007.

NT Use of the Psalms

- Hays, R.B. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. Yale University Press, 1989.
- Moyise, S., and M.J.J. Menken, eds. *The Psalms in the New Testament*. T&T Clark, 2004. [Essential collection of essays]
- Jobes, K.H., and M. Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. 2nd ed. Baker Academic, 2015. Chapters 9–10. [On LXX Psalms and NT]
- deClaissé-Walford, N., R.A. Jacobson, and B.L. Tanner. *The Book of Psalms*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Eerdmans, 2014.

Part Three: Samuel — Narrative Divergence

Phase Preface

This volume presents Phase 2B of the MT/LXX/DSS Textual Harmony Project, focusing on the books of Samuel — specifically the textual tradition represented by **4QSamuel^a** (4Q51), the most significant biblical manuscript from the Dead Sea Scrolls for understanding the relationship between the Hebrew Bible's textual traditions and their Greek translation.

If Jeremiah presented the most dramatic **literary-structural** divergence between the MT and LXX (two complete literary editions of a prophetic book), and the Psalms presented the most dramatic **compositional** divergence (alternative psalm orders and boundaries), Samuel presents the most dramatic **narrative divergence** — cases in which the three traditions tell the same stories with significantly different details, numbers, sequences, and theological emphases.

The book of Samuel in the LXX is substantially longer than the MT in some passages, shorter in others, and contains readings that were long dismissed as errors by the Greek translator until 4QSamuel^a demonstrated that many of them faithfully reflect ancient Hebrew texts now lost from the MT tradition. The discovery of 4QSamuel^a at Qumran Cave 4 in 1952 — and its painstaking publication by Frank Moore Cross, Donald Freedman, and Eugene Ulrich over the subsequent decades — fundamentally revised the scholarly understanding of the MT's textual history.

This harmony focuses on five narrative complexes where the three traditions diverge most significantly:

1. **The Missing Paragraph Before 1 Samuel 11** — A passage about Nahash the Ammonite present in 4QSamuel^a and the LXX but absent from the MT
2. **The Goliath Narrative (1 Samuel 16–17)** — The LXX is 39 verses shorter than the MT; 4QSamuel^a evidence examined
3. **The Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1–10)** — Significant verbal variants between the traditions
4. **The Reign of Saul and the Court History of David** — Selected passages with major textual divergence
5. **The Death of Saul (1 Samuel 31 / 2 Samuel 1)** — Contradictory accounts and manuscript evidence

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The Three Traditions for Samuel

The Masoretic Text of Samuel

The MT of Samuel is preserved in:

- **Codex Leningradensis** (L, 1009 C.E.) — the basis of BHS and BHQ
- **Codex Aleppo** (A, c. 920 C.E.) — partially preserved for Samuel
- **Codex Cairensis** (C, 895 C.E.) — the oldest dated Hebrew biblical manuscript; contains portions of Samuel

The MT of Samuel is widely regarded by textual critics as one of the **least well-preserved** books in the Hebrew Bible. The MT of Samuel contains numerous internal difficulties — grammatical awkwardness, apparent haplographies (scribal omissions caused by similar line endings), and readings that are contextually difficult — that suggest the MT tradition for Samuel suffered transmission problems not evident in better-preserved books.

The Septuagint of Samuel

The LXX of Samuel presents particularly complex textual problems because two substantially different Greek translations exist:

- **LXX^B** (Codex Vaticanus type) — the Old Greek translation, likely made in the second century B.C.E.
- **LXX^L** (Lucianic recension) — a later revision attributed to Lucian of Antioch (d. 312 C.E.) that has been shown to often preserve ancient Hebrew readings

The relationship between LXX^B, LXX^L, and the MT is triangular and complex. In some passages LXX^B agrees with 4QSamuel^a against the MT; in others LXX^L agrees with 4QSamuel^a against both MT and LXX^B. The standard critical edition is the Göttingen Septuagint, *Regnorum I–IV* (edited by N. Fernández Marcos, *Reges I et II* [Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum VIII/1, 2011]).

4QSamuel^a (4Q51)

4QSamuel^a is the longest and most significant of three Samuel manuscripts found at Qumran. It is:

- Written in a **Hasmonean hand** dating to approximately 50–25 B.C.E.
- One of the largest biblical scrolls from Cave 4 — originally comprising at least 57 columns
- Preserved in approximately 190 fragments covering portions of 1 Samuel 1–2 Samuel 24

Publication history: Fragments were first published by Frank Moore Cross in 1953 (*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 132). The complete critical edition appeared as **DJD XVII** (E. Ulrich, F.M. Cross, et al., *Qumran Cave 4: Samuel*, Oxford University Press, 2005). An accessible discussion is in Abegg, Flint, Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, pp. 213–292.

Character of 4QSamuel^a: The scroll is not simply a variant of the MT or simply a proto-LXX text. It represents a **third textual tradition** — one that sometimes agrees with the MT against the LXX, sometimes agrees with the LXX against the MT, and sometimes presents readings

found in neither. Its most significant contribution is that it confirms, against long-standing scholarly skepticism, that many LXX readings in Samuel reflect **genuine ancient Hebrew texts** that were replaced or lost in the tradition that produced the MT.

Part One: The Missing Paragraph — 1 Samuel 10:27b–11:1

The Problem

In the MT, 1 Samuel 11 begins abruptly:

MT (ASV) — 1 Samuel 11:1: Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

The transition from 1 Samuel 10 is jarring. At the end of chapter 10, Saul has just been publicly confirmed as king by lot. Then immediately — without any narrative bridge — an Ammonite king attacks a Israelite city. Who is Nahash? Why is he attacking? The MT provides no context.

The 4QSamuel^a Reading

4QSamuel^a (4Q51) preserves a paragraph of text **between** 1 Samuel 10:27 and 11:1 that is entirely absent from the MT. The passage (translated from the Hebrew of 4Q51, following Cross's editio princeps) reads:

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.

About a month later, Nahash the Ammonite went up and encamped against Jabesh-gilead…

The LXX Reading

The LXX (Brenton) at the same point reads:

And it came to pass about a month after, that Naas the Ammanite came up, and encamped against Jabis Galaad…

The LXX has the temporal marker — *"about a month later"* — which signals that it is continuing from something that preceded this verse. But the LXX does not have the full paragraph that 4QSamuel^a preserves; it has only the connective phrase.

The Josephus Parallel

The Jewish historian Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*, VI.5.1) describes Nahash oppressing the Transjordanian tribes before the Jabesh-gilead incident — confirming that a tradition about Nahash's earlier cruelty was known in the first century C.E. Josephus's description closely matches the 4QSamuel^a paragraph, suggesting that Josephus had access to a text type similar to 4QSamuel^a rather than the MT.

Variance Notes: - **[ADD by MT]** The missing paragraph in the MT is almost certainly the result of **haplography** — a scribal copying error in which the scribe's eye skipped from one occurrence of a phrase to another, causing the intervening text to be omitted. The paragraph is genuine; its loss is a MT scribal accident. - **[DSS]** 4QSamuel^a confirms the reading and provides the fuller Hebrew text. The LXX preserves only the temporal connective ("*about a month later*") without the full paragraph — suggesting the LXX Vorlage had an intermediate form of the text. - **[THEOL]** The missing paragraph transforms the narrative. With it, Nahash is a known villain whose systematic brutality against Israel has been ongoing. His attack on Jabesh-gilead is the final provocation that triggers Saul's first act as king. Without it (MT), Nahash appears from nowhere. The MT is narratively inferior; the 4QSamuel^a text is narratively superior. This is not subjective judgment — it is the same criterion textual critics use when the "harder reading" (the more difficult one) is considered more likely to be a scribal alteration of something simpler.

Part Two: The Goliath Narrative — 1 Samuel 16–17

Overview

The narrative of David and Goliath is the most extensively studied textual problem in the books of Samuel. The MT and the LXX present **substantially different versions** of the story. The LXX is **39 verses shorter** than the MT — an omission of approximately one-fifth of the MT's total text for these chapters.

MT Chapters 16–17 contain: - 16:1–13: Samuel anoints David - 16:14–23: David enters Saul's court as a musician (harp player) - 17:1–11: The Philistine challenge; Goliath's description - 17:12–31: David's visit to the battlefield; his brothers' reaction - 17:32–40: David volunteers; Saul's initial skepticism; the sling - 17:41–54: The combat; David's victory; the flight of the Philistines - 17:55–58: Saul asks who David is (apparently not knowing him, despite 16:14–23) - 18:1–5: Jonathan's covenant with David

LXX Chapters 16–17 (LXX^B) lack: - 17:12–31 (David's visit to the battlefield; his brothers' conversation) - 17:41, 48b, 50 (certain combat details) - 17:55–58 (Saul's question about David's identity)

The Internal Contradiction in the MT

The MT of 1 Samuel contains what appears to be a direct internal contradiction:

In **16:14–23**, David enters Saul's service as a musician. Saul loves him greatly: *"Saul loved him greatly; and he became his armor-bearer"* (16:21). Saul knows David, knows his father Jesse, and has formally taken David into royal service.

In **17:55–58**, immediately after the Goliath combat — which presumably follows from chapter 16 — Saul sees David go out to fight Goliath and asks his general Abner: *"Whose son is this youth?"* (17:55). When David returns with Goliath's head, Saul asks him directly: *"Whose son art thou, young man?"* (17:58). David answers: *"I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."*

The problem: Saul has already met David and brought him into royal service (16:21). How can he now not know who David is?

The LXX solves this problem by **omitting** 17:12–31 and 17:55–58 — the material that creates the contradiction. In the LXX, there is no second introduction of David; Saul's question about his identity does not appear.

The Three Scholarly Explanations

Explanation 1 — The LXX reflects the original text (Short Text Theory): P. Kyle McCarter (*I Samuel*, Anchor Bible, 1980), Emanuel Tov, and most critical scholars argue that the LXX preserves the earlier, shorter form of the narrative. The MT's additional material (17:12–31; 17:55–58) represents **secondary expansion** — later additions that filled in backstory (David's family, his visit to the battlefield) but inadvertently created an internal contradiction with 16:14–23.

Under this view, the original narrative knew only one story of David's introduction to Saul. The expansions were added by a later editor who either did not know or did not notice the contradiction with chapter 16.

Explanation 2 — The MT reflects the original text (Long Text Theory): Traditional harmonists and some critical scholars (John Mauchline, David Tsumura) argue that the MT represents two originally independent traditions that were editorially combined: (a) David as court musician (16:14–23) from one source and (b) David as shepherd-warrior (17:12–31; 17:55–58) from another. The editor who combined them allowed the apparent contradiction to stand because both traditions were authoritative. The LXX then omitted the duplicate material.

Explanation 3 — Two parallel editions (Tov's revision): In his later work, Emanuel Tov (*Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., pp. 341–344) concludes that the MT and LXX represent **two different editorial stages** of a growing narrative: the shorter LXX form is earlier; the MT represents a later expanded edition incorporating additional folk traditions about David's youth.

The 4QSamuel^a Evidence

4QSamuel^a (4Q51) preserves fragments of 1 Samuel 17. The critical question: does 4QSamuel^a have the material that the LXX lacks?

The answer is complex. 4QSamuel^a's fragments for chapters 16–17 are fragmentary, but the evidence available suggests:

- **4QSamuel^a preserves some of 17:3–6** (Goliath's description) — present in both MT and LXX
- **The fragments do not clearly preserve 17:12–31** — the contested passage
- **Some fragments may align with the MT's longer text** at certain points

The 4QSamuel^a evidence for the Goliath narrative is **inconclusive** — the scroll is too fragmentary at this point to determine definitively whether it had the short or long form. This is itself significant: the three-tradition harmony cannot be completed for this passage with current evidence.

The Full Parallel Text

Goliath's Physical Description — 1 Samuel 17:4–7

MT (ASV): And there went out a champion from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was **six cubits and a span** [approximately 9 feet 9 inches / 2.97 meters]. And he had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was clad with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was **five thousand shekels of brass** [approximately 125 lbs / 57 kg]. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a javelin of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed **six hundred shekels of iron** [approximately 15 lbs / 6.8 kg]: and his shield-bearer went before him.

LXX (Brenton): And there went forth a mighty man out of the army of the Philistines, Goliath by name, of Geth, **four cubits and a span** [approximately 6 feet 9 inches / 2.06 meters] was his height. And he had a helmet on his head, and he wore a breastplate of chain armour; and the weight of his breastplate was **five thousand shekels of brass**. And he had greaves of brass on his legs, and a brazen spear between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear weighed **six hundred shekels of iron**: and his shield-bearer went before him.

DSS (4QSamuel^a): The fragment does not clearly preserve this verse. However, a fragment at **Josephus** (*Antiquities* VI.9.1) describes Goliath as *"of vast bulk, for he was **four cubits and a span** in height"* — aligning with the LXX against the MT.

Variance Notes — Goliath's Height: - **[VAR — Famous]** MT: *"six cubits and a span"* (~9'9"); LXX: *"four cubits and a span"* (~6'9"). This is the most famous numerical variant in the narrative and one of the most discussed in popular biblical scholarship.

Which is correct? Several lines of evidence favor the LXX/Josephus reading of **four cubits and a span**:

1. **The Septuagint**: LXX^B consistently reads "four cubits and a span" — not a single Greek manuscript reads "six cubits."

2. **Josephus**: Writing in the first century C.E. from a text tradition he describes as authoritative, gives "four cubits and a span."

3. **Human anatomy**: A height of approximately 6'9" (2.06 m) is exceptionally tall but within human biological range — a warrior of this height would be a formidable opponent but physically plausible. A height of approximately 9'9" (2.97 m) exceeds the biological maximum for human height by approximately one meter. No confirmed human being in recorded history has exceeded 8'11" (2.72 m).

4. **The MT tradition of gigantism**: The MT already contains references to other giant Philistine warriors in 2 Samuel 21:15–22 and 1 Chronicles 20:4–8 — a tradition that may have progressively enlarged Goliath's dimensions as his legendary status grew.

5. **Scribal error**: In Hebrew, "four" (*'arba'*) and "six" (*shesh*) are visually dissimilar, making scribal confusion unlikely. However, a copyist influenced by the tradition of Goliath's exceptional size may have changed "four" to "six" deliberately.

Frank Moore Cross concluded that the LXX's "four cubits and a span" is the earlier reading. The MT's "six cubits" represents an exaggeration that developed in the MT tradition.

David's Introduction to Saul — The Contradiction Examined

MT Only — 1 Samuel 16:14–23 (Present in both MT and LXX)

MT (ASV): Now the Spirit of YahWeh departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from YahWeh troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants, that are before thee, to seek out a man who is a skilful player on the harp; and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.

And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me. Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is skilful in playing, and a mighty man of valor, and a man of war, and prudent in speech, and a comely person; and YahWeh is with him.

Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, who is with the sheep. And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul.

And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armor-bearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favor in my sight. And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took the harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

LXX (Brenton): [Substantially parallels the MT in this passage]

DSS (4QSamuel^a): Fragments of this passage exist and largely agree with the MT, though with minor textual variants.

MT Only — 1 Samuel 17:55–58 (ABSENT from LXX)

MT (ASV): And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.

And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the stripling is.

And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.

LXX (Brenton): *[This entire passage — vv. 55–58 — is ABSENT from the LXX]*

DSS (4QSamuel^a): The relevant fragment is not clearly preserved at this point.

Variance Notes: - **[ADD by MT or OMIT by LXX]** The contradiction created by the presence of both 16:14–23 (David in Saul's court) and 17:55–58 (Saul not knowing David) is the most significant internal narrative inconsistency in the MT of Samuel. The LXX eliminates the contradiction by lacking 17:55–58.

The most historically significant implication: If the LXX's shorter text is original (as most critical scholars now believe), then the MT of 1 Samuel 17 represents an **editorially expanded narrative** — a later stage of the book's composition that added folk-tradition material about David's youth without fully harmonizing it with the earlier court-musician narrative. The contradiction in the MT is evidence of editorial seams in the composition of the book, not scribal error.

Part Three: The Song of Hannah — 1 Samuel 2:1–10

Overview

The Song of Hannah is one of the oldest and most important poems in the Hebrew Bible, closely related in structure, vocabulary, and theology to Psalm 113 and to the Magnificat of Mary in Luke 1:46–55 (which explicitly echoes it). It is among the best-preserved passages in Samuel across the three traditions — which makes the variants that do exist particularly significant.

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1 Samuel 2:1–10 — Full Parallel Text

MT (ASV): And Hannah prayed, and said:

My heart exulteth in YahWeh; My horn is exalted in YahWeh; My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; Because I rejoice in thy salvation.

There is none holy as YahWeh; For there is none besides thee, Neither is there any rock like our God.

Talk no more so exceeding proudly; Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth; For YahWeh is a God of knowledge, And by him actions are weighed.

The bows of the mighty are broken; And they that stumbled are girded with strength.

They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; And they that were hungry have ceased to hunger: Yea, the barren hath borne seven; And she that hath many children languisheth.

YahWeh killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to Sheol, and bringeth up.

YahWeh maketh poor, and maketh rich: He bringeth low, he also lifteth up.

He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, He lifteth up the needy from the dunghill, To make them sit with princes, And inherit the throne of glory: For the pillars of the earth are YahWeh's, And he hath set the world upon them.

He will keep the feet of his holy ones; But the wicked shall be put to silence in darkness; For by strength shall no man prevail.

They that strive with YahWeh shall be broken to pieces; Against them will he thunder in heaven: YahWeh will judge the ends of the earth; And he will give strength unto his king, And exalt the horn of his anointed.

LXX (Brenton): And Anna prayed and said:

My heart is established in the Lord; my horn is exalted in my God; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; I have rejoiced in thy salvation.

For there is none holy as the Lord; and there is none righteous as our God; there is none holy beside thee.

Boast not, and talk not high things; let not high-sounding words come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and God prepares his own designs.

The bow of the mighty has been made weak, and the weak have girded themselves with strength.

They that were full of bread are brought low; and the hungry have forsaken the earth; for the barren has borne seven, and she that abounded in children has been made weak.

The Lord kills and makes alive; he brings down to Hades and brings up.

The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and lifts up.

He raises the poor from the earth, and lifts the needy from the dunghill; to seat him with the mighty of the people, and causing them to inherit a throne of glory: giving the vow to the vower, and he blessed the years of the righteous.

For by strength shall no man prevail.

The Lord shall make his adversary weak; the Lord is holy.

Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man boast in his strength, and let not the rich man boast in his wealth; but let him that boasts boast in this, to understand and know the Lord, and to execute judgment and justice in the midst of the earth.

The Lord has gone up to the heavens and thundered; he shall judge the ends of the earth, and give strength to our kings, and shall exalt the horn of his Christ.

DSS (4QSamuel^a): Fragments of the Song of Hannah are preserved in 4QSamuel^a. The DSS fragments align more closely with the MT than with the LXX at several key points. Specifically, the extended LXX passage (the wisdom-boasting section, *"Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom"*) does not appear in 4QSamuel^a, suggesting it may be a LXX expansion rather than a reflection of its Hebrew Vorlage.

Variance Notes:

- **[VAR]** MT: *"There is none holy as YahWeh; For there is none besides thee, Neither is there any rock like our God"* — LXX: *"there is none holy as the Lord; and there is none righteous as our God; there is none holy beside thee."* The LXX adds *"there is none righteous as our God"* — a phrase absent from the MT. The MT's *"rock"* (*tsûr*, a common Hebrew divine epithet) is entirely absent from the LXX.

- **[ADD in LXX]** The LXX contains an extended passage after *"neither let the mighty man boast in his strength"* (approximately verses equivalent to MT vv. 9–10) that draws heavily on Jeremiah 9:22–23 (*"let him that boasts boast in this, to understand and know the Lord"*). This passage has no Hebrew counterpart in the MT or in 4QSamuel^a. It appears to be a **LXX expansion**, incorporating the Jeremiah passage into Hannah's song.

- **[VAR — Theologically Significant]** MT: *"And he will give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed"* — LXX: *"and shall exalt the horn of his Christ"* (*Christou autou*). The LXX renders Hebrew *mĕshîchô* (his anointed one) with the Greek *Christos* (the anointed one / Christ) — the same word used throughout the NT for Jesus. This is the first occurrence of the word *Christos* in the LXX Psalms and Samuel material that the NT will develop into its central Christological title. Hannah's song ends with a reference to "his Christ" — understood by the early church as a prophecy of the Messiah.

- **[Magnificat Connection]** The Song of Hannah and Luke's Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55) share the following parallel themes, most of which are closer to the LXX than the MT formulation:

Hannah's Song	Magnificat	Tradition
"My heart exulteth / is established in the Lord"	"My soul doth magnify the Lord"	Both
"My horn is exalted in my God"	"my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour"	Both
"he that were full have hired out for bread / They that were full are brought low"	"The hungry he hath filled with good things; And the rich he hath sent empty away"	LXX closer
"He raiseth up the poor out of the dust"	"He hath put down princes from their thrones, And hath exalted them of low degree"	Both
"he will give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed"	"He hath holpen Israel his servant"	Both

Luke's Mary almost certainly draws on the LXX form of the Song of Hannah. The Magnificat is structured as a Greek poem drawing on Greek OT vocabulary, suggesting Luke (or his source) was working from the LXX tradition.

Part Four: The Ark Narrative and the Reign of Saul

1 Samuel 13:1 — The Age of Saul

MT (ASV): Saul was **[one year old]** when he began to reign; and he reigned **two years** over Israel.

LXX (Brenton): [The LXX (LXX^B) **entirely omits** 1 Samuel 13:1]

DSS (4QSamuel^a): The fragment does not preserve this verse.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Textual Corruption]** 1 Samuel 13:1 in the MT is universally acknowledged by all textual critics and all major English translations as **corrupt in the MT**. The Hebrew reads literally: *"A son of one year [was] Saul in his becoming king, and two years he reigned over Israel."* A one-year-old king reigning two years is historically impossible. The formula is the standard regnal introduction used throughout Kings (*"X years old was [king] when he began to reign, and Y years he reigned"*), but the numbers have been lost or corrupted in transmission. The LXX (LXX^B) simply omits the verse, having found it already corrupt in its Vorlage.

The **Acts 13:21** gives Saul's reign as **forty years**. Many English translations bracket the verse or supply the missing numbers: ESV: *"Saul was [thirty] years old when he began to reign, and he reigned [forty] years over Israel."* These supplied numbers are conjectural and are not found in any extant Hebrew manuscript, the LXX, or the DSS.

4QSamuel^a does not preserve this verse. This is one of the clearest cases in which the MT's text is demonstrably corrupt and the LXX's omission is the most honest response to the problem.

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1 Samuel 17:50 — Did David Kill Goliath with the Sling or the Sword?

MT (ASV) — 17:50–51: So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. And David ran, and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of its sheath, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith.

LXX (Brenton): [The LXX **omits** verse 50 — *"So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David"*]

And David ran, and stood over him, and took his sword, and slew him, and cut off his head.

DSS (4QSamuel^a): Fragmentary at this point; unclear.

Variance Notes: - **[ADD by MT]** The MT has verse 50 immediately followed by verse 51, producing a sequence in which David first *"slew him"* with the stone (v.50) and then *"slew him"* again with the sword (v.51) — a redundancy. The LXX omits v.50, leaving only the sword beheading in v.51. This is consistent with the LXX's generally shorter form of chapter 17.

- **[VAR — 2 Samuel 21:19]** A further complication: **2 Samuel 21:19** (MT) reads: *"Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim the Bethlehemite slew Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam."* The identical description of the spear staff connects this passage to the Goliath of 1 Samuel 17. If Elhanan killed Goliath in 2 Samuel 21:19, who killed him in 1 Samuel 17? The Chronicler resolves this (1 Chronicles 20:5) by saying Elhanan killed "Lahmi the brother of Goliath" — but this appears to be an editorial harmonization. The LXX and DSS do not clearly resolve the underlying question of whether two separate giant warriors named Goliath existed, or whether the traditions are in tension.

Part Five: The Death of Saul — 1 Samuel 31 and 2 Samuel 1

The Internal Contradiction

The death of Saul is narrated twice in the MT of Samuel — and the two accounts contradict each other:

Account 1 — 1 Samuel 31:3–5 (MT and LXX substantially agree):

And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers overtook him; and he was greatly distressed by reason of the archers. Then said Saul to his armor-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armor-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took his sword, and **fell upon it**. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he likewise fell upon his sword, and died with him.

Account 2 — 2 Samuel 1:6–10 (The Amalekite's Report):

And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance to be upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul was leaning upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and the horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. And he said unto me, Stand, I pray thee, beside me, and slay me; for anguish hath taken hold of me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood beside him, and slew him, because I knew that he could not live after that he had fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

MT and LXX: Both the MT and LXX preserve both accounts without harmonizing them.

DSS (4QSamuel^a): The scroll is fragmentary at this point.

Variance Notes:

- **[VAR — Internal Contradiction]** Account 1 (1 Samuel 31) states that Saul **fell on his own sword** and died before any enemy reached him. Account 2 (2 Samuel 1) has an Amalekite claiming that **he personally killed Saul** at Saul's request. David executes the Amalekite for the killing (2 Sam 1:15–16), accepting the report as true.

The scholarly question is whether one account is historical and one is fiction, or whether both are editorial inclusions from different source traditions:

1. **The Amalekite lied**: The traditional harmonistic reading — the Amalekite found Saul already dead or dying and fabricated the story of the mercy killing to gain David's favor. This is narratively plausible and is the reading adopted by most traditional commentators (Calvin, Matthew Henry) and many critical ones (Alter, McCarter).

2. **Two independent traditions**: Some scholars (Rost, Noth) see 2 Samuel 1 as reflecting an independent tradition about Saul's death that was not harmonized with 1 Samuel 31. Both traditions were included because both were considered authoritative. This is the same model used to explain the Goliath contradiction.

3. **The Chronicler's solution**: 1 Chronicles 10:1–14 follows 1 Samuel 31 (Saul falls on his sword) and omits the Amalekite's report entirely — an implicit editorial judgment that 1 Samuel 31 is the authoritative account.

The MT and LXX both preserve the contradiction without resolution. Neither the MT nor the LXX harmonizes the two accounts. 4QSamuel^a is too fragmentary to contribute to this specific question.

Part Six: 4QSamuel^a's Most Significant Individual Contributions

2 Samuel 6:3–4 — The Ark Narrative

MT (ASV): And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in the hill: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was in the hill, with the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

4QSamuel^a: The scroll here preserves a slightly longer text that clarifies the grammar of the MT, which has an awkward repetition (*"the house of Abinadab… the house of Abinadab"* in consecutive clauses). 4QSamuel^a appears to have a smoother reading that the MT may have compressed.

LXX (Brenton): And they put the ark of the Lord on a new wagon, and brought it out of the house of Aminadab that was in the hill; and Oza and his brethren the sons of Aminadab drove the new wagon with the ark. And his brethren went before the ark.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** The LXX reads *"his brethren"* rather than *"Ahio"* — a difference that reflects either a different Hebrew reading or an interpretation of the Hebrew *'achyô* as "his brothers" (from *'ach*, brother) rather than as a personal name (Ahio).

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2 Samuel 8:3 — The Extent of David's Empire

MT (ASV): And David smote Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore his dominion unto the River.

4QSamuel^a: The scroll reads *"to restore his hand upon the Euphrates"* — a slightly more explicit geographic reference than the MT's unspecified "the River."

LXX (Brenton): And David smote Adraazar the son of Raab king of Suba, as he went to extend his power to the river Euphrates.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** The LXX and 4QSamuel^a both have *"Euphrates"* explicitly; the MT has only "the River" (*nâhâr*) — which in context clearly means the Euphrates but leaves the name unstated. This is a minor variant with no theological significance; the geographic reference is the same.

Appendix A: Summary of Major Samuel Divergences

Passage	MT	LXX	DSS	Type	Significance
Before 11:1	Missing paragraph	Connective only	**Full paragraph**	[ADD in DSS/LXX]	DSS restores lost context
13:1	Numerically corrupt	Omitted	Not preserved	[CORRUPT in MT]	All traditions acknowledge the problem
17:4	Goliath: 6 cubits	Goliath: **4 cubits**	Not preserved	[VAR]	Josephus confirms 4 cubits
17:12–31	Present	**Absent**	Unclear	[ADD by MT]	Shorter LXX text likely earlier
17:50	David kills with stone AND sword	Stone verse absent	Unclear	[ADD by MT]	MT redundancy; LXX smoother
17:55–58	Saul doesn't know David	**Absent**	Unclear	[CONTRADICTION in MT]	LXX eliminates contradiction
2:10	"his anointed"	*"his Christ"*	MT-aligned	[THEOL/VAR]	First *Christos* in Samuel
31 vs. 2 Sam 1	Suicide; Amalekite	Same contradiction	Unclear	[INTERNAL CONTRADICTION]	Unresolved in all traditions

Passage	MT	LXX	DSS	Type	Significance
	both				

Appendix B: 4QSamuel^a and the Reliability of the Septuagint

The publication of 4QSamuel^a (DJD XVII, 2005) fundamentally revised scholarly understanding of the LXX of Samuel. Before its discovery, the many readings in LXX Samuel that differed from the MT were routinely attributed to: (a) the Greek translator's errors; (b) deliberate Greek theological interpretation; (c) Greek stylistic smoothing.

After 4QSamuel^a, a different picture emerges. Many of the LXX's distinctive readings in Samuel are now confirmed by 4QSamuel^a to reflect **genuine ancient Hebrew texts** — older readings that survived in the LXX tradition but were lost from (or replaced in) the tradition that produced the MT.

The implications, stated by Frank Moore Cross (*The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 3rd ed., 1995, pp. 132–177):

1. **The MT of Samuel is a relatively late and imperfect textual tradition.** It preserves the text faithfully in many places but shows signs of scribal corruption, haplography, and editorial harmonization that the 4QSamuel^a / LXX tradition does not share.

2. **The LXX of Samuel is not a "free" translation.** In many of the passages where it differs from the MT, it is translating a Hebrew text faithfully — a Hebrew text that differs from the MT. The LXX translators of Samuel were more faithful to their source than had been supposed.

3. **Neither the MT nor the LXX/4QSamuel^a tradition is simply "original."** Both represent **authentic ancient textual traditions** of the book of Samuel. The eclectic task of the textual critic is to evaluate each variant on its own terms — using internal criteria (grammatical coherence, narrative logic, the lectio difficilior principle) alongside external criteria (manuscript support, versional evidence, parallel passages).

Appendix C: The Goliath Tradition in Jewish and Christian Interpretation

The Goliath narrative has been interpreted theologically across three traditions:

Jewish Interpretation (Midrash, Talmud): The Midrash Samuel describes Goliath as a warrior of supernatural origin, interpreting his armament allegorically. The Talmud (*Sotah* 42b) discusses the Elhanan/Goliath problem but resolves it by suggesting that Elhanan and David are the same person. The MT's larger Goliath (six cubits) is the standard in rabbinic tradition.

Christian Interpretation: The early church read the David-Goliath narrative typologically — David as a type of Christ, Goliath as a type of Satan or death, the smooth stone as a symbol of Christ's purity. Augustine (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* on Psalm 144) develops the typology at

length. The NT does not directly cite the Goliath narrative, though 1 Corinthians 1:27 (*"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty"*) echoes its theological pattern.

Qumran Interpretation: No specifically sectarian interpretation of the Goliath narrative survives. 4QSamuel^a's preservation of the text is transmission rather than interpretation. The War Scroll (1QM) does describe eschatological battles in terms that echo the Goliath pattern (the small versus the mighty, the divine warrior fighting for the weak) but does not explicitly cite 1 Samuel 17.

Appendix D: Essential Scholarship for Samuel

Primary Text Editions

- Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Fascicle for Samuel (H.P. Smith, revised). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990. [MT]
- Fernández Marcos, N., ed. *Reges I et II*. Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum VIII/1. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011. [LXX critical edition]
- Ulrich, E., F.M. Cross, et al. *Qumran Cave 4: Samuel*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XVII. Oxford University Press, 2005. [4QSamuel^{a-}c editio princeps]

English Translations

- Brenton, L.C.L. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*. 1851. Public domain.
- Abegg, M., P. Flint, and E. Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*. HarperOne, 1999. Pp. 213–292.

Commentaries

- McCarter, P.K. *I Samuel*. Anchor Bible 8. Doubleday, 1980. [Essential; extensive textual apparatus]
- McCarter, P.K. *II Samuel*. Anchor Bible 9. Doubleday, 1984.
- Tsumura, D.T. *The First Book of Samuel*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Eerdmans, 2007.
- Alter, R. *The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel*. Norton, 1999. [Literary emphasis; sensitive to textual problems]
- Anderson, A.A. *2 Samuel*. Word Biblical Commentary 11. Word, 1989.

Textual Criticism of Samuel

- Cross, F.M. *The Ancient Library of Qumran*. 3rd ed. Fortress, 1995. Pp. 132–177. [Foundational study of 4QSamuel^a]

- Cross, F.M. “The Ammonite Oppression of the Tribes of Gad and Reuben.” In *History, Historiography, and Interpretation*. Ed. H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld. Magnes Press, 1983. [On the missing Nahash paragraph]
- Ulrich, E. *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*. Scholars Press, 1978. [Foundational monograph on 4QSamuel^a and Josephus]
- Tov, E. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. 3rd ed. Fortress, 2012. Pp. 337–344. [Samuel section]
- Flint, P.W., and E. Ulrich. “Samuel.” In *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, pp. 213–292.

On the Goliath Narrative Specifically

- Barthélemy, D., D.W. Gooding, J. Lust, and E. Tov. *The Story of David and Goliath: Textual and Literary Criticism*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 73. Fribourg / Göttingen, 1986. [The essential specialized study]
- Rofé, A. “The Battle of David and Goliath: Folklore, Theology, Eschatology.” In *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel*. Ed. J. Neusner et al. Fortress, 1987.
- Stoebe, H.J. *Das erste Buch Samuelis*. Kommentar zum Alten Testament VIII/1. Gütersloh, 1973.

Part Four: Exodus — Architectural Divergence

Phase Preface

This volume presents Phase 2C of the MT/LXX/DSS Textual Harmony Project, focusing on the Tabernacle narratives of Exodus — the extended account of the construction of the portable wilderness sanctuary in Exodus 25–40. These chapters represent the most dramatic **architectural divergence** in the entire MT/LXX textual relationship: the same physical object (the Tabernacle) described in the same two-part literary structure (divine blueprint in chs. 25–31, human construction in chs. 35–40) but in a substantially different order in the LXX, with significant additions, omissions, and reorganizations that go well beyond anything explicable as translation technique.

The Tabernacle narratives have generated a specialized scholarly literature because they raise a fundamental question that bears on the entire project of textual criticism: **When an ancient translator presents the same content in a substantially different order, is the translator exercising editorial freedom, or faithfully rendering a different Hebrew source?** The Dead Sea Scrolls evidence for Exodus — though fragmentary — provides critical data points for evaluating this question.

The four phases of this project have now examined four different *types* of textual divergence:

- **Phase 1 (Jeremiah):** Two complete literary editions — a shorter and a longer text

- **Phase 2A (Psalms):** Compositional divergence — different psalm counts, orders, and boundaries
- **Phase 2B (Samuel):** Narrative divergence — the same stories told with different details and contradictions
- **Phase 2C (Exodus): Architectural divergence** — the same instructions reordered, restructured, and supplemented

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The Three Traditions for Exodus

The Masoretic Text of Exodus

The MT of Exodus is preserved in the standard witnesses:

- **Codex Leningradensis** (L, 1009 C.E.) — basis of BHS and BHQ
- **Aleppo Codex** (A, c. 920 C.E.) — partially preserved through Exodus 28
- **Samaritan Pentateuch** (SP) — an important independent Hebrew witness, discussed below

The BHQ Exodus volume (edited by Anneli Aejmelaeus and Udo Quast, 2023) provides the most current critical apparatus.

The MT of Exodus 35–40 presents the **construction** of the Tabernacle in an order closely parallel to — but not identical with — the **blueprint** given in chapters 25–31. The pattern is:

Blueprint (MT Chs. 25–31)	Construction (MT Chs. 35–40)
Ark of the Covenant (25:10–22)	Ark (37:1–9)
Table of Showbread (25:23–30)	Table (37:10–16)
Golden Lampstand (25:31–40)	Lampstand (37:17–24)
Altar of Incense (30:1–10)	Altar of Incense (37:25–29)
Court and Curtains (26–27)	Court and Curtains (38:9–20)
Altar of Burnt Offering (27:1–8)	Altar of Burnt Offering (38:1–7)
Bronze Laver (30:17–21)	Bronze Laver (38:8)
Priestly Garments (28–29)	Priestly Garments (39:1–31)
Anointing Oil and Incense (30:22–38)	(No parallel in MT construction)
Bezalel and Oholiab (31:1–11)	(See Exodus 35:30–36:7)

Blueprint (MT Chs. 25–31)	Construction (MT Chs. 35–40)
Sabbath Command (31:12–17)	(See Exodus 35:1–3)

The Septuagint of Exodus

The LXX of Exodus presents a substantially different organization of the Tabernacle construction narrative. The differences are concentrated in **chapters 35–40**, where the LXX:

1. Presents the construction elements in a **different sequence** from the MT
2. **Omits** several passages present in the MT (including the entire account of the bronze laver, MT 38:8)
3. **Adds** material not present in the MT (a different account of the court curtains)
4. Uses a distinct **narrative formula** ("just as the Lord commanded Moses") that appears more frequently and in different positions than in the MT

The standard critical edition is the Göttingen Septuagint, *Exodus* (edited by John William Wevers, 1991). Wevers's accompanying study, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus* (Scholars Press, 1990), is the essential exegetical companion. The NETS translation by Larry Perkins (2007) is the standard scholarly English translation.

The LXX of Exodus chapters 35–40 is approximately **1,000 words shorter** than the MT — comparable in proportional terms to the LXX's shortness relative to MT Jeremiah, though the mechanism is different (reordering and compression rather than editorial revision).

The Dead Sea Scrolls of Exodus

Exodus is one of the most extensively attested books at Qumran. The relevant manuscripts include:

Signum	Location	Content	Character
4QExod-Lev^f (4Q17)	Cave 4	Exodus 36–38 (fragmentary)	**Closer to LXX** in some readings
4QpaleoExod^m (4Q22)	Cave 4	Exodus 6–37 (extensive)	**Samaritan Pentateuch type**
2QExod^a (2Q2)	Cave 2	Exodus 1; 7–9; 11	MT-aligned
2QExod^b (2Q3)	Cave 2	Exodus 4; 12–13; 18–19	MT-aligned
4QExod^b (4Q13)	Cave 4	Exodus 1–6	Mixed
1QExod (1Q2)	Cave 1	Exodus 16; 19–20; 22	MT-aligned
MasExod	Masada	Exodus 35:38–36:24	**MT-aligned**

The most important for the Tabernacle narrative are:

4QExod-Lev^f (4Q17): Contains fragments of Exodus 36–38 and presents readings that in several instances agree with the LXX against the MT. Critical edition in DJD XII (1994), edited by Frank Moore Cross. This scroll is the primary DSS evidence for evaluating whether the LXX's Tabernacle sequence reflects a genuine Hebrew tradition or translator editorial freedom.

4QpaleoExod^m (4Q22): Written in the ancient paleo-Hebrew script rather than the Aramaic square script used for most Qumran manuscripts, this scroll preserves a text type closely related to the **Samaritan Pentateuch** — an independent Hebrew tradition with its own extensive variants from the MT. Critical edition in DJD IX (1992), edited by Patrick W. Skehan, Eugene Ulrich, and Judith Sanderson.

MasExod: Fragments from Masada preserve Exodus 35:38–36:24 in a text that **agrees with the MT** at every preserved point — providing a Hebrew counterwitness to the LXX sequence.

Part One: The Blueprint Chapters — Exodus 25–31

The blueprint for the Tabernacle in MT Exodus 25–31 has relatively fewer significant MT/LXX divergences than the construction chapters. However, several important variants in the blueprint chapters set the stage for understanding what follows.

Exodus 25:1–9 — The Divine Command to Build

MT (ASV): And YahWeh spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they take for me an offering: of every man whose heart maketh him willing ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them: gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, and acacia wood, oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate.

And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it.

LXX (Brenton): And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and take first-fruits of all who are disposed in their heart to give, and ye shall take my first-fruits. And this is the offering which ye shall take from them: gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and double-scarlet, and fine-spun linen, and goat's hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and hyacinth-coloured skins, and incorruptible wood, and oil for the light, and incense-oil for ointment, and for the composition of incense, and sardius stones, and stones for the carved work of the breastplate and the full-length robe.

And thou shalt make me a sanctuary, and I will appear among you. And thou shalt make me all things according to the pattern I show thee on the mount, even the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all its furniture: so thou shalt make it.

DSS: No fragment clearly preserves this passage in a way that adjudicates between MT and LXX.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"that I may dwell among them"* (*wĕshâkantî bĕtôkâm*); LXX: *"and I will appear among you"* (*kai ophthēsomai en hymin*). The Hebrew *shâkan* (to dwell/tent) — the root from which *Mishkân* (Tabernacle) is derived — is here rendered by the LXX as *"appear"* rather than *"dwell."* This is a significant theological difference: the MT emphasizes divine dwelling (*shekhinah*, presence among Israel); the LXX emphasizes divine manifestation/appearance. The MT's *shâkan* root links the command directly to the Tabernacle's Hebrew name (*mishkân*, dwelling-place); the LXX breaks this etymological connection. - **[VAR]** MT: *"sealskins"* (*'ôrôt tĕhâshîm*) — the material covering the Tabernacle; the *tâhash* is an unidentified animal. LXX: *"hyacinth-coloured skins"* — interpreting the color rather than the animal type. - **[VAR]** MT: *"According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle"* — LXX: *"And thou shalt make me all things according to the pattern I show thee on the mount, even the pattern of the tabernacle."* The LXX adds *"on the mount"* (*en tō orei*) — specifying Mount Sinai as the location of the divine blueprint revelation.

Exodus 25:10–22 — The Ark of the Covenant

MT (ASV): And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four feet thereof; and two rings shall be on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings on the sides of the ark, to bear the ark therewith.

And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.

And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, at the two ends of the mercy-seat.

And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

LXX (Brenton): And thou shalt make the ark of testimony, of incorruptible wood; the length of two cubits and a half, and the breadth of a cubit and a half, and the height of a cubit and a half. And thou shalt gild it with pure gold, thou shalt gild it within and without; and thou shalt make for it golden wreaths twisted round about. And thou shalt cast for it four golden rings, and thou shalt put them on the four sides; two rings on the one side, and two rings on the other side. And thou shalt make carrying poles of incorruptible wood, and shalt overlay them with gold.

And thou shalt put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to bear the ark with them. They shall be prominent, the poles of the ark.

And thou shalt put into the ark the testimonies which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a propitiatory, a lid of pure gold; the length of two cubits and a half, and the breadth of a cubit

and a half. And thou shalt make two cherubs graven in gold, and thou shalt put them on both sides of the propitiatory.

And I will make myself known to thee from thence, and I will speak to thee above the propitiatory between the two cherubs that are upon the ark of the testimony, even in all things which I shall charge thee concerning the children of Israel.

DSS: 4QExod^b (4Q13) contains fragmentary material for Exodus 25 but does not clearly preserve the verses above in a way that adjudicates between MT and LXX.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"ark of acacia wood"* — LXX: *"ark of testimony… of incorruptible wood."* The LXX consistently translates the Hebrew *'ătsê shittîm* (acacia wood) as *xylōn asēptōn* (incorruptible wood) throughout Exodus — an interpretive translation that emphasizes the wood's quality rather than its species. - **[VAR]** MT: *"mercy-seat"* (*kappôret*) — LXX: *"propitiatory"* (*hilastērion*). The Hebrew *kappôret* is from the root *kâpar* (to cover, to atone). The LXX *hilastērion* (place of propitiation/atonement) captures the theological content but uses a different Greek root. This same word is used in Romans 3:25 (Paul: *"whom God set forth as a propitiation"*) — the NT's application of Exodus language to Christ's death. - **[ADD in LXX]** The LXX adds after the pole instruction: *"They shall be prominent, the poles of the ark"* — a sentence not found in the MT at this point. This detail appears in the parallel MT passage at 1 Kings 8:8 (*"And the staves were so long that the ends of the staves were seen from the holy place before the inner sanctuary"*), suggesting the LXX translator has incorporated the 1 Kings parallel.

Part Two: The Central Divergence — Exodus 36–40

Overview: The Order Problem

The most significant textual divergence in the Tabernacle narratives — and arguably in the entire Pentateuch — is the difference in **order** between MT Exodus 35–40 and LXX Exodus 35–40. The LXX presents the construction of the Tabernacle's furnishings in a sequence that is systematically different from the MT.

The full comparison:

Item	MT Order (MT chs. 35–40)	LXX Order (LXX chs. 35–40)
Sabbath command	35:1–3	35:1–3 (same)
Collection of materials	35:4–29	35:4–29 (same)
Bezalel and Oholiab appointed	35:30–36:7	35:30–36:7 (same)
Curtains of the Dwelling	36:8–19	36:8–34 (same order, slightly different)
Boards and bases	36:20–34	—

Item	MT Order (MT chs. 35–40)	LXX Order (LXX chs. 35–40)
Veil and screen	36:35–38	36:35–38 (same)
Ark	**37:1–9**	**37:1–9** (same)
Table of Showbread	37:10–16	37:10–16 (same)
Golden Lampstand	37:17–24	37:17–24 (same)
Altar of Incense	37:25–29	37:25–28
Anointing Oil and Incense	—	LXX 37:29
Altar of Burnt Offering	38:1–7	38:1–7 (same)
Bronze Laver	**38:8**	**ABSENT**
Court curtains	38:9–20	38:9–22 (different formulation)
Materials inventory	**38:21–31**	**LXX 38:24–31** (abbreviated)
Priestly garments	39:1–31	**PLACED EARLIER in LXX (after 36:38)**
Robe	39:22–26	**LXX 36:35**
Ephod	**39:2–7**	**LXX 36:9–12**
Breastplate	39:8–21	**LXX 36:15–29**
Other garments	39:27–31	**LXX 36:35–38**
Moses inspects the work	39:32–43	— (compressed)
Erection of the Tabernacle	40:1–33	40:1–33 (substantially parallel)
Divine Glory fills the Tabernacle	40:34–38	40:34–38 (same)

The most striking single divergence: in the MT, the priestly garments are constructed in chapter 39, near the end of the construction sequence. In the LXX, the **priestly garments are constructed in chapter 36**, immediately after the Tabernacle's structural elements and before the sacred furnishings. The LXX gives the garments a fundamentally different position in the construction sequence — a difference of several chapters and a radically different organizational logic.

The Bronze Laver — The Most Discussed Single Omission

MT (ASV) — Exodus 38:8: And he made the laver of brass, and the base thereof of brass, of the mirrors of the ministering women who ministered at the door of the tent of meeting.

LXX (Brenton): *[This verse is ABSENT from the LXX]*

DSS (4QExod-Lev^f): The 4QExod-Lev^f fragments at Exodus 38 are fragmentary. The critical question — does the scroll have the laver verse? — cannot be definitively answered from the preserved fragments, though Cross noted that the pattern of 4QExod-Lev^f at nearby verses showed affinities with the LXX tradition.

Variance Notes: - **[OMIT — Dramatic]** The bronze laver was a major cultic object — a large basin containing water for priestly purification before service at the altar. Its complete absence from the LXX of the construction narrative is theologically and liturgically significant. The laver does appear in the **blueprint** (MT Exodus 30:17–21; LXX Exodus 30:17–21 — present in both traditions), making its absence from the LXX **construction** account an asymmetry between blueprint and fulfillment unique to the LXX.

Three explanations have been proposed: 1. **LXX translator omission**: The translator omitted 38:8 deliberately or accidentally (haplography). 2. **Different Hebrew Vorlage**: The LXX Vorlage lacked this verse — a genuine textual divergence in the Hebrew tradition. 3. **Later MT addition**: The verse was added to the MT after the LXX translation was made. Significant support for this view: the verse contains the remarkable detail that the laver was made *"of the mirrors of the ministering women who ministered at the door of the tent of meeting"* — a tradition that has no parallel elsewhere in the construction narrative and that the rabbis (in *Midrash Tanchuma*) found so difficult they devoted extensive attention to explaining what these "ministering women" were doing and why their mirrors were donated for the laver.

The mirror-women detail is one of the most discussed single phrases in Exodus scholarship precisely because it appears to preserve a tradition about female cultic service at the tent of meeting that is otherwise suppressed or absent from the Hebrew Bible's ritual texts. If the verse is a later addition to the MT (not original to the construction narrative), its extraordinary content makes it one of the most significant additions — preserving a memory of women's religious roles that the LXX tradition may not have shared.

Exodus 36:35–39:31 — The Priestly Garments Sequence

The major structural divergence between the MT and LXX in the Tabernacle narrative is the placement of the priestly garments. The comparison requires presenting the MT and LXX sequences in parallel:

MT SEQUENCE (Exodus 36–39): - 36:8–38: Curtains, boards, veil, screen (structural elements) - 37:1–9: The Ark - 37:10–16: The Table of Showbread - 37:17–24: The Golden Lampstand - 37:25–29: The Altar of Incense - 38:1–7: The Altar of Burnt Offering - 38:8: The Bronze Laver - 38:9–20: The Court - 38:21–31: The Materials Inventory - **39:1–31: The Priestly Garments** ← HERE, near the end

LXX SEQUENCE (LXX Exodus 36–39): - 36:8–34: Curtains, boards (structural elements) - 36:35–38: Veil and screen - **36:9–38: The Priestly Garments** ← HERE, after structural elements - 37:1–9: The Ark - 37:10–16: The Table of Showbread - 37:17–24: The Golden Lampstand - 37:25–29: The Altar of Incense and Anointing Oil - 38:1–7: The Altar of Burnt Offering - 38:9–22: The Court - 38:24–31: The Materials Inventory (abbreviated)

Variance Notes: - **[ORDER — Major]** The LXX construction sequence builds: structural elements (curtains, boards) → **priestly garments** → sacred furnishings (Ark, Table, Lampstand) → altars → court. The MT sequence builds: structural elements (curtains, boards) → sacred furnishings → altars → court → **priestly garments** → final inspection.

The LXX logic: The sanctuary is built outside-in, from the structural shell inward to the most sacred objects. The priestly garments come immediately after the structural elements because they belong to the same category as the building itself — the garments *are* a kind of mobile sanctuary that the priests carry on their bodies. Placing them early makes the priests dressed and ready to serve before the furnishings are placed inside.

The MT logic: The sanctuary is built inside-out, beginning with the most sacred object (the Ark) and moving outward to the court, and finally dressing the priests. The garments come last, as the final preparation before the sanctuary's commissioning. Moses's inspection follows the garment-making and precedes the erection of the Tabernacle.

Neither sequence is self-evidently superior as an account of how the construction actually proceeded — both are literary-theological arrangements, not construction timetables. The question is which arrangement is earlier.

The Materials Inventory — Exodus 38:21–31 (MT) / 38:24–31 (LXX)

MT (ASV) — 38:21–31: This is the sum of the things of the tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of the testimony, as they were counted, according to the commandment of Moses, through the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest.

And Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that YahWeh commanded Moses.

And with him was Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, a craftsman, and a skilful workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine linen.

All the gold that was used for the work in all the work of the sanctuary, even the gold of the wave-offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary.

And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation was a hundred talents, and a thousand and seven hundred and seventy and five shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary.

And the brass of the wave-offering was seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels.

LXX (Brenton) — 38:24–31: [The LXX has a compressed and partially reordered version of this inventory]

And all the gold that was employed for the works in all the holy furniture, even the gold of the offerings, was twenty-nine talents, and seven hundred and twenty-nine shekels according to the holy shekel.

And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation, an hundred talents and a thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, the half-shekel current among the numbered from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand five hundred and fifty.

And the hundred talents of silver went to cast the hundred capitals of the tabernacle, and the capitals of the veil. A talent for a capital.

And the thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels he made into hooks for the pillars, and he overlaid their chapters, and filleted them.

And the brass of the offering was seventy talents and one thousand four hundred and thirty shekels.

DSS (4QExod-Lev^f): The scroll's fragments at this passage are small. However, the MT's introductory verses (38:21–24 — identifying Ithamar as the accountant, Bezalel as the chief craftsman, and Oholiab as his associate) are **absent from the LXX's parallel passage**. This is one of the most significant structural omissions.

Variance Notes: - **[OMIT in LXX]** MT 38:21–24 (the identification of Ithamar, Bezalel, and Oholiab as responsible for the inventory) is **absent from the LXX**. The LXX goes directly to the gold totals without the introductory attribution. - **[VAR — Numbers]** MT: *"twenty-nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels"* of gold; LXX: *"twenty-nine talents, and seven hundred and twenty-nine shekels"* — a one-shekel difference. Such numerical variants are common in ancient manuscripts and are among the most common scribal errors (copyists misread numbers). - **[VAR — Numbers]** MT: *"two thousand and four hundred shekels"* of bronze; LXX: *"one thousand four hundred and thirty shekels."* A larger numerical divergence in the bronze total — approximately 970 shekels difference, significant enough to suggest either a different source document for the LXX or a tradition with different accounting.

Part Three: The Samaritan Pentateuch — A Fourth Tradition

Overview

The **Samaritan Pentateuch** (SP) is an independent Hebrew textual tradition preserved by the Samaritan community, whose origins lie in the northern tribes of Israel following the Assyrian conquest of 722 B.C.E. The SP preserves the Torah in paleo-Hebrew script and contains approximately 6,000 differences from the MT — making it a significant independent witness.

For the Tabernacle narrative, the SP is particularly important because it represents yet a fourth organizational tradition. The DSS scroll **4QpaleoExod^m** (written in paleo-Hebrew script like the SP) is closely related to the SP type and provides a pre-Christian date for that tradition.

The SP of Exodus 35–40 agrees with the MT in its overall sequence — the priestly garments come late (in the SP's equivalent of MT chapter 39) rather than early as in the LXX. This places the SP in broad agreement with the MT against the LXX on the major structural question.

However, the SP contains extensive additions to the construction narrative — particularly **harmonizing expansions** that align the construction report with the blueprint by adding phrases from the blueprint chapters that are absent from the MT construction chapters. These SP harmonizations, attested also in 4QpaleoExod^m, represent a systematic editorial tendency to make the construction narrative a more complete verbal echo of the divine blueprint.

Exodus 36:8 — The Typical SP Harmonization Pattern

MT (ASV): And every wise-hearted man among them that wrought the work made the tabernacle with ten curtains; of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim, the work of the skilful workman, made he them.

SP (translation): And every wise-hearted man among them that wrought the work made the tabernacle with ten curtains; of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim, the work of the skilful workman, made he them. **The length of each curtain was twenty and eight cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits: all the curtains were of one measure.** [Added by SP from MT 26:2 — the blueprint dimensions]

LXX (Brenton): And every wise-hearted man among those who wrought made the tabernacle: and they brought each the works of their hands.

DSS (4QpaleoExod^m): The DSS scroll in paleo-Hebrew script agrees with the SP, including the harmonizing addition of the blueprint dimensions — confirming that this expanded text type predates the MT standardization.

Variance Notes: - **[ADD in SP/DSS]** The dimensions of each curtain (*"twenty and eight cubits... four cubits"*) are present in the MT blueprint (26:2) but **absent from the MT construction account** (36:8). The SP adds them from the blueprint — a systematic harmonization pattern. 4QpaleoExod^m agrees with the SP, providing a pre-Christian DSS confirmation of this expanded Hebrew tradition. - **[VAR]** The LXX of this verse is compressed relative to both the MT and SP, lacking the specific description of the curtain's decoration (*"with cherubim, the work of the skilful workman"*) and the craftsmen's identity.

Part Four: The Conclusion — The Glory Fills the Tabernacle

Exodus 40:34–38 is the climax of the entire Tabernacle narrative and the theological culmination of the book of Exodus. All three traditions converge at this point, though with minor variants.

Exodus 40:34–38 — The Divine Glory

MT (ASV): Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of YahWeh filled the tabernacle.

And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of YahWeh filled the tabernacle.

And whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward, throughout all their journeys: but if the cloud was not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of YahWeh was upon the tabernacle by day, and there was fire therein by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

LXX (Brenton): And the cloud covered the tabernacle of witness, and the tabernacle was filled with the glory of the Lord.

And Moses was not able to enter into the tabernacle of witness, because the cloud overshadowed it, and the tabernacle was filled with the glory of the Lord.

And when the cloud went up from the tabernacle, the children of Israel departed with all their baggage: and if the cloud went not up, they did not depart, till the day when the cloud went up. For a cloud was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was upon it by night before all the children of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

DSS: MasExod (from Masada) does not extend to chapter 40. 4QExod-Lev^f is too fragmentary at this point. No DSS clearly preserves this passage.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"tent of meeting"* (*'ôhel mô'êd*) in v.34; LXX: *"tabernacle of witness"* (*skēnē tou martyriou*). The LXX consistently translates *'ôhel mô'êd* (tent of meeting/appointment) as *skēnē tou martyriou* (tabernacle of witness/testimony). The Greek *martyrion* (witness/testimony) renders Hebrew *'êdût* (testimony/witness) — a term that appears in the name "Ark of the Testimony" (*'ârôn hâ'êdût*) but is not the standard meaning of *mô'êd* (appointed time/meeting). The LXX conflates the two related concepts — the place of meeting with God and the place where the testimony (Law) was kept. - **[VAR]** MT: *"the glory of YahWeh filled the tabernacle"* (*kĕbôd-YHWH*); LXX: *"the glory of the Lord"* (*hē doxa Kyriou*) — standard equivalence; no significant difference. - **[VAR]** MT: *"the children of Israel went onward, throughout all their journeys"* — LXX: *"the children of Israel departed with all their baggage"* (*kai apēran sùn tē aposkeuē autōn*). The LXX adds *"with all their baggage"* — a concrete detail not in the MT at this point.

Part Five: Scholarly Explanation of the Tabernacle Divergences

The Three Major Scholarly Positions

The divergences between MT and LXX in Exodus 35–40 have generated one of the most sustained specialized debates in Pentateuchal textual criticism. Three positions have been defended by serious scholars:

Position 1 — The LXX Reflects a Different and Earlier Hebrew Vorlage (Tov, Wevers)

Emanuel Tov (*Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed., pp. 168–175; *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, 2nd ed., Eisenbrauns, 1997) argues that the LXX of Exodus 35–40 reflects a genuine Hebrew text that differed from the MT in the arrangement of the construction materials. The LXX translator was not reordering; he was faithfully translating a shorter and differently organized Hebrew source.

Supporting evidence: - The LXX sequence has an internal logic (structural elements → priestly garments → furnishings) that a translator seeking to *improve* the MT's order would be unlikely to invent - The omission of the bronze laver (38:8) is difficult to explain as a translator's choice — a translator would not normally omit a major cultic object without reason - The numerical variants in the materials inventory suggest different source documents, not translation errors - The LXX was translated at a period (c. 250–150 B.C.E.) when multiple Hebrew editions of the Pentateuch were in circulation, as confirmed by the SP and 4QpaleoExod^m traditions

John William Wevers (*Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, Scholars Press, 1990) largely agrees: the LXX translator was not free enough with his source to have invented the major structural rearrangements; these must reflect Hebrew originals.

Position 2 — The LXX Translator Reorganized the MT Text (Haran, Propp)

Menahem Haran (*Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel*, Eisenbrauns, 1985) and William Propp (*Exodus 19–40*, Anchor Bible, 2006) argue that the LXX translator exercised substantial editorial freedom in the Tabernacle construction chapters, reorganizing the material according to a different organizational principle. The blueprint chapters (25–31) presented the divine instructions; the translator, wishing to present the construction as a systematic execution of those instructions, organized the construction narrative differently.

Supporting evidence: - The LXX translator of Exodus shows evidence of interpretive translation and paraphrase elsewhere in the book - The MT's order is the *lectio difficilior* — harder to explain, which usually argues for its priority - The SP/4QpaleoExod^m tradition, though containing many expansions, agrees with the MT's overall sequence of the construction chapters, suggesting the MT sequence was the established Hebrew tradition

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Position 3 — Two Recensions of the Tabernacle Narrative (Römer, Schmid)

Building on European Documentary Hypothesis work (particularly on the Priestly source, *P*), some scholars argue that the MT and LXX of Exodus 35–40 reflect **two different stages of the Priestly source's editing history**. The LXX preserves an earlier P recension; the MT preserves a later revised recension that added the bronze laver, repositioned the priestly garments, expanded the materials inventory, and adjusted the internal sequence.

This position treats the textual divergence as evidence for the *compositional history* of the Tabernacle narrative rather than purely its *transmission history*. The divergences between MT and LXX reflect authorial revision, not scribal copying or translation choices.

The Current State of Scholarship

As of the current scholarly consensus (Tov, Ulrich, Propp, Aejmelaeus), the most defensible position is:

1. The LXX of Exodus 35–40 **reflects a genuine Hebrew Vorlage** that differed from the MT at the structural level. The major reordering of the priestly garments and the absence of the bronze laver are too systematic and too narratively coherent to be translator innovations.

2. This does not mean the LXX Vorlage is necessarily **older** than the MT. Both the MT sequence and the LXX's sequence may represent editorial stages of the Tabernacle narrative, with neither being demonstrably prior.

3. The **SP/4QpaleoExod^m tradition** represents a third edition — one that agrees with the MT in sequence but contains extensive harmonizing additions from the blueprint chapters, suggesting a deliberate attempt to make the construction account a verbatim fulfillment of the divine commands.

4. **Three Hebrew editions** of the Tabernacle construction narrative circulated in antiquity: (a) the shorter, differently organized edition reflected in the LXX; (b) the edition reflected in the MT; (c) the expanded harmonizing edition of the SP/4QpaleoExod^m. The existence of three parallel editions is now the working assumption of most textual critics.

Appendix A: Summary of Major Exodus Divergences

Passage	MT	LXX	DSS/SP	Type	Significance
25:8	"that I may dwell among them"	"I will appear among you"	—	[VAR/ THEOL]	*Shekhinah* vs. *epiphany* theology
25:22	"mercy-seat" (*kappôret*)	"propitiatory" (*hilastērion*)	—	[VAR/ THEOL]	NT uses LXX term (Rom 3:25)
36:8ff	Construction curtains	Same	SP/4Q: **adds blueprint dimension**	[ADD in SP]	Harmonizing expansion; pre-

Passage	MT	LXX	DSS/SP	Type	Significance
			s		Christian DSS
36–39	Priestly garments **late** (ch.39)	Priestly garments **early** (ch.36)	SP: agrees with MT	[ORDER — Major]	Systematic structural reordering
38:8	Bronze laver present	**Bronze laver ABSENT**	4QExod-Lev^f: fragmentary	[OMIT in LXX]	Most dramatic single omission
38:21–24	Ithamar/Bezalel/Oholiab named	**Absent from LXX**	—	[OMIT in LXX]	Attribution paragraph missing
38:21–31	Materials inventory	Abbreviated; slightly different numbers	—	[VAR + OMIT]	Different numerical traditions
40:34–38	“tent of meeting”	“tabernacle of witness”	—	[VAR]	Different Hebrew terms conflated

Appendix B: The Tabernacle in Jewish and Early Christian Tradition

Jewish Interpretation

The Tabernacle narratives occupied a central place in rabbinic interpretation. The *Midrash Tanchuma* (a medieval collection drawing on ancient sources) devotes extensive attention to the *“mirrors of the ministering women”* (MT 38:8) — the verse absent from the LXX. The midrash argues that Moses initially refused to use the mirrors for the laver (mirrors being instruments of vanity and desire), but God commanded him to accept them because the women had used their mirrors to conceive children in Egypt when their husbands were too exhausted from labor to desire them. The mirrors, used in service of life and family during slavery, were thereby sanctified.

This midrashic tradition preserves the memory of a specifically **female** cultic role in the wilderness sanctuary — precisely the detail that makes MT 38:8’s uniqueness so striking and the LXX’s omission of it so significant.

The **Philo of Alexandria** (*De Vita Mosis* II.71–145) discusses the Tabernacle extensively and allegorizes its elements: the linen curtains represent earth; the blue represents sky; the scarlet, fire; the gold of the furnishings, the heavenly Logos. Philo works from the LXX and therefore his allegorical system is built on the LXX's arrangement, not the MT's.

Early Christian Interpretation

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews devotes chapters 8–10 to a sustained typological interpretation of the Tabernacle as a prefiguration of Christ's high-priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. The argument draws on LXX Exodus throughout:

- The mercy-seat (*hilastērion*, LXX term for *kappôret*) becomes the "place of propitiation" — and Paul applies the same word to Christ in Romans 3:25
- The bronze laver (absent from the LXX construction narrative) is not cited in Hebrews
- The high-priestly garments (in the LXX placed early in the construction sequence) are interpreted in Hebrews 9 as the "greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands"

The Hebrews author's typological system is built on the LXX tradition — which raises the possibility that the LXX's different organization of the Tabernacle materials shaped the early church's understanding of what the Tabernacle *meant* as a prefiguration of Christ.

Appendix C: Essential Scholarship for Exodus

Primary Text Editions

- Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Exodus fascicle (H. Cazelles). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990. [MT]
- Aejmelaeus, A., and U. Quast, eds. *Exodus*. Biblia Hebraica Quinta 2. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2023. [BHQ — most current]
- Wevers, J.W., ed. *Exodus*. Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum II/1. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991. [LXX critical edition — Göttingen]
- Skehan, P.W., E. Ulrich, and J.E. Sanderson. *Qumran Cave 4: Palaeo-Hebrew and Greek Biblical Manuscripts*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert IX. Oxford University Press, 1992. [4QpaleoExod^m]
- Cross, F.M., et al. *Qumran Cave 4: Genesis to Numbers*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XII. Oxford University Press, 1994. [4QExod-Lev^f]

English Translations

- Brenton, L.C.L. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*. 1851. Public domain. [LXX]

- Perkins, L. “Exodus.” In A. Pietersma and B.G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS)*. Oxford University Press, 2007. [LXX — scholarly standard]
- Abegg, M., P. Flint, and E. Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*. HarperOne, 1999. Pp. 3–76. [DSS Exodus]

Commentaries

- Propp, W.H.C. *Exodus 1–18*. Anchor Bible 2. Doubleday, 1999.
- Propp, W.H.C. *Exodus 19–40*. Anchor Bible 2A. Doubleday, 2006. [Most complete critical commentary; full textual apparatus]
- Durham, J.I. *Exodus*. Word Biblical Commentary 3. Word, 1987.
- Childs, B.S. *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Westminster, 1974. [Theological emphasis; classic]
- Houtman, C. *Exodus*. 4 vols. Historical Commentary on the Old Testament. Peeters, 1993–2002.

Textual Criticism of Exodus

- Wevers, J.W. *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*. Scholars Press, 1990. [Essential companion to the Göttingen LXX]
- Tov, E. *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*. 2nd ed. Eisenbrauns, 1997. [On the LXX as textual evidence]
- Tov, E. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. 3rd ed. Fortress, 2012. Pp. 168–175. [Exodus section]
- Sanderson, J.E. *An Exodus Scroll from Qumran: 4QpaleoExod^m and the Samaritan Tradition*. Harvard Semitic Studies 30. Scholars Press, 1986. [The definitive study of 4QpaleoExod^m]

On the Tabernacle Narrative Specifically

- Haran, M. *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel*. Eisenbrauns, 1985. Chs. 9–10. [On the Tabernacle; argues MT priority]
- Hurowitz, V. *I Have Built You an Exalted House: Temple Building in the Bible in Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement 115. Sheffield Academic Press, 1992. [Comparative ancient Near Eastern context]
- Römer, T. “Exodus.” In T. Römer, J.-D. Macchi, and C. Nihan, eds., *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Labor et Fides, 2009. Pp. 137–153.
- Knohl, I. *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School*. Fortress, 1995. [On the literary history of the Priestly source and the Tabernacle texts]

- Levine, B.A. "The Tabernacle: Neglected Aspects of the Hebrew Text." *Eretz-Israel* 24 (1993): 119–128. [On specific textual problems]

Part Five: The Twelve Minor Prophets — Revisional Divergence

Phase Preface

This volume presents Phase 2D of the MT/LXX/DSS Textual Harmony Project, focusing on the Twelve Minor Prophets (*Dodekapropheton*) and the revolutionary manuscript that illuminates their textual history: **8HevXIIgr**, the Greek Minor Prophets scroll found in the Cave of Horror at Nahal Hever in the Judean desert.

The preceding four phases have examined four distinct types of textual divergence between the traditions:

Phase	Book	Divergence Type
1	Jeremiah	Literary-structural — two complete Hebrew editions
2A	Psalms	Compositional — psalm counts, orders, boundaries
2B	Samuel	Narrative — same stories, different details
2C	Exodus	Architectural — same blueprint, different construction sequence

Phase 2D introduces a fifth and qualitatively different type: **revisional divergence** — not two independent traditions of the same text reaching different forms through transmission, but one tradition deliberately and systematically corrected toward another. This represents a human editorial act at a historically locatable moment, and its documentation transforms our understanding of how the Greek Bible evolved from its Old Greek form toward the Hebrew-aligned recensions of the first and second centuries C.E.

The Nahal Hever Scroll (8HevXIIgr) — Introduction

Discovery and Publication

The Cave of Horror (*Mĕʾarat ha-Ḥorror*, Nahal Hever Cave 8) is one of a series of caves along the western shore of the Dead Sea in which Jewish refugees took shelter during the Bar Kokhba revolt against Rome (132–135 C.E.). Unlike the caves at Qumran — a sectarian community library deposited deliberately — the Nahal Hever cave materials were the personal possessions of refugees who died there, leaving their documents behind.

The Greek Minor Prophets scroll was discovered among these materials in the 1950s by Bedouin, with subsequent official excavations by Yigael Yadin in 1960–1961. The scroll was first published by **Dominique Barthélemy** in *Les Devanciers d'Aquila* (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 10; Brill, 1963) — a publication that fundamentally changed the field of Septuagint studies. The definitive critical edition is:

- **DJD VIII**: Emanuel Tov, Robert A. Kraft, and Patricia A. Parsons, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever* (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert VIII; Oxford University Press, 1990).

Date and Character

The scroll is dated paleographically to approximately **50 B.C.E. – 50 C.E.** — making it roughly contemporary with the birth of Christianity and the final decades of the Second Temple period. It is written on parchment in a small, careful hand that Tov and Parsons identify as characteristic of Jewish scribal production of the period.

The scroll preserves portions of **Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah,** and **Zechariah** — not a complete Twelve Prophets but extensive enough to establish its character definitively. What Barthélemy recognized immediately upon examining it was that this is not a fresh translation of the Hebrew into Greek. It is the **Old Greek (LXX) translation of the Minor Prophets systematically revised** at hundreds of points to bring it into closer conformity with a proto-Masoretic Hebrew text.

The Kaige Recension

Barthélemy's analysis of 8HevXIIgr led him to identify a **pattern of systematic translation equivalences** that characterize the revision. The most diagnostic is the treatment of the Hebrew particle *wĕgam* ("and also / and even") — rendered in the Old Greek by various Greek words depending on context, but in the revision systematically rendered by the Greek *kai ge* ("and indeed / and also"). This consistent equivalence — and the dozen or more similar systematic correspondences Barthélemy identified — define what he called the **kaige recension**: a revisionary tradition that affected not only the Minor Prophets but (as subsequent scholarship established) portions of Samuel-Kings, Job, Psalms, and other books.

The kaige recension is now understood as the **missing link** between:

- The **Old Greek (LXX)** translations of the third and second centuries B.C.E. — made with relative freedom from the Hebrew, representing what we call the Septuagint
- The **later Greek revisions** of Aquila (c. 130 C.E.), Symmachus (fl. c. 200 C.E.), and Theodotion (c. 180 C.E.) — highly literal, word-for-word translations aligned to the proto-MT Hebrew text

The kaige recension stands between these two poles, representing a first-century systematic effort to correct the free Old Greek translation toward the Hebrew tradition that was consolidating into what would become the Masoretic Text.

Why This Matters for the Harmony Project

The Nahal Hever scroll introduces a dimension absent from the preceding phases: **deliberate editorial correction of Scripture toward a specific textual tradition**. Whereas in Jeremiah, Samuel, and Exodus we examined cases where the MT and LXX diverged through independent transmission of different Hebrew sources, here we see a Jewish community in the first century **actively choosing** between two Greek text forms and revising to bring the Greek Bible into alignment with the Hebrew.

This choice reflects a historical reality with enormous theological consequences: by the first century C.E., Jewish communities in the Land of Israel were increasingly committed to a single authoritative Hebrew text — the ancestor of the MT — and found the divergences between that Hebrew text and the existing Greek translations unacceptable. The kaige revision is the first systematic attempt to fix the problem.

That same period is also when the earliest Christians were quoting Greek scripture. The NT authors worked primarily from the Old Greek (LXX); the kaige revisers were simultaneously correcting that same Old Greek away from its NT-compatible form. The textual history of the Twelve Minor Prophets in the first century C.E. is therefore directly relevant to understanding why NT quotations of the OT sometimes agree with the LXX, sometimes agree with the MT, and occasionally agree with neither.

The Four Traditions for the Twelve Prophets

1. The Masoretic Text

The MT of the Twelve Minor Prophets is preserved in the standard witnesses (Codex Leningradensis, Aleppo Codex). The critical edition is the **Biblia Hebraica Quinta** (BHQ), Minor Prophets volume (Hosea–Malachi), edited by Anthony Gelston (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2010) — one of the most complete and reliable BHQ volumes. The BHQ apparatus for the Minor Prophets is particularly valuable because it collects the evidence from 8HevXIIgr, the Qumran pesharim, and the LXX in a single apparatus.

2. The Old Greek (LXX)

The Old Greek translation of the Minor Prophets was made in Alexandria, most likely in the second century B.C.E. The standard critical edition is the **Göttingen Septuagint**: *Duodecim Prophetae* (Septuaginta XII), edited by Joseph Ziegler (3rd ed., Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984). Ziegler's apparatus distinguishes the Old Greek (OG) from the kaige-revised readings, making it an essential tool for identifying which Greek readings pre-date the Nahal Hever scroll.

The NETS translation by Muraoka (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah) and others (2007) is the scholarly English standard. The Brenton LXX (1851, public domain) is used for extended passages in this harmony.

3. The Nahal Hever Greek Scroll (8HevXIIgr)

As described above. Where 8HevXIIgr is preserved and differs from both the OG and the MT, its reading is presented as a third Greek tradition, identified as [8Hev] throughout this harmony.

4. The Qumran Pesharim

The Qumran community produced *pesher* (commentary) documents on several of the Minor Prophets. The most important for this phase is:

1QpHab — the **Habakkuk Pesher** (Commentary on Habakkuk), Cave 1, Qumran. This is one of the best-preserved and most studied Qumran documents. It quotes the Hebrew text of Habakkuk 1:1–2:20 column by column, then provides the *pesher* — the community's

interpretation of the text as prophesying their own history and the coming judgment. The biblical text quoted in 1QpHab represents an independent Hebrew witness distinct from the MT, occasionally agreeing with the LXX against the MT or presenting readings found in neither.

Critical edition: DJD I (1955), edited by D. Barthélemy and J.T. Milik; re-edited by William Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk* (Scholars Press, 1979). Modern edition: Maurya Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books* (Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 8; Catholic Biblical Association, 1979).

Part One: The Kaige Revision — Methodology and Evidence

The Systematic Translation Correspondences

Barthélemy identified approximately fifteen systematic word-for-word correspondences that define the kaige revision. The most important:

Hebrew	Old Greek (LXX)	Kaige / 8HevXIIgr	Aquila (later)
wĕgam (and also)	Various	*kai ge*	*kai ge*
ʾanî (I)	*egō*	*egō eimi*	*egō eimi*
nĕʾum (oracle of)	Various	*legei* (says)	*legei*
mišpāṭ (judgment/justice)	*krima*	*krisis*	*krisis*
yāšab (sit/dwell)	Various	*kathēmai*	*kathēmai*
ʾēšet (wife of)	Various	*gynē*	*gynē*
helek (walk/way)	Various	*hodós*	*hodós*

The significance of these correspondences is not merely lexicographical. They demonstrate that the kaige revision was **systematic and principled** — not the product of a single translator making idiosyncratic choices but a deliberate program of revision applying consistent equivalences throughout the text. This is revision, not translation.

A Worked Example: Amos 9:11 (Preserved Context Only)

The Amos material in 8HevXIIgr is not well preserved, but the passage Acts 15:16–17 quotes Amos 9:11–12 in a form that helps us understand the textual traditions. The NT quotation follows the LXX against the MT:

MT (ASV) — Amos 9:12: That they may possess the remnant of **Edom** (*ʾEdôm*), and all the nations that are called by my name.

LXX (Brenton) — Amos 9:12: That the remnant of **mankind** (*anthrōpōn*) may earnestly seek me, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called.

Acts 15:17 (James quoting the LXX): That the residue of **men** (*anthrōpōn*) may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called.

[8HevXIIgr — not preserved for this verse]

Variance Note: - **[VAR — Major]** The difference between *"Edom"* (MT) and *"mankind"* (LXX) is a one-letter difference in Hebrew: *'Edôm* (אֱדוֹם) vs. *'âdâm* (אָדָם, humanity). The LXX read *'âdâm* (man/humanity); the MT has *'Edôm* (the nation of Edom). In unpointed Hebrew, these two words differ only in their vowel pointing; the consonants are *'dm* in both cases. The LXX translator read the word as "humanity" (*'âdâm*), producing a universalist reading; the MT reads it as "Edom," producing a particularist reading about possessing a neighboring nation. **James's use of the LXX reading at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) — arguing that Gentiles are included in God's purposes — depends entirely on the universalist LXX reading.** Had he been using the MT, his quotation would not have supported his argument.

Part Two: Habakkuk — The Most Important Minor Prophet Textually

Overview of the Habakkuk Traditions

Habakkuk is the best-documented Minor Prophet in the Qumran corpus. Three independent witnesses exist:

1. **MT Habakkuk** — the standard text (Codex Leningradensis / BHS)
2. **LXX Habakkuk** — the Old Greek translation
3. **8HevXIIgr Habakkuk** — the kaige revision of the OG
4. **1QpHab** — the Qumran Habakkuk Pesher, quoting a Hebrew text and interpreting it

These four traditions converge and diverge across the book's three chapters. No book in the Minor Prophets provides a richer textual laboratory.

Habakkuk 1:1 — The Superscription

MT (ASV): The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

LXX (Brenton): The burden which the prophet Ambacum saw.

8HevXIIgr: The burden which Habakkuk the prophet saw. [Agrees with MT against LXX's *Ambacum*]

1QpHab: *"The burden which Habakkuk the prophet saw"* — agrees with MT.

Variance Notes: - **[ORTH]** *Ambacum* (LXX) vs. *Habakkuk* (MT and 8HevXIIgr) — a Greek transliteration difference. The kaige revision (8HevXIIgr) here corrects the LXX's rendering toward the MT's form of the prophet's name.

Habakkuk 1:5–6 — "Look Among the Nations"

MT (ASV): Look ye among the nations, and behold, and wonder marvellously; for I am working a work in your days, which ye will not believe though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, that march through the breadth of the earth, to possess dwelling-places that are not theirs.

LXX (Brenton): Behold, ye despisers, and look, and wonder marvellously, and vanish; for I work a work in your days, which ye will in no wise believe, though a man declare it to you. For, behold, I stir up the Chaldeans, the bitter and hasty nation, that marches through the breadth of the earth, to inherit tabernacles not his own.

8HevXIIgr: Look ye among the nations… [partially preserved; begins to correct toward MT]

1QpHab Column II: The Hebrew text quoted in 1QpHab 1:5 reads: *"Look, O traitors, and see and be astonished; for a work is being wrought in your days which you will not believe when told."*

NT Usage: Acts 13:41 (Paul's sermon at Antioch) quotes Habakkuk 1:5 in the LXX form: *"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."*

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Major]** MT: *"Look ye among the nations"* (*rĕ'û baggôyim*) — LXX: *"Behold, ye despisers"* (*idete, kataphronētai*). These are completely different readings. The MT's *baggôyim* (among the nations) shares no consonantal similarity with the LXX's "despisers" (*bōgedîm*, traitors in Hebrew). The LXX apparently translated from a Hebrew text that had *bōgĕdîm* (traitors/despisers) rather than *baggôyim* (among the nations) — a difference of several consonants, not explicable as a simple misreading. - **[1QpHab]** The Qumran pesher text quotes *"Look, O traitors"* — agreeing with the LXX against the MT. This confirms that the LXX's reading reflects a genuine Hebrew Vorlage at Qumran that had *bōgĕdîm* (traitors) rather than the MT's *baggôyim* (nations). The MT has a third Hebrew reading; the LXX/1QpHab tradition has a second; and Acts 13:41 follows the LXX tradition. - **[NT]** Paul's quotation from Acts 13:41 precisely follows the LXX — and his application of the verse to Jesus's resurrection and the threat of rejection is built on the LXX's address to "despisers" (*kataphronētai*) rather than the MT's address to the nations. The theological argument depends on the LXX/1QpHab reading.

Habakkuk 2:1–4 — The Watchtower Vision and "The Just Shall Live by His Faith"

This is the single most theologically consequential passage in the Minor Prophets for New Testament interpretation. Habakkuk 2:4b — *"the just shall live by his faith"* — is quoted three times in the NT (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38) and is the biblical foundation for the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone. The four traditions present four meaningfully different readings.

Habakkuk 2:1–3 — The Vision and Its Timing

MT (ASV): I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will look forth to see what he will speak with me, and what I shall answer concerning my complaint.

And YahWeh answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that **he may run that readeth it**. For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay.

LXX (Brenton): I will stand upon my watch, and mount upon the rock, and watch to see what he will say to me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

And the Lord answered me and said, Write the vision, and that plainly on a tablet, that **he that reads it may run**. For the vision is yet for a time, and it shall shoot up at the end, and shall not be vain: if it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, and shall not be delayed.

8HevXIIgr: Partially preserved. The fragments confirm the kaige revision is moving toward the MT at several points in this passage. The *"write the vision"* section is partially legible.

1QpHab Column VII: The pesher text at 2:2 reads: *"And God told Habakkuk to write down the things which will come to pass in the last generation, but the fulfilment of the end-time he did not make known to him."* The pesher community identified "the last generation" with their own time — the sect's history and the coming eschatological judgment.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"that he may run that readeth it"* (*lĕma'an yârûts qôrê' bô*) — LXX: *"that he that reads it may run"* (*hina diōxē ho anaginōskōn auta*). The sequence of subject and verb is reversed: MT implies the vision is clear enough to read while running; LXX implies the reader can run [to tell others] after reading. The Greek is closer to "so that the reader may announce/pursue" — a slightly different sense. - **[1QpHab]** The pesher reads the vision as addressed to the sect itself ("the last generation") — an eschatological interpretation that goes beyond both the MT and LXX's surface sense. The pesher exploits the text's temporal ambiguity ("yet for the appointed time") to identify its own moment as the fulfillment.

Habakkuk 2:4 — The Most Debated Verse in the Minor Prophets

MT (ASV): Behold, his soul is puffed up, it is not upright in him; but **the just shall live by his faith** (*wĕtsaddîq bĕ'emûnātô yichyeh*).

LXX (Brenton): If he draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him: but **the just shall live by my faith** (*ho de dikaios ek pisteōs mou zēsetai*).

8HevXIIgr: The preserved text reads: *"...but the just shall live by his faith"* — agreeing with the **MT** (*bĕ'emûnātô*, his faith) against the LXX (*pistis mou*, my faith). This is one of the clearest kaige corrections: the revision has changed "my faith" (LXX) to "his faith" (MT).

1QpHab Column VIII: The pesher quotes: *"...but the righteous shall live by his faithfulness"* (*bĕ'emûnātô*) — agreeing with the **MT** against the LXX. The pesher interprets this as: *"Its interpretation concerns all the doers of the Law in the house of Judah, whom God will deliver from the house of judgment, because of their suffering and because of their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness."*

The Critical Comparison: Habakkuk 2:4b in Four Traditions

Tradition	Reading	Possessive	Nuance
MT	*wĕtsaddîq bĕ'emûnātô yichyeh*	**his** (*-ô*, 3rd person masculine suffix)	The righteous person lives by his own faithfulness/reliability
LXX	*ho de dikaios ek pisteōs mou zēsetai*	**my** (*mou*, 1st person genitive)	The righteous person lives by **God's** faithfulness/faith
8HevXIIgr	*...ek pisteōs autou zēsetai*	**his** (*autou*, 3rd person genitive)	Corrected to agree with MT — his own faithfulness
1QpHab	*bĕ'emûnātô*	**his**	Agrees with MT; interpreted as faithfulness to the Teacher of Righteousness

The NT Quotations — Three Uses, Three Different Readings

The verse is quoted three times in the New Testament. In each case the quotation is from a Greek text. Comparing the quotations with the four traditions above:

Romans 1:17 (Paul): *"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, But **the righteous shall live by faith** (ho de dikaios ek pisteōs zēsetai)."*

Paul's quotation omits the possessive pronoun entirely — no "his" and no "my." This is **neither the MT nor the LXX** strictly, but a shortened form of both. Omitting the pronoun makes the verse work as a statement about faith in general — the righteous person lives *by faith* (without specifying whose faith).

Galatians 3:11 (Paul): *"Now that no man is justified by the law before God, is evident: for, **The righteous shall live by faith** (ho dikaios ek pisteōs zēsetai)."*

Again Paul omits the pronoun and uses the shorter form. His argument is about the contrast between law and faith — making the verse a general statement about the mode of living rather than about one party's faithfulness.

Hebrews 10:38 (unknown author): *"But **my righteous one shall live by faith** (ho de dikaios mou ek pisteōs zēsetai): and if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him."*

Hebrews reads *"my righteous one"* (*dikaios mou*) — following neither the MT nor the standard LXX exactly. The *mou* (my) is attached to *dikaios* (righteous one) rather than to *pisteos* (faith). Hebrews also includes the surrounding verse (the soul that draws back having no pleasure) — which connects to the LXX's context for verse 4. The Hebrews form appears to draw on a Greek text tradition that had *mou* but placed it differently from the standard LXX.

The theological implications:

The three NT uses deploy the verse for three different theological purposes: - **Romans 1:17**: Foundation of the entire doctrine of justification by faith — the gospel reveals God's righteousness *from faith to faith* - **Galatians 3:11**: Proof that the Mosaic law cannot justify — the righteous live by faith, not law-observance - **Hebrews 10:38**: Encouragement to perseverance — God's righteous people live by faith and must not draw back

None of the three NT quotations precisely matches any of the four ancient textual traditions. The NT authors are either quoting a text form now lost, deliberately adapting the text to their argument, or working from a Greek tradition intermediate between the forms preserved in the LXX manuscripts and 8HevXIIgr.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Most Theologically Significant in the Minor Prophets]** The difference between "his faith" (MT, 8HevXIIgr, 1QpHab) and "my faith" (LXX) is a single Hebrew letter: the suffix *-ô* (his, masculine third person) vs. the suffix *-î* (my, first person). In unpointed Hebrew, these suffixes can be confused in copying. The LXX translator read (or had in his Vorlage) *bĕ'emûnātî* (my faithfulness); the MT has *bĕ'emûnātô* (his faithfulness). - If the MT is correct (*his* faith): the verse is about the righteous person's own faithfulness/trustworthiness sustaining his life — an anthropological claim about human virtue. - If the LXX is correct (*my* faith): the verse is about God's faithfulness sustaining the righteous — a theological claim about divine reliability. - Paul's and Galatians's omission of the pronoun makes the verse work for a third reading: the righteous person lives *in the sphere of* faith — faith as the mode of existence for the righteous, abstracted from the question of whose faith. - **The Reformation's central text rests on a reading found in none of the ancient manuscripts precisely.** Luther's *sola fide* translates Hab 2:4 as the just living *by faith* — an abstraction that neither the MT's "his faithfulness" nor the LXX's "my faithfulness" quite supports, though Paul's abbreviated quotation (omitting the pronoun) is Luther's direct source.

Part Three: Micah — The Bethlehem Prophecy

Micah 5:1–3 — "Out of Thee Shall Come Forth a Ruler"

This passage is quoted in Matthew 2:6 as the biblical basis for identifying Bethlehem as the Messiah's birthplace. The traditions diverge significantly.

MT (ASV) — Micah 5:2: But thou, **Beth-lehem Ephrathah**, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be **ruler in Israel**; whose goings forth are from of old, from **everlasting** (*mîmê 'ôlâm*).

LXX (Brenton) — Micah 5:2: And thou, **Bethleem**, house of Ephratha, art few in number to be reckoned among the thousands of Juda; yet out of thee shall one come forth to me, to be a ruler of Israel; and **his goings forth were from the beginning, even from eternity** (*ap' archēs ex hēmerōn aiōnos*).

8HevXIIgr: Partially preserved at Micah 5. The fragments confirm kaige corrections at several points but the crucial verse 2 is not clearly preserved in the surviving fragments.

Matthew 2:6 (NT quotation): And thou **Bethlehem**, land of Judah, art in no wise least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come forth a governor, who shall be **shepherd** of my people Israel.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Matthew's Composite Quotation]** Matthew 2:6 does not precisely match any known ancient text of Micah 5:2. It combines elements from several traditions: - MT: *"little to be among the thousands"* → Matthew: *"in no wise least among the princes"* — Matthew reverses the sense! The MT says Bethlehem is *small*; Matthew says it is *not the least*. Matthew appears to be quoting from memory, paraphrasing, or working from a Greek tradition not preserved in LXX manuscripts. - *"shepherd of my people Israel"*: This phrase does not appear in either the MT or LXX of Micah 5:2. Matthew has added it — possibly from 2 Samuel 5:2 (*"thou shalt feed my people Israel"*) or from another OT shepherd-ruler tradition. This is a **composite quotation**. - Matthew identifies the ruler as *"a governor"* (*hēgoumenos*) — the same Greek word the LXX uses for the ruler.

- **[VAR]** MT: *"from everlasting"* (*mîmê 'ôlâm*, literally "from days of eternity/old") — LXX: *"from eternity"* (*ex hēmerōn aiōnos*, "from days of eternity"). The LXX closely follows the MT here. The phrase has been interpreted both as referring to the ancient origins of the Davidic dynasty (historical reading) and as an affirmation of the Messiah's pre-existence (Christological reading). The early church read it Christologically; the LXX's *"from eternity"* (*aiōnos*) supported this reading.
- **[VAR]** MT: *"Beth-lehem Ephrathah"* — LXX: *"Bethleem, house of Ephratha"* — Matthew: *"Bethlehem, land of Judah."* Matthew's *"land of Judah"* (*gē Iouda*) for MT's *"Ephrathah"* suggests he is either working from a different textual tradition or substituting a more geographically explicit identification.

Micah 5:3 — The Remnant Returns

MT (ASV): Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

LXX (Brenton): Therefore shall he appoint them to wait till the time of her that travails: she shall bring forth, and then the remnant of their brethren shall return to the children of Israel.

8HevXIIgr: Partially preserved. The kaige correction is visible at the phrase *"remnant of their brethren"* — aligning with the MT against a slightly different LXX formulation.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"the remnant of **his** brethren"* — LXX: *"the remnant of **their** brethren."* The possessive changes the reference: "his" (MT) refers back to the ruler of v.2 — his kinsmen, the remnant of the Davidic tribe; "their" (LXX) refers more broadly to the people. A single letter difference in Hebrew (*'echâyw*, "his brothers" vs. *'achêhem*, "their brothers") with theological implications for whether the focus is the Davidic line or the people as a whole.

Part Four: Zechariah — "They Shall Look Upon Him Whom They Pierced"

Zechariah 12:10 — One of the Most Theologically Charged Verses in the Twelve Prophets

MT (ASV): And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto **me** (*'ēlay*) whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him (*'âlâyw*), as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

LXX (Brenton): And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and compassion: and they shall look upon **me** (*eis eme*) because they have mocked me, and they shall make lamentation for him (*ep' auton*) as for a beloved friend, and shall be grieved for him, as for a firstborn son.

8HevXIIgr: Partially preserved. The Nahal Hever scroll at Zechariah 12:10 is one of the most discussed fragments. The preserved text reads *"they shall look upon me"* — agreeing with both MT and LXX on the first-person *"me"*, but the subsequent clause is damaged.

NT Citations: - **John 19:37**: *"And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced"* — following a reading that has *"him"* (*auton*) rather than *"me"* (*eme*). John's quotation diverges from both the MT and the LXX. - **Revelation 1:7**: *"Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him"* — John's apocalyptic vision draws on the same tradition.

The Grammatical Paradox

MT Zechariah 12:10 contains one of the most striking grammatical anomalies in the Hebrew Bible:

First clause: *"they shall look unto **me** ('ēlay) whom they have pierced"* — God speaks in the first person (*me*), identifying himself as the one who has been pierced.

Second clause: *"and they shall mourn for **him** ('âlâyw)"* — the person mourned shifts from first person (*me*) to third person (*him*).

This **person shift** within a single verse — from *"me"* to *"him"* — is grammatically anomalous and has generated extensive interpretation. The MT's text as it stands implies that God himself is the pierced one, but the mourning is for a third party.

Variant tradition for "me": Several manuscripts (LXX manuscripts in the *Lucianic* recension, and a reading mentioned by Theodoret) have *"him"* (*autos*) rather than *"me"* (*eme*) in the first clause — reading the entire verse consistently in the third person: *"they shall look upon **him** whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him."* This is the reading that underlies John 19:37.

Tradition	First pronoun	Second pronoun	Source
MT	**me** (*'ēlay*)	him (*'âlâyw*)	Standard MT
LXX (OG)	**me** (*eis eme*)	him (*ep' auton*)	Old Greek

Tradition	First pronoun	Second pronoun	Source
LXX Lucianic	**him** (*auton*)	him (*auton*)	Later LXX recension
8HevXIIgr	**me** (partially preserved)	damaged	Kaige
John 19:37	—	**him** (*auton*)	NT quotes second clause only

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Critical]** John 19:37 quotes only the second clause (*"they shall look on him whom they pierced"*) — taking the third-person *"him"* of the MT's second clause and making it the antecedent for the entire verse. This sidesteps the grammatical paradox in the MT by quoting the less anomalous half. - **[THEOL]** The early church's Christological reading of this verse — identifying Jesus as the pierced one — required the third-person reading (*"him whom they pierced"*). The MT's first-person *"me"* is more theologically radical in one sense (God identifies himself as the pierced one) but more difficult to apply directly to Jesus. John's quotation takes the more interpretable path: *"him whom they pierced"* — applicable to Jesus's body pierced by the soldier's spear (John 19:34–37). - **[LXX]** The LXX's *"because they have mocked me"* (*anthi hōn katōrchēsanto*) for the MT's *"whom they have pierced"* (*'êt 'asher-dâqarû*) represents a completely different reading of the Hebrew verb *dâqar* (to pierce/stab). The LXX translator apparently read *raqad* (to dance/mock) rather than *dâqar* (to pierce) — a consonantal transposition error (*d/r* exchange). This is one of the clearest cases of translator misreading in the entire LXX.

Part Five: Nahum and Zephaniah — The Kaige Revision in Detail

Nahum 1:2 — "The Lord Is a Jealous God"

MT (ASV): YahWeh is a jealous God and avengeth; YahWeh avengeth and is full of wrath; YahWeh taketh vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

LXX (Brenton): God is jealous, and the Lord avenges; the Lord avenges with wrath; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries, and he cuts off his enemies.

8HevXIIgr: The scroll preserves portions of Nahum 1. The kaige revision at verse 2 corrects several LXX readings:

- LXX: *"he cuts off his enemies"* (*ektibon autou*) — 8HevXIIgr corrects to *"he reserves [wrath] for his enemies"* (*phylassei*) — agreeing with the MT (*wĕnôtēr*) against the OG

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** The LXX's *"he cuts off his enemies"* translates a Hebrew verb differently from the MT's *"he reserveth [wrath]"* (*nâtar*, to keep/reserve). The 8HevXIIgr correction demonstrates the kaige reviser's method: identifying points where the OG has used a contextually plausible but incorrect rendering and correcting it to align with the MT's more precise vocabulary.

Zephaniah 3:17 — "He Will Rejoice Over Thee with Singing"

MT (ASV): YahWeh thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy, **he will rest in his love** (*yacharîsh bĕ'ahăbātô*), he will joy over thee with singing.

LXX (Brenton): The Lord thy God is in thee; the Mighty One shall save thee; he shall bring joy upon thee, **and shall refresh thee with his love** (*kainiei se en tē agapē autou*); and he shall rejoice over thee with delight as in a day of feasting.

8HevXIIgr: The scroll is partially preserved at Zephaniah 3. The phrase corresponding to *"he will rest in his love"* (MT) / *"refresh thee with his love"* (LXX) is damaged at the critical point.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Striking]** MT: *"he will rest/be silent in his love"* (*yacharîsh bĕ'ahăbātô*) — the Hebrew *châresh* means to be silent, to be still. The extraordinary image is of God being *silent* in his love — overcome with love to the point of speechlessness. LXX: *"shall refresh thee with his love"* (*kainiei se*) — the Greek *kainizō* means to renew/refresh. These are entirely different images. The MT presents divine love as silent wonder; the LXX presents it as renewal and refreshment. The difference may reflect a different Hebrew Vorlage (*yĕchaddesh*, "he will renew," a *chet/resh* and *daleth/shin* confusion) or an interpretive translation. - **[THEOL]** Zephaniah 3:14–17 is one of the most joyous passages in the Minor Prophets — addressed to "daughter Zion," commanding her to rejoice because God is in her midst. The image of God rejoicing over his people *"with singing"* (*yâgîl 'âlayik bĕrinnâh*) appears in both MT and LXX and has been read as a divine counterpart to the Magnificat's *"my soul doth magnify the Lord."*

Part Six: The Significance of the Kaige Revision for NT Textual History

The First-Century Greek Bible Landscape

By the first century C.E., there were at least three distinct Greek text traditions of the Minor Prophets circulating simultaneously:

1. **The Old Greek (OG/LXX)** — the original translation, made approximately 200–100 B.C.E., with relative freedom from the Hebrew, representing the Greek Bible known to most Diaspora Jews and to the earliest Christians.

2. **The Kaige revision (8HevXIIgr)** — the systematic correction of the OG toward the proto-MT, active approximately 50 B.C.E. – 50 C.E. This was used by Palestinian Jews committed to the Hebrew text's authority.

3. **Proto-Theodotionic readings** — closely related to the kaige revision, found in NT quotations that agree with the MT against the standard LXX. These suggest that some NT authors had access to revised Greek texts as well as the OG.

NT Authors and the Two Greek Traditions

The NT quotations from the Minor Prophets distribute across these traditions in a pattern that is not random:

Quotations following the Old Greek (LXX) against MT: - Acts 13:41 (Hab 1:5: "despisers" not "nations") - Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11 (Hab 2:4: omitting the pronoun) - Acts 15:17 (Amos 9:12: "mankind" not "Edom") - Matthew 2:6 (Micah 5:2: complex composite)

Quotations following the MT against Old Greek: - John 19:37 (Zech 12:10: "him" not "me") - Matthew 27:9–10 (Zechariah 11:12–13 with Jeremiah attribution — complex)

Quotations matching neither tradition clearly: - Hebrews 10:38 (Hab 2:4: *"my righteous one shall live by faith"* — distinctive form)

This distribution pattern suggests that different NT authors drew on different Greek text traditions, and that by the first century C.E. the "Septuagint" was not a single stable text but a collection of divergent manuscripts representing both OG and kaige-revised forms.

The Barthélemy Thesis — Summary and Significance

Barthélemy's identification of the kaige recension (*Les Devanciers d'Aquila*, 1963) transformed Septuagint studies in three ways:

1. **It explained the puzzle of proto-Theodotionic readings in the NT.** Certain NT quotations that seemed to follow a non-LXX Greek text (agreeing with the MT against the OG) were not the NT authors quoting from memory or adapting the text — they were quoting from a genuine Greek text tradition (the kaige revision) that happened to agree with the MT.

2. **It established a trajectory from LXX to MT in the Greek tradition.** The movement was not from MT to LXX (translations getting progressively looser) but from OG (free) to kaige (corrected) to Aquila (maximally literal). The Reformation's tendency to privilege the MT over the LXX recapitulated — perhaps unknowingly — this same ancient trajectory.

3. **It demonstrated that the "Septuagint" is not a single document.** The OG and kaige recension are both "the Septuagint" in different senses. NT citations that agree with what we call the LXX may be quoting the OG; NT citations that agree with the MT may be quoting the kaige revision. The NT's relationship to the OT is not a relationship to a single text but to a living, plural tradition.

Appendix A: Summary Table of Major Minor Prophet Divergences

Passage	MT	OG (LXX)	8HevXIIgr	1QpHab / Other DSS	NT Usage	Type
Amos 9:12	"Edom" (*'Edôm*)	"mankind" (*anthrōpōn*)	Not preserved	—	Acts 15:17 follows LXX	[VAR — 1 letter]
Hab 1:5	"among the nations" (*baggôyim*)	"despisers" (*kataphronētai*)	Partially preserved	1QpHab: "traitors"	Acts 13:41 follows LXX/1QpHa	[VAR — Hebrew

Passage	MT	OG (LXX)	8HevXIIgr	1QpHab / Other DSS	NT Usage	Type
					b	Vorlage]
Hab 2:4	"his faith" (*bĕʾemûnātô*)	"my faith" (*pisteōs mou*)	**Corrects to "his"**	1QpHab: "his faithfulness"	Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38 — all different	[VAR — 1 suffix letter]
Micah 5:2	"Beth-lehem Ephrathah"	"Bethleem, house of Ephratha"	Partially preserved	—	Matt 2:6 composite; *not* the least	[VAR + NT composite]
Micah 5:3	"his brethren"	"their brethren"	Kaige correction	—	—	[VAR — pronoun]
Zech 12:10	"unto **me** … for **him**"	"**me** … for **him**"	"me" preserved	—	John 19:37 follows "him"	[VAR + THEOL]
Nah 1:2	"reserveth [wrath]"	"cuts off"	**Corrects to "reserveth"**	—	—	[VAR — kaige correction]
Zeph 3:17	"silent in his love"	"refresh with his love"	Damaged	—	—	[VAR — major image]

Appendix B: The Habakkuk Pesher (1QpHab) — A Summary

The Habakkuk Pesher is one of the most important documents from Qumran for understanding how the DSS community used biblical texts. Key features:

Method: The pesher quotes the biblical text verbatim column by column, then gives the *pesher* interpretation: *"its interpretation concerns…"* (*pishro ʾal…*). The interpretation identifies the biblical actors with contemporary figures: the Chaldeans of Habakkuk become the Romans (Kittim); Habakkuk's wicked person becomes the "Wicked Priest" (probably the Hasmonean high priest); the prophet's complaint about injustice becomes the community's complaint about persecution by the Jerusalem establishment.

Biblical text: The 1QpHab Hebrew text of Habakkuk is not identical to the MT. At several points it agrees with the LXX against the MT (as at 1:5 where it reads *"traitors"* with the LXX against the MT's *"nations"*). At Hab 2:4 it agrees with the MT (*"his faithfulness"*). This mixed

profile is typical of DSS biblical texts — not consistently proto-MT or proto-LXX but representing an independent Hebrew tradition.

Theological significance: The pesher interprets Habakkuk 2:4 (*"the righteous shall live by his faithfulness"*) as referring to *"all the doers of the Law in the House of Judah whom God will save from the house of judgment because of their suffering and their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness."* This is neither Paul's reading (faith as the mode of justification) nor the Reformation's reading (faith alone as opposed to works) but a communal, Torah-observant reading in which faithfulness to the Teacher of Righteousness saves the community. Three contemporary readings of the same verse — Paul's, Luther's, Qumran's — all built on different nuances of the same ambiguous Hebrew *'emûnâh* (faithfulness/faith/fidelity).

Appendix C: Essential Scholarship for the Twelve Prophets and 8HevXIIgr

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Part Six: Isaiah — Interpretive-Theological Divergence

Phase Preface

This volume presents Phase 2E of the MT/LXX/DSS Textual Harmony Project, focusing on the book of Isaiah — the most extensively cited Old Testament book in the New Testament, the most completely preserved book among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the book whose LXX translation exhibits the most theologically interpretive character of any major prophetic book.

Isaiah occupies a unique position in the textual history of the Hebrew Bible for four reasons:

First, the **Great Isaiah Scroll** (1QIsa^a), discovered in Cave 1 at Qumran in 1947, is the oldest complete book of the Bible ever found — dated to approximately 125–100 B.C.E. and predating the oldest complete MT manuscripts by more than a millennium. Its 54 columns of text provide an unparalleled window into the Hebrew text of Isaiah in the Second Temple period.

Second, the **LXX of Isaiah** is among the most theologically interpretive translations in the entire Septuagint corpus. The LXX translator (or translators) worked with consistent theological purposes — rendering the Hebrew in ways that emphasize universalism, eschatology, and wisdom, and that in several passages produce readings directly applicable to early Christian Christological claims in ways the MT does not support.

Third, Isaiah is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament **more than any other Old Testament book** — approximately 66 direct citations and hundreds of allusions. Understanding which text tradition underlies each NT quotation is therefore critical for NT exegesis.

Fourth, Isaiah presents the **"virgin birth" textual problem** — Isaiah 7:14 — in which the difference between the MT's *'almâh* (young woman) and the LXX's *parthenos* (virgin) is the single most debated textual variant in the relationship between the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

The Three Traditions for Isaiah

The Masoretic Text of Isaiah

The MT of Isaiah is preserved in the standard witnesses: - **Codex Leningradensis** (L, 1009 C.E.) — basis of BHS and BHQ - **Aleppo Codex** (A, c. 920 C.E.) — partially preserved for Isaiah

The BHQ Isaiah volume (edited by Arie van der Kooij and others; Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2013) provides the most current critical apparatus.

The MT of Isaiah is widely regarded as one of the **better-preserved** books in the Hebrew Bible — in striking contrast to Samuel, which is poorly preserved. The MT and the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a) agree on the vast majority of the text, with variants that are largely orthographic (spelling differences) or minor. This overall agreement between the MT and the DSS is itself significant: it demonstrates that the proto-MT tradition of Isaiah was already well-established in the second century B.C.E.

The Septuagint of Isaiah

The LXX of Isaiah was translated in Alexandria, most likely in the second century B.C.E. — approximately the same period as the Great Isaiah Scroll was copied. It is the work of a single, educated translator who approached his task with considerable interpretive freedom.

The character of the LXX Isaiah has been analyzed definitively by Ronald Troxel (*LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, Brill, 2008) and Arie van der Kooij (*The Oracle of Tyre: The Septuagint of Isaiah XXIII as Version and Vision*, Brill, 1998). The consensus: the LXX translator was not simply rendering the Hebrew word for word but was producing an *interpretation* — a translation with consistent theological aims, consistent renderings of key terms, and consistent interpretive moves that reflect the translator's own theological perspective and Hellenistic context.

The critical edition is the **Göttingen Septuagint**, *Isaias* (edited by Joseph Ziegler, 2nd ed., Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967). The NETS translation (by Arie van der Kooij and others, 2007) is the scholarly standard English rendering.

For this harmony, the **Brenton LXX** (1851, public domain) is used for extended passages.

The Dead Sea Scrolls of Isaiah

Two principal Isaiah manuscripts were found at Qumran:

Signum	Location	Content	Character
1QIsa^a (1Q1)	Cave 1	**Complete Isaiah** (all 66 chapters)	Generally agrees with MT; significant orthographic variants; some substantive variants
1QIsa^b (1Q2)	Cave 1	Isaiah 41–66 (fragmentary)	**Closer to MT** than 1QIsa^a
4QIsa^a (4Q55)	Cave 4	Isaiah 1; 2; 4–6; 7	MT-aligned
4QIsa^b (4Q56)	Cave 4	Isaiah 1; 10; 13–14; 22; 24; 26–27	MT-aligned
4QIsa^c (4Q57)	Cave 4	Isaiah 9; 29; 31; 33; 40–41	MT-aligned
4QIsa^d–r	Cave 4	Various chapters	Mostly MT-aligned

The critical edition is the **Biblical Qumran Scrolls** (BQS) series: *Isaiah I and II* (edited by Eugene Ulrich, DJD XXXII; Oxford University Press, 2010).

1QIsa^a is the most important single manuscript in the DSS biblical corpus. Its 54 columns have been fully digitized and published by the Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library. The scroll exhibits:

1. **Orthographic freedom** — longer spellings (plene writing) of words that the MT spells more briefly. These spelling differences account for the majority of variants between 1QIsa^a and the MT.

2. **Minor verbal variants** — approximately 2,000 differences from the MT, the majority trivial; perhaps 200 that are significant; and a handful that are theologically important.

3. **Occasional agreement with the LXX against the MT** — the most significant category for textual criticism.

Part One: The Superscription and Early Chapters (Isaiah 1–6)

Isaiah 1:1 — The Superscription

MT (ASV): The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

LXX (Brenton): The vision which Esaias son of Amos saw, which he saw concerning Juda, and concerning Jerusalem, in the reign of Ozias, and Joatham, and Achaz, and Ezekias, who reigned over Judaea.

1QIsa^a: Agrees with MT in substance; orthographic variants only.

Variance Notes: - **[ORTH]** The LXX adds *"who reigned over Judaea"* at the end — a clarifying expansion absent from the MT. The MT's "kings of Judah" (*malkê Yĕhûdâh*) is sufficient; the LXX adds the participial clause to make the royal identification explicit. - The LXX's "Esaias" vs. MT's "Isaiah" is a simple Greek transliteration convention throughout.

Isaiah 2:2–4 — The Mountain of the Lord

MT (ASV): And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of YahWeh's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of YahWeh, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of YahWeh from Jerusalem.

And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

LXX (Brenton): That in the last days the mountain of the Lord shall be glorious, and the house of God shall be on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall come to it. And many people shall go and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will tell us his way, and we will walk in it: for out of Sion shall go forth a law, and the word of God out of Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles: and nation shall not take up sword against nation, neither shall they learn to war any more.

1QIsa^a: Largely agrees with MT; the passage is well preserved in the scroll.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"established on the top of the mountains"* (*nâkôn bĕrô'sh hehârîm*) — LXX: *"shall be glorious"* (*phaneron estai*). The Hebrew *nâkôn* means established/firm; the LXX reads *phaneron* (manifest/glorious) — a meaningfully different theological image. The MT emphasizes the mountain's foundational stability; the LXX emphasizes its visible glory. - **[VAR]** MT: *"the law"* (*tôrâh*) — LXX: *"a law"* (*nomos*). The MT's definite article (*hattôrâh*, the Torah) makes this a specific reference to God's law; the LXX's indefinite *nomos* (a law) is slightly more general. - **[Note]** This same passage appears in Micah 4:1–3 (the parallel is nearly verbatim) — one of the clearest examples in the Hebrew prophets of shared tradition. Both Isaiah 2 and Micah 4 show this oracle; neither MT nor LXX of either book explains which prophet originated it.

Isaiah 6:1–13 — The Throne Vision and the Call of Isaiah

Isaiah 6 is the account of Isaiah's inaugural vision — the seraphim, the throne, the burning coal, and the commission to preach to a people who will not hear. It contains one of the most important NT citations of Isaiah.

MT (ASV) — 6:1–3: In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said,

Holy, holy, holy, is YahWeh of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

LXX (Brenton) — 6:1–3: And it came to pass in the year in which king Ozias died, that I saw the Lord sitting on a high and exalted throne, and the house was full of his glory. And seraphim stood round about him; each one had six wings; and with two they covered their face, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one cried to the other, and they said,

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Sabaoth: the whole earth is full of his glory.

1QIsa^a: The vision account is well preserved; agrees substantially with MT.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"his train filled the temple"* (*ûshûlâyw mĕlê'îm 'et-hahêkâl*) — the glory fills the Temple; LXX: *"the house was full of his glory"* (*kai plērēs ho oikos tēs doxēs autou*). The MT's *shûlâyw* (his train/skirts — the hem of God's robe) becomes in the LXX simply "his glory" (*doxa autou*) filling the house. The LXX translator avoids the anthropomorphic image of God's garment hem and replaces it with the more abstract concept of divine glory. - **[VAR]** MT: *"YahWeh of hosts"* (*YHWH tsĕbâ'ôt*) — LXX: *"Lord of Sabaoth"* (*Kyrios Sabaōth*). The LXX transliterates the Hebrew *tsĕbâ'ôt* (hosts/armies) as *Sabaōth* rather than translating it — a distinctive practice that preserves the Hebrew word in Greek liturgy. This is the form quoted in Romans 9:29 (*"Lord of Sabaoth"*) and Revelation 4:8 (*"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty"*).

Isaiah 6:9–10 — The Hardening Passage

MT (ASV): And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again, and be healed.

LXX (Brenton): And he said, Go and tell this people, Ye shall hear indeed, but ye shall not understand; and ye shall see indeed, but ye shall not perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

1QIsa^a: Agrees with MT in substance.

NT Usage: Isaiah 6:9–10 is the most frequently cited Isaiah passage in the NT, quoted or alluded to in all four Gospels and Acts: - Matthew 13:14–15 (extended quotation, following LXX) - Mark 4:12 (shorter allusion, following MT/Aramaic Targum) - Luke 8:10 (brief allusion) - John 12:40 (following neither MT nor LXX precisely) - Acts 28:26–27 (extended quotation, following LXX)

Variance Notes — Critical: - **[VAR — Major]** MT: *"Make the heart of this people fat… shut their eyes"* — **God commands Isaiah to cause the hardening**. God is the active agent of judicial blindness. LXX: *"For this people's heart has grown dull… their eyes they have closed"* — **the people have hardened themselves**. The people are the active agents of their own blindness. This is one of the most significant theological differences between the MT and LXX in the entire book: - The MT presents divine judicial hardening as God's direct command — a profound and disturbing claim about divine sovereignty in judgment - The LXX softens this into human self-hardening — the people have done this to themselves - **[NT follows LXX]** Matthew 13:14–15 and Acts 28:26–27 follow the LXX's form, which attributes the hardening to the people (*"their eyes they have closed"*). John 12:40 is unique: *"He hath blinded their eyes, and he hardened their heart"* — following neither MT nor LXX but presenting a third form that attributes the hardening to God but using different vocabulary. John's form is closest to the MT's theology (divine agency) but with different vocabulary. - **[THEOL]** This variant has direct bearing on the NT's theology of Israel's rejection of Jesus. The LXX form (self-hardening) is pastorally gentler; the MT form (divine judgment) is more theologically severe. Paul's argument in Romans 9–11 about the "hardening in part" that has come upon Israel draws on the divine-agency theology closer to the MT, even though he quotes the LXX elsewhere.

Part Two: The Immanuel Sign — Isaiah 7:14

The Most Debated Textual Variant in Isaiah

Isaiah 7:14 is the single most debated verse in the relationship between the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. The issue is specific: the Hebrew word *'almâh* and its rendering in the LXX as *parthenos*.

MT (ASV) — Isaiah 7:14: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, **a young woman** (*hâ'almâh*) shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

LXX (Brenton) — Isaiah 7:14: Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, **a virgin** (*parthenos*) shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Emmanuel.

1QIsa^a: The scroll reads *h'lmh* — the same consonants as the MT's *hâ'almâh* (the young woman). The DSS provides no support for the LXX's *parthenos* (virgin) reading — it agrees with the MT's term.

NT Citation — Matthew 1:22–23: Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold, **the virgin** (*hē parthenos*) shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us.

Matthew follows the **LXX** (*parthenos*, virgin) rather than the MT (*'almâh*, young woman).

The Linguistic Analysis

The Hebrew word *'almâh*:

The Hebrew word *'almâh* (עַלְמָה) appears **nine times** in the Hebrew Bible: - Genesis 24:43 (Rebekah at the well) - Exodus 2:8 (Miriam) - Psalm 68:25 (maidens playing timbrels) - Proverbs 30:19 (the way of a man with a maiden) - Song of Solomon 1:3; 6:8 (the maidens who love the king) - Isaiah 7:14 (the disputed verse) - 1 Chronicles 15:20 (musical notation *'al 'alamoth*)

In every other occurrence, *'almâh* denotes a **young woman of marriageable age** — typically (though not universally) assumed to be unmarried, but the word does not carry the specific semantic content of "virgin" (*bĕtûlâh*). The Hebrew word for "virgin" in the specific sense of a woman who has not had sexual intercourse is **bĕtûlâh** (בְּתוּלָה) — a different word that Isaiah could have used but did not.

The Greek word *parthenos*:

The Greek *parthenos* (παρθένος) can mean: 1. A virgin — a woman who has not had sexual intercourse (its primary and specific meaning) 2. A young unmarried woman — a usage found in some Greek texts where virginity is assumed but not the focus

The LXX translator's choice of *parthenos* for *'almâh* is defensible in sense 2 but carries the specific connotation of sense 1 in its most natural Greek reading.

Three Scholarly Positions

Position 1 — The LXX is a mistranslation (or over-translation): Most critical OT scholars (including those with no theological stake in the matter — Wildberger, Blenkinsopp, Sweeney)

hold that *'almâh* means "young woman" (unmarried, likely a virgin by assumption), not "virgin" in the specific sense. The LXX translator chose *parthenos* because he associated *'almâh* with unmarried status, but the specific semantic content of virginity is not in the Hebrew. The original sign in Isaiah 7 was addressed to the specific historical crisis of Ahaz's reign (the Syro-Ephraimite War, c. 734 B.C.E.) and referred to a contemporary birth — either Isaiah's own son (see 8:3) or a royal birth — as a timetable for the political crisis to be resolved.

Position 2 — The LXX is a valid translation that Matthew uses typologically: Some critical scholars and many theological interpreters (Brown, Fitzmyer, Collins) argue that *'almâh* in the context of an extraordinary divine sign (*'ôt*, a sign) may carry connotations of an unusual conception, and that the LXX's *parthenos* is a legitimate interpretive rendering. Matthew's use is typological: the historical birth associated with Ahaz's time was a type or prefiguration of the ultimate Immanuel-birth in Jesus. The LXX's *parthenos* enabled the typological connection even if the historical original did not specifically prophesy a virgin birth.

Position 3 — The LXX reflects the intended meaning (traditional view): The traditional Christian reading holds that Isaiah specifically prophesied a virgin birth and that the LXX *parthenos* accurately renders the prophet's intent. The *'almâh* was chosen rather than *bĕtûlâh* because the prophet was describing not merely biological virginity but the condition of a specific woman whom God would cause to conceive in a miraculous way. This position is maintained by many in the evangelical and traditional Catholic exegetical traditions.

The 1QIsa^a Evidence

The Great Isaiah Scroll reads *h'lmh* — identical to the MT consonants, with the definite article: *the* young woman (or *the* 'almâh), not *a* young woman. This use of the definite article (*hê*) suggests the text had a specific young woman in mind — someone the recipients of the sign would recognize. This use of the definite article is present in both the MT and 1QIsa^a and is absent from the LXX (*parthenos* without the definite article in Matthew's quotation).

The 1QIsa^a evidence confirms the MT's *'almâh* and gives no support to the LXX's *parthenos*. Whatever the LXX translator was doing at Isaiah 7:14, he was not following a Hebrew Vorlage that had a different word — he was making an interpretive translation of the same Hebrew word the MT preserves.

Isaiah 7:14 — Broader Context

MT (ASV) — Isaiah 7:10–16 (the full sign oracle): And YahWeh spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of YahWeh thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt YahWeh.

And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, the young woman shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Butter and honey shall he eat, when he knoweth to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken.

Variance Notes — Contextual: - **[VAR]** MT: *"the young woman shall conceive"* (*hinnêh hâ'almâh hârâh*) — the Hebrew is ambiguous: *hârâh* can be a participle (*is pregnant*) or a perfect (*conceived*). If it is a participle, the woman is already pregnant and the sign is the name she will give the child. If it is a perfect (which is also possible), the prophecy anticipates a future conception. The LXX's future *lēmpsetai* (*shall conceive*) follows the future interpretation. This ambiguity is in the Hebrew; the LXX has resolved it in the direction of futurity. - **[THEOL]** The contextual timetable in v.16 — *"before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken"* — places the fulfillment within the Syro-Ephraimite crisis of approximately 734 B.C.E. This temporal reference does not appear in Matthew's quotation. Matthew quotes only verse 14 in isolation, detaching it from its original political-historical context and applying it to the birth of Jesus.

Part Three: The Servant Songs — Isaiah 40–55

Overview of Second Isaiah (Deutero-Isaiah)

Chapters 40–55 of Isaiah — traditionally called "Second Isaiah" or "Deutero-Isaiah" in critical scholarship, on the grounds that they address the Babylonian exile (6th century B.C.E.) rather than the Assyrian crisis (8th century B.C.E.) of chapters 1–39 — contain the most theologically rich material in the book and the most extensively cited Isaiah passages in the NT. The four **Servant Songs** (42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12) are the centerpiece.

Isaiah 40:3 — "Prepare the Way of the Lord"

MT (ASV): The voice of one that crieth, **In the wilderness** prepare ye the way of YahWeh; make level in the desert a highway for our God.

LXX (Brenton): The voice of one crying **in the wilderness**, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God.

1QIsa^a: Agrees with MT.

NT Usage: - Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23 — all four Gospels apply this verse to John the Baptist

Variance Notes — Punctuation/Interpretation: - **[VAR — Punctuation]** The Hebrew can be read two ways depending on where the phrase *"in the wilderness"* is attached: - **MT punctuation** (Masoretic accents): *"A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord'"* — the voice cries, and the preparation is to happen *in the wilderness*. The construction of the highway is the event in the wilderness. - **LXX punctuation**: *"A voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord'"* — the voice is *in the wilderness*, and the preparation is of "the way of the Lord" without geographic specification. - The LXX's punctuation is followed by

all four Gospels: John the Baptist is the voice crying *in the wilderness* — the wilderness being where John preaches, not where the highway is to be built. This Christological application of the passage requires the LXX's punctuation, which locates the crying voice in the wilderness. - The MT's punctuation does not support the NT's application nearly as directly.

Isaiah 42:1–4 — The First Servant Song

MT (ASV): Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will he not break, and a smoking flax will he not quench: he will bring forth justice in truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.

LXX (Brenton): Jacob is my servant, I will help him: Israel is my chosen, my soul has accepted him; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

He shall not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor shall his voice be heard without. A bruised reed he shall not break, and smoking flax he shall not quench; but he shall bring forth judgment to truth. He shall shine out, and shall not be discouraged, until he have set judgment on the earth: and in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

1QIsa^a: Agrees substantially with MT; the servant is not explicitly identified.

NT Usage — Matthew 12:18–21: Matthew quotes Isaiah 42:1–4 at length — the longest OT quotation in Matthew's Gospel — applying it to Jesus's healing ministry:

Behold, my servant whom I have chosen; my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry aloud; neither shall any one hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles hope.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Major]** MT: unnamed servant — LXX: *"Jacob is my servant… Israel is my chosen."* The LXX explicitly identifies the servant as Jacob/Israel — a collective identification. Matthew's quotation does **not** follow the LXX here: Matthew's version has no Jacob/Israel identification, aligning instead with a reading closer to the MT or a pre-Matthean Greek text that omitted the identification. - **[VAR]** MT: *"he will bring forth justice"* (*mishpât*) — LXX: *"judgment to the Gentiles"* (*krisin tois ethnesin*). Both have the Gentiles (MT: *gôyim*; LXX: *ethnesin*) as the recipients of the servant's justice/judgment. The LXX makes explicit what the MT implies. - **[VAR]** MT: *"He will not fail nor be discouraged"* — LXX: *"He shall shine out, and shall not be discouraged."* The MT's *yikbeh* (be dimmed/discouraged) is rendered by the LXX as *"shall shine out"* (*analampsai*) — the opposite image. The MT says he will not be *extinguished*; the LXX says he will *shine*. These are not contradictory but they are substantially different images. - **[VAR]** MT: *"and the isles shall wait for his law"* — LXX/Matthew: *"and in his name shall the Gentiles hope."* Matthew follows a reading closer to the LXX here but with minor differences. The NT's universalist hope is explicitly stated; the MT is slightly more restrained in its expression.

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 — The Fourth Servant Song

This is the most extensively discussed passage in the entire OT for NT interpretation. It is cited, alluded to, or paraphrased in virtually every major section of the NT — the Gospels (the Passion narratives), Acts (Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch), Paul's letters, 1 Peter, and Revelation. It is the primary OT text used to interpret Jesus's death as vicarious and atoning.

Isaiah 52:13–15 — The Exaltation of the Servant

MT (ASV): Behold, my servant shall deal wisely, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Like as many were astonished at thee (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men), so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand.

LXX (Brenton): Behold, my servant shall understand, and be exalted, and glorified exceedingly. As many shall be amazed at thee, so shall thy face be without glory from men, and thy glory shall not be honoured by the sons of men. Thus shall many nations wonder at him; and kings shall keep their mouths shut: for they to whom no report was brought concerning him, shall see; and they who have not heard, shall consider.

1QIsa^a: Generally agrees with MT; the scroll is legible at this passage.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"he shall sprinkle many nations"* (*yazzeh gôyîm rabbîm*) — LXX: *"many nations shall wonder at him"* (*thaumasontai autou ethne polla*). The Hebrew verb *nâzâh* means "to sprinkle" (as in priestly sprinkling of blood or water). This is the priestly-atoning image: the servant sprinkles the nations as the priest sprinkles sacrificial blood. The LXX has *"shall wonder at"* (*thaumasontai*) — an entirely different image: amazement rather than sprinkling. Whether the LXX translator read a different Hebrew word or deliberately avoided the priestly imagery is debated. The NT does not quote this verse specifically, but the priestly-atoning theology of the MT underlies the NT's interpretation of Jesus's death. - **[VAR]** MT: *"his visage was so marred more than any man"* — LXX: *"so shall thy face be without glory from men."* The MT's *mish'hat* (marring/disfigurement) is rendered by the LXX as *"without glory"* (*adoxēsei*) — an abstraction from the specific physical disfigurement of the MT.

Isaiah 53:1–12 — The Servant's Suffering and Exaltation

MT (ASV) — Selected verses: [v.1] Who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of YahWeh been revealed?

[v.3] He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not.

[v.4] Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

[v.5] But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

[v.6] All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and YahWeh hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

[v.7] He was oppressed, yet he humbled himself and opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

[v.10] Yet it pleased YahWeh to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of YahWeh shall prosper in his hand.

[v.11] Of the travail of his soul shall he see, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities.

[v.12] Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

LXX (Brenton) — Selected verses: [v.1] Lord, who has believed our report? and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

[v.3] But his form was ignoble, and inferior to that of the children of men; he was a man in suffering, and acquainted with the bearing of sickness, for his face is turned from us: he was dishonoured, and not esteemed.

[v.4] He bears our sins, and is pained for us: yet we accounted him to be in trouble, and in suffering, and in affliction.

[v.5] But he was wounded on account of our sins, and was bruised because of our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his bruises we were healed.

[v.6] All we as sheep have gone astray; every one has gone astray in his way; and the Lord gave him up for our sins.

[v.7] And he, because of his affliction, opens not his mouth: he was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is dumb, so he opens not his mouth.

[v.10] The Lord also is pleased to purge him from his stroke. If ye can give an offering for sin, your soul shall see a long-lived seed:

[v.11] the Lord also is pleased to take away from the travail of his soul, to shew him light, and to form him with understanding; to justify the just one who serves many well; and he shall bear their sins.

[v.12] Therefore he shall inherit many, and he shall divide the spoils of the mighty; because his soul was delivered to death: and he was numbered among the transgressors; and he bore the sins of many, and was delivered because of their iniquities.

1QIsa^a: The scroll is well-preserved at Isaiah 53. Several significant variants are present:

- **1QIsa^a at 53:11**: The scroll reads *"he shall see light"* (*yir'eh 'ôr*) — confirming the LXX's *"to shew him light"* (*deixai autō phōs*) against the standard MT (which lacks *'ôr*, "light"). This is the most important single variant in 1QIsa^a for text-critical purposes.

NT Usage — Isaiah 53 in the NT:

NT Citation	Isaiah 53 Verse	Notes
John 12:38	53:1	*"Lord, who hath believed our report?"* — LXX form
Romans 10:16	53:1	*"Lord, who hath believed our report?"* — LXX form
Matthew 8:17	53:4	*"He took our infirmities"* — follows MT against LXX
1 Peter 2:22	53:9	*"who did no sin"* — LXX
1 Peter 2:24	53:5	*"by whose stripes ye were healed"* — LXX
Luke 22:37	53:12	*"was numbered with transgressors"* — LXX
Acts 8:32–33	53:7–8	Extended quotation — LXX
Romans 4:25	53:12	*"delivered up because of our trespasses"* — LXX

Variance Notes — Isaiah 53:

- **[VAR — Major]** MT 53:4: *"Surely he hath borne our **griefs** (chŏlî, illnesses/diseases)"* — LXX: *"He bears our **sins** (hamartias)."* The MT's *chŏlî* means physical illness; the LXX translates it as *sins* (hamartias). Matthew 8:17 explicitly quotes the MT's disease meaning (*"He took our infirmities"*) and applies it to Jesus's healing of the sick. Paul and 1 Peter follow the LXX's sin-bearing meaning. The same Hebrew verse thus supports two different NT theologies — Jesus as healer (MT interpretation) and Jesus as sin-bearer (LXX interpretation).

- **[DSS — Important]** 1QIsa^a at 53:11: The MT reads *"Of the travail of his soul shall he see"* — without specifying what the servant will see. 1QIsa^a adds *'ôr* (light): *"he shall see **light** from the travail of his soul."* The LXX also has the light: *"to shew him light."* This DSS reading confirms that the LXX's *light* is not a translator's addition but reflects a genuine Hebrew textual variant. The verse with *"light"* reads: the servant will see light — resurrection imagery — from his suffering. The version without *"light"* (standard MT) is more ambiguous. The DSS here confirms the LXX's reading against the standard MT.

- **[VAR]** MT 53:10: *"when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin"* (*'âshâm*, the guilt offering) — LXX: *"If ye can give an offering for sin."* The MT's conditional (*'im*) introduces an extraordinary theological statement: if/when the servant's soul is made a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days. The LXX's reading is grammatically different and theologically softer — turning a bold statement about the

servant's death as atonement into a more conditional construction. The NT's sacrificial interpretation of Jesus's death follows the MT's theology rather than the LXX's.

- **[VAR]** MT 53:12: *"he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors"* — LXX: *"he bore the sins of many, and was delivered because of their iniquities."* The MT's *wayipgga' bapôshĕ'îm* (*"he made intercession for the transgressors"*) is a powerful priestly intercessory image. The LXX has *"was delivered because of their iniquities"* (*paredothē*) — a different image (being handed over/delivered). Luke 22:37 quotes the MT's intercessory form; Romans 4:25 (*"delivered up because of our trespasses"*) echoes the LXX's *paredothē* tradition.

Part Four: Selected Passages from Isaiah 56–66 (Trito-Isaiah)

Isaiah 61:1–2 — "The Spirit of the Lord Is Upon Me"

MT (ASV): The Spirit of the Lord YahWeh is upon me; because YahWeh hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of YahWeh's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.

LXX (Brenton): The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken in heart, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense; to comfort all that mourn.

1QIsa^a: Agrees substantially with MT.

NT Usage — Luke 4:18–19: At Nazareth, Jesus reads from the scroll of Isaiah and applies this passage to himself:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"the opening of the prison to them that are bound"* (*pĕqach-qôach la'ăsûrîm*) — LXX: *"recovery of sight to the blind"* (*tuphlos anablepsin*). These are completely different readings. The MT's *pĕqach-qôach* means "opening wide" (of the prison); it uses a word related to the root *pâqach* (to open eyes), but in the MT it modifies the prison, not the eyes. The LXX reads *"recovery of sight to the blind"* — interpreting *pâqach* in the eye-opening sense. - **Luke follows the LXX**: Luke 4:18 has *"recovering of sight to the blind"* — the LXX's reading, not the MT's. Luke also adds *"to set at liberty them that are bruised"* which is not in Isaiah 61 at all (it appears to come from Isaiah 58:6 — a composite quotation). - The difference matters theologically: in the MT, the servant proclaims freedom from captivity (political liberation); in the LXX and Luke, the servant also restores physical sight (healing ministry). - **[VAR]** MT: *"the year of YahWeh's favor, and the day of vengeance"* — LXX: *"the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense."* Luke 4:19 quotes only *"the acceptable year of the Lord"* — stopping before the "day of vengeance/recompense." This deliberate

truncation is theologically significant: Jesus stops reading mid-sentence at the Nazareth sermon, proclaiming only the year of favor, not yet the day of judgment. This has been interpreted as a distinction between the era of grace (first coming) and the era of judgment (second coming).

Part Five: The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a) — Key Variants

Orthographic and Grammatical Variants

The majority of 1QIsa^a's approximately 2,000 differences from the MT are **orthographic** — differences in spelling that do not affect meaning. Examples:

- 1QIsa^a regularly uses **plene** (full) spelling where the MT uses defective spelling: e.g., MT *mlek* (king) vs. 1QIsa^a *mlwk*; MT *bn* (son) vs. 1QIsa^a *bwn*
- These differences confirm that the scroll's scribes were working in a Second Temple Hebrew context with evolving orthographic conventions, not with different semantic content

Substantive Variants in 1QIsa^a

Chapter:Verse	MT Reading	1QIsa^a Reading	LXX	Significance
1:15	"your hands are full of blood"	"your hands are full of bloodshed"	"full of blood"	Minor expansion
7:14	*hâ'almâh* (the young woman)	*h'lmh* (same consonants)	*parthenos* (virgin)	Major NT variant
33:2	"our arm every morning"	"his arm every morning" (3rd person)	3rd person	Pronoun variant
40:7	"the people is grass" + second clause	Lacks the second clause "surely the people is grass"	LXX lacks the repetition	MT repetition; 1Q lacks it
49:17	"thy sons shall make haste"	"thy builders shall make haste" (*bônayik* not *bânayik*)	"thy builders"	**LXX and 1QIsa^a agree against MT**
53:11	"he shall see" (of soul's travail)	"he shall see **light**" (*yir'eh 'ôr*)	"to shew him **light**"	**DSS and LXX agree against MT**

Isaiah 49:17 — Thy Sons or Thy Builders?

MT (ASV): Thy **sons** (*bânayik*) shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth from thee.

1QIsa^a: Thy **builders** (*bônayik*) shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth from thee.

LXX (Brenton): And thou shalt be quickly built by those of whom thou wast made desolate.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** The Hebrew consonants *bânayik* (thy sons) and *bônayik* (thy builders) differ only in the vowel of the first syllable — a distinction not visible in unpointed Hebrew text. The MT vocalization *bânayik* (sons) is the standard pointing; 1QIsa^a reads *bônayik* (builders), confirmed by the LXX's *"built"* (*oikodomēthēsē*). The DSS and LXX agree against the MT: Zion will be rebuilt by its builders, not peopled by its sons. Both images are contextually appropriate to the restoration context of Isaiah 49; the MT's "sons" is perhaps the more expected image; the DSS/LXX's "builders" is more specific.

Appendix A: Summary of Major Isaiah Divergences

Passage	MT Reading	LXX Reading	1QIsa^a	NT Follows	Type	Significance
Isa 6:9–10	God commands hardening (imperative)	People have hardened themselves (perfect)	Agrees with MT	Matt 13/Acts 28: LXX; John 12:40: MT theology	[VAR/ THEOL]	Who causes the blindness?
Isa 7:14	*'almâh* (young woman)	*parthenos* (virgin)	*h'lmh* = agrees with MT	Matt 1:23: LXX	[VAR — most debated]	Virgin birth textual basis
Isa 40:3	Prepare way *in the wilderness* (geographic)	Voice crying *in the wilderness* (locating the voice)	Agrees with MT	All four Gospels: LXX punctuation	[VAR — punctuation]	John the Baptist's location
Isa 42:1	Unnamed servant	**Jacob/ Israel** is my servant	No identification	Matt 12:18: neither (no Jacob)	[VAR]	Who is the servant?
Isa 49:17	"thy **sons**" (*bânayik*)	"thy **builders**"	**1QIsa^a: builders**	—	[VAR — DSS/LXX	Consonantal

Passage	MT Reading	LXX Reading	1QIsa^a	NT Follows	Type	Significance
					agree]	ambiguity
Isa 52:15	Servant "shall **sprinkle**" nations	Nations "shall **wonder at**" him	Agrees with MT	—	[VAR/ THEOL]	Priestly vs. wonder image
Isa 53:4	He bore our **griefs** (*diseases*)	He bore our **sins**	Agrees with MT	Matt 8:17: MT; 1 Pet 2:24: LXX	[VAR/ THEOL]	Healing vs. sin-bearing
Isa 53:11	"he shall see" (no object)	"to show him **light**"	**1QIsa^a: "he shall see light"**	—	[VAR — DSS/LXX agree]	Resurrection imagery
Isa 53:12	"made **intercession** for transgressors"	"delivered because of their iniquities"	Agrees with MT	Luke 22:37: MT; Rom 4:25: LXX echo	[VAR/ THEOL]	Intercession vs. delivery
Isa 61:1	"opening of prison to bound"	"**recovery of sight** to blind"	Agrees with MT	Luke 4:18: **LXX**	[VAR]	Healing vs. liberation

Appendix B: Isaiah in the New Testament — A Full Accounting

Isaiah is quoted or clearly alluded to more than any other OT book in the NT. The following table covers the major direct citations:

NT Reference	Isaiah	MT Reading	LXX/DSS	NT Follows	Significance
Matt 1:23	7:14	*'almâh* (young woman)	*parthenos* (virgin)	**LXX**	Virgin birth prophecy
Matt 3:3	40:3	Way prepared *in wilderness*	Voice *in wilderness*	**LXX punctuation**	John the Baptist
Matt 8:17	53:4	*"borne our diseases"*	*"borne our sins"*	**MT**	Healing ministry

NT Reference	Isaiah	MT Reading	LXX/DSS	NT Follows	Significance
Matt 12:18–21	42:1–4	Unnamed servant	Jacob/Israel servant	**Neither** (no Jacob)	Jesus as servant
Matt 13:14–15	6:9–10	Imperative hardening	Perfect self-hardening	**LXX**	Parable explanation
Luke 4:18–19	61:1–2	*"opening of prison"*	*"recovery of sight"*	**LXX**	Nazareth sermon
John 1:23	40:3	Geographic wilderness	Voice in wilderness	**LXX punctuation**	Baptist's self-description
John 12:38	53:1	*"Who believed our report?"*	Same	LXX	Unbelief of Israel
John 12:40	6:10	God blinds	People blind themselves	**MT theology** (but neither exactly)	Rejection of Jesus
Acts 8:32–33	53:7–8	*"as a sheep to slaughter"*	Same (LXX)	**LXX**	Ethiopian eunuch
Acts 28:26–27	6:9–10	Imperative hardening	Perfect self-hardening	**LXX**	Paul's final word to Rome
Rom 9:29	1:9	*"Lord of hosts"*	*"Lord of Sabaoth"*	**LXX** (*Sabaoth* transliterated)	Remnant of Israel
Rom 10:16	53:1	*"Who believed?"*	Same	LXX	Israel's unbelief
Rom 10:20–21	65:1–2	*"I was found of them…"*	Same	LXX	Gentiles and Israel
1 Pet 2:22	53:9	*"no violence in his mouth"*	*"no deceit in his mouth"*	**LXX** (*"deceit"* not *"violence"*)	Sinlessness of Christ
1 Pet 2:24	53:5	*"by his stripes we are healed"*	Same	LXX	Atonement

Appendix C: The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a) — A Summary

Physical description: 54 columns of text on 17 sewn sheets of parchment. The scroll measures approximately 7.3 meters (24 feet) in length and 30 cm (12 inches) in height. It is the largest and best-preserved of all the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Date: Paleographically dated to approximately 125–100 B.C.E. by Frank Moore Cross. Some scholars (Menahem Mansoor, Peter Flint) have proposed dates as early as 200 B.C.E.

Scribal characteristics: Written by at least two scribes (the break occurs between columns 27 and 28, between Isaiah 33 and 34). The scribes used corrections, erasures, and marginal notes extensively — evidence of careful but not mechanically precise copying.

Theological character: 1QIsa^a is not a sectarian document — it shows no evidence of specifically Essene/Qumran theological editing. It is a general-purpose copy of Isaiah that happened to be placed in the cave at Qumran, perhaps as part of the community library. Its text type is neither consistently proto-MT nor consistently LXX-aligned but represents an independent Hebrew transmission tradition.

Significance: The scroll demonstrated two things simultaneously: (1) the remarkable stability of the MT tradition — over a millennium, the text of Isaiah had been transmitted with extraordinary fidelity; and (2) the existence of Hebrew variants that confirmed some LXX readings previously dismissed as translator errors or inventions.

Appendix D: Essential Scholarship for Isaiah

Primary Text Editions

- van der Kooij, A., et al., eds. *Isaiah*. Biblia Hebraica Quinta 11. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2013. [MT — BHQ]
- Ziegler, J., ed. *Isaias*. Septuaginta XIV. 2nd ed. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967. [LXX — Göttingen]
- Ulrich, E., et al. *Isaiah*. Biblical Qumran Scrolls / Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XXXII. Oxford University Press, 2010. [DSS]

English Translations

- Brenton, L.C.L. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha*. 1851. Public domain. [LXX]
- van der Kooij, A. “Isaiah.” In Pietersma and Wright, eds., *NETS*. Oxford University Press, 2007. [LXX scholarly standard]
- Abegg, M., P. Flint, and E. Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*. HarperOne, 1999. Pp. 267–382. [1QIsa^a]

Commentaries

- Blenkinsopp, J. *Isaiah 1–39*; *Isaiah 40–55*; *Isaiah 56–66*. Anchor Yale Bible 19, 19A, 19B. Yale University Press, 2000–2003. [Most complete current critical commentary]
- Wildberger, H. *Isaiah 1–12*; *13–27*; *28–39*. Continental Commentary. Augsburg / Fortress, 1991–2002.
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- Goldingay, J. *Isaiah 40–55*. International Critical Commentary. T&T Clark, 2014.
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- Koole, J.L. *Isaiah III* (40–66). 3 vols. Historical Commentary on the Old Testament. Peeters, 1997–2001.

LXX Isaiah Specifically

- Troxel, R.L. *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation: The Strategies of the Translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah*. Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 124. Brill, 2008. [The essential monograph]
- van der Kooij, A. *The Oracle of Tyre: The Septuagint of Isaiah XXIII as Version and Vision*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 71. Brill, 1998.
- Ekblad, R. *Isaiah's Servant Poems according to the Septuagint*. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 23. Peeters, 1999.
- Seeligmann, I.L. *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies*. Forschungen zum Alten Testament 40. Mohr Siebeck, 2004. [Classic 1948 study reprinted]

1QIsa^a Specifically

- Burrows, M., J.C. Trever, and W.H. Brownlee. *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery*, Vol. I: *The Isaiah Manuscript and the Habakkuk Commentary*. American Schools of Oriental Research, 1950. [Original publication]
- Flint, P.W., E. Tov, and J.C. VanderKam, eds. *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 101. Brill, 2003. [Includes key essays on 1QIsa^a]
- Parry, D.W., and E. Qimron. *The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a): A New Edition*. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 32. Brill, 1999.

Isaiah 7:14 and the Virgin Birth Question

- Brown, R.E. *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*. Updated ed. Anchor Bible Reference Library. Doubleday, 1993. Pp. 143–153. [The fullest treatment]
- Collins, J.J. "The Sign of Immanuel." In *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*. Eerdmans, 1999.
- Oswalt, J.N. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Eerdmans, 1986. Pp. 208–215. [Traditional view]
- Roberts, J.J.M. "Isaiah and His Children." In *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry*. Eisenbrauns, 1985.

Isaiah 53 and NT Interpretation

- Hengel, M. *The Atonement: The Origins of the Doctrine in the New Testament*. Fortress, 1981.
- Whybray, R.N. *Thanksgiving for a Liberated Prophet: An Interpretation of Isaiah Chapter 53*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement 4. Sheffield, 1978.
- Janowski, B., and P. Stuhlmacher, eds. *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*. Eerdmans, 2004. [Essential collection of essays]
- Wagner, J.R. *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul "In Concert" in the Letter to the Romans*. Supplements to Novum Testamentum 101. Brill, 2002.

Part Seven: Daniel — Substitutional Divergence

Phase Preface

This volume presents Phase 2F of the MT/LXX/DSS Textual Harmony Project, focusing on the book of Daniel — the most textually complex book in the entire Hebrew Bible canon, and the only book for which the church deliberately replaced the Septuagint translation with a later revision before the Old Greek tradition was even a century old.

Daniel stands apart from every other book examined in this project in four ways that make it uniquely challenging:

First, Daniel is bilingual. The book is written partly in Hebrew (1:1–2:4a; 8:1–12:13) and partly in Aramaic (2:4b–7:28). This bilingual character — with no clear theological or narrative rationale for the language switches — has generated extensive scholarly debate about the book's compositional history and is without parallel in the Hebrew Bible canon.

Second, the Old Greek (LXX) of Daniel was so different from the proto-Masoretic Hebrew/Aramaic text that the church replaced it with the revision made by **Theodotion** (fl. c. 180 C.E.) in virtually all Christian manuscripts by the third century C.E. The original LXX Daniel survives in only two Greek manuscripts — Codex Chisianus (Codex 88) and a Syriac translation (the Syro-Hexapla) — and in the Göttingen Septuagint edition. This is unique in the history of the LXX: in every other book, the Old Greek remained the church's Bible; in Daniel, Theodotion displaced it entirely.

Third, the LXX of Daniel contains three substantial additions absent from the MT/Aramaic text: - **The Prayer of Azariah** (inserted into MT Daniel 3, between verses 23 and 24) - **The Song of the Three Young Men** (inserted into MT Daniel 3, continuing after the Prayer of Azariah) - **Susanna** (a complete narrative, placed before MT Daniel 1 in some manuscripts, after chapter 12 in others) - **Bel and the Dragon** (two narrative episodes, placed after MT Daniel 12)

These additions raise the deuterocanon question directly: they are canonical in Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christianity, deuterocanonical or apocryphal in Protestant and Jewish traditions, and entirely absent from the MT.

Fourth, the Dead Sea Scrolls preserve eight Daniel manuscripts — more than for most biblical books — but none of them contains the LXX additions. The DSS Daniel manuscripts are all in Hebrew or Aramaic, aligning with the MT base text, and contain no trace of the Prayer of Azariah, the Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, or Bel and the Dragon.

The Four Traditions for Daniel

The Masoretic Text (MT) / Aramaic Daniel

The MT/Aramaic Daniel is preserved in: - **Codex Leningradensis** (L, 1009 C.E.) and the **Aleppo Codex** (A, c. 920 C.E.) — the standard MT witnesses - The BHQ Daniel volume (edited by A. Geissen and others; Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2016)

The MT/Aramaic text contains 12 chapters with the following bilingual structure:

Chapters	Language	Content
1:1–2:4a	Hebrew	Prologue; the court scene; beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream
2:4b–7:28	Aramaic	The four kingdoms; the fiery furnace; Nebuchadnezzar's madness; Belshazzar's feast; the lion's den; the four beasts
8:1–12:13	Hebrew	The ram and goat; Gabriel's interpretation; the seventy weeks; the final vision

The Old Greek (OG / LXX) of Daniel

The Old Greek translation of Daniel is the most divergent of any LXX book from its Hebrew/Aramaic source. It was translated in the late second or early first century B.C.E. and contains:

1. **The 12 MT/Aramaic chapters** — but with extensive additions, expansions, and variations throughout
2. **The Prayer of Azariah** and **the Song of the Three Young Men** — inserted into chapter 3
3. **Susanna** — a detective narrative about Daniel as a young judge
4. **Bel and the Dragon** — two stories satirizing idol worship

The Old Greek survives in: - **Codex Chisianus** (MS 88) — an 11th-century manuscript; the primary surviving OG witness - The **Syro-Hexapla** — a Syriac translation of Origen's Hexapla column that preserves the OG Daniel with Origenic sigla - The Göttingen Septuagint critical edition: **Susanna, Daniel, Bel et Draco** (edited by Joseph Ziegler and Olivier Munnich, 1999)

Theodotion's Revision (Th / θ′)

Theodotion (fl. c. 180 C.E.) produced a thoroughgoing revision of the Old Greek toward the Hebrew/Aramaic text. His revision of Daniel was so much closer to the MT/Aramaic — and so much more readable — that the church adopted it in place of the OG by the late second or early third century C.E. Origen (c. 185–254 C.E.) already knew the Theodotion Daniel as the standard Greek text.

Theodotion's Daniel: - Follows the MT/Aramaic closely, including the bilingual structure - Retains the three OG additions (Prayer of Azariah, Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon) but often in forms closer to the OG than to a fresh translation - Was used by the NT authors — several apparent NT allusions to Daniel follow the Theodotion form

The NT's use of Theodotion Daniel (rather than the OG) is significant: it means that in some NT passages, what appears to be a "LXX quotation" is actually Theodotion. The Book of Revelation's allusions to Daniel are particularly dependent on Theodotion.

The Dead Sea Scrolls of Daniel

Eight Daniel manuscripts were found at Qumran:

Signum	Location	Content	Character
1QDan^a (1Q71)	Cave 1	Dan 1:10–17; 2:2–6	MT-aligned
1QDan^b (1Q72)	Cave 1	Dan 3:22–30	MT-aligned
4QDan^a (4Q112)	Cave 4	Dan 1–7 (extensive)	MT-aligned
4QDan^b (4Q113)	Cave 4	Dan 5–7; 8	MT-aligned
4QDan^c (4Q114)	Cave 4	Dan 10–12	MT-aligned
4QDan^d (4Q115)	Cave 4	Dan 4; 7	MT-aligned
4QDan^e (4Q116)	Cave 4	Dan 9–10	MT-aligned
pap6QDan (6Q7)	Cave 6	Dan 8; 10–11	MT-aligned

All eight DSS Daniel manuscripts: 1. Follow the MT/Aramaic bilingual structure 2. Contain none of the LXX additions (no Prayer of Azariah, no Susanna, no Bel and the Dragon) 3. Preserve the same 12-chapter structure as the MT 4. Show the language switches between Hebrew and Aramaic at the same points as the MT

Critical edition: DJD XVI (P.W. Skehan, E. Ulrich, J. Sanderson, et al., 2000).

Part One: The Bilingual Structure and Its Significance

The Language Switches in Daniel

The most distinctive textual feature of Daniel is its bilingualism. The book switches languages **twice**:

1. **Hebrew → Aramaic** at 2:4a/4b: The Chaldeans begin to speak to the king in Aramaic, and from that point the narrative continues in Aramaic through chapter 7.

2. **Aramaic → Hebrew** at 8:1: The vision of the ram and the goat is narrated in Hebrew, and the book remains in Hebrew through its conclusion at 12:13.

The textual evidence: All DSS manuscripts, the MT, and the Theodotion version preserve the language switches at exactly the same points. The Old Greek, working from a Semitic source, does not reflect the bilingual character in Greek — both Hebrew and Aramaic portions become Greek.

Scholarly debate on the language switches:

Position 1 — Canonical unity with compositional history (Collins, Goldingay): The bilingual structure reflects the book's compositional history. The Aramaic chapters (2–7) represent an earlier collection of court tales that circulated independently; they were incorporated into a Hebrew framework (chapters 1 and 8–12) by the final editor. The language switches are seams of composition rather than deliberate literary devices.

Position 2 — Literary intentionality (Lenglet, Steinmann): The bilingual structure is deliberate and chiastic. The Aramaic chapters (2–7) form a chiasm: A (ch.2: four kingdoms), B (ch.3: fiery furnace), C (ch.4: Nebuchadnezzar's madness), C' (ch.5: Belshazzar's feast), B' (ch.6: lion's den), A' (ch.7: four beasts). The Hebrew chapters frame this Aramaic center.

Position 3 — Scribal accident (Torrey): The language switch at 2:4b began as a marginal note ("*In Aramaic*") that was subsequently incorporated into the text, and the remainder of the Aramaic section followed from this scribal accident. This view has few current adherents.

Part Two: The OG vs. Theodotion in the Narrative Chapters

Daniel 4 — Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Great Tree

Chapter 4 is where the OG diverges most dramatically from both the MT/Aramaic and the Theodotion version. The OG is substantially longer and presents a significantly different narrative framework.

MT/Aramaic (ASV) — Daniel 4:1–3 (= OG 4:1; Th 4:1): Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied unto you. It hath seemed good unto me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God hath wrought toward me.

How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

OG (Brenton, from Codex 88) — Daniel 4:1: In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he said: I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and prosperous in my palace. And I saw a vision, and it terrified me…

Theodotion (Brenton) — Daniel 4:1–3: Nabouchodonosor the king, to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied to you. It seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders that the most high God has wrought with me. How great are his signs, and how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his power to all generations.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Major]** The OG of Daniel 4 begins with a specific date (*"the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign"*) absent from the MT/Aramaic and Theodotion. The MT/Aramaic begins immediately with the royal proclamation; the OG provides a narrative introduction with a date and setting that are not in the MT. - **[ORDER]** The OG presents the events of chapter 4 in a different narrative order from the MT. The MT/Aramaic follows the structure: royal proclamation → dream → Daniel interprets → fulfillment (Nebuchadnezzar's madness) → restoration and doxology. The OG has a substantially different internal arrangement. - **[ADD in OG]** The OG of chapter 4 is approximately **one-third longer** than the MT/Aramaic. The OG contains extended speeches, additional prayers, and narrative elaborations absent from the MT. This is the opposite of the Jeremiah situation (where the LXX is shorter than the MT); in Daniel 4, the OG is *longer* than the MT.

Daniel 5:1–6 — Belshazzar's Feast

MT/Aramaic (ASV): Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, might drink therefrom.

Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, drank from them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him; and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

OG: The OG of chapter 5 is considerably shorter than the MT, lacking several elaborative phrases.

Theodotion (Brenton): Baltasar the king made a great supper for his thousand nobles, and before the thousand was the wine. And Baltasar drinking commanded to bring the vessels of

gold and silver, which Nabouchodonosor his father had brought out from the temple in Jerusalem; that the king and his nobles, and his mistresses and his concubines, should drink out of them.

Then were brought the golden and silver vessels which had been taken out of the temple of God in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, and his mistresses and concubines, drank out of them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of iron, and of wood, and of stone.

In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote in front of the lamp on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the knuckles of the hand that wrote. And the king's countenance was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him; and the joints of his loins were relaxed, and his knees struck against each other.

DSS (4QDan^a): The scroll preserves portions of Daniel 5. It agrees substantially with the MT/Aramaic at the preserved points.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** The Theodotion follows the MT/Aramaic closely in this passage — demonstrating its revisory character: the Theodotion translator corrected the OG toward the MT. - **[VAR]** MT: *"the joints of his loins were loosed"* (*qatrê horṣêh mitparsqîn*) — Theodotion: *"the joints of his loins were relaxed."* The Aramaic image of physical terror (the king's body literally coming apart at the joints) is preserved in both.

Daniel 6:1 — The Number of Satraps

MT/Aramaic (ASV): It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps, who should be throughout the whole kingdom.

OG: And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being sixty-two years old. And it pleased him, and he appointed over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps…

Theodotion: And it pleased Darius, and he appointed over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes…

DSS (4QDan^b): Partially preserved; agrees with MT/Aramaic at this point.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** The OG adds Darius's age (*"sixty-two years old"*) at 6:1 — a detail from MT 5:31. The OG seems to have combined these notices. The MT keeps them separate; Theodotion follows the MT's arrangement. - **[ADD in OG]** The OG of chapter 6 contains several narrative elaborations absent from both the MT and Theodotion, including expanded descriptions of Daniel's accusers and the king's distress.

Part Three: The Additions — Susanna, Prayer of Azariah, Song of the Three Young Men, and Bel and the Dragon

Overview

The three addition complexes in the Greek Daniel tradition require separate treatment because they raise both textual-critical and canonical questions simultaneously. The term *"additions"* is used here descriptively, without prejudging whether they were composed in Greek or translated from a Semitic original, and without prejudging their canonical status.

Addition One: The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men

Location in the Greek tradition: Inserted between MT Daniel 3:23 (the three young men are thrown into the furnace) and 3:24 (the king is astonished to see four men in the furnace).

MT Daniel 3:23–24 (ASV): And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste; he spake and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

In the MT, this transition is abrupt: the men are thrown in; immediately the king is astonished to see four men walking unharmed. The LXX additions expand the interior of the furnace narrative.

The Prayer of Azariah (= Shadrach / Hananiah):

Azariah is the Hebrew name of Abednego (see Dan 1:7). The prayer placed in his mouth in the furnace is a national confession of sin and a plea for deliverance — closely related in genre to Nehemiah 9, Ezra 9, and Daniel 9 (MT).

The prayer begins (Brenton): *And Azarias stood up, and prayed on this manner; and opening his mouth in the midst of the fire said: Blessed art thou, O Lord God of our fathers: and thy name is worthy of praise, and glorious for ever: for thou art just in all things that thou hast done to us.*

The prayer confesses Israel's sin (*"for we have sinned in all things, and done unjustly, departing from thee"*), acknowledges the justice of the current suffering, and appeals to God's faithfulness to the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Song of the Three Young Men:

Following a prose transition that describes a royal servant stoking the furnace (and an angel descending to protect the three), the Song of the Three Young Men is a doxological hymn calling on all creation to bless God — structurally related to Psalm 148 and to the Benedicite (*"O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord"*) of the Christian liturgical tradition.

The Song begins: *Then the three, as out of one mouth, praised, glorified, and blessed God in the furnace, saying: Blessed art thou, O Lord God of our fathers: and to be praised and highly exalted*

for ever. And blessed is thy holy and glorious name: and to be highly praised and highly exalted for ever.

DSS Evidence for the Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Young Men:

No Qumran manuscript contains the Prayer of Azariah or the Song of the Three Young Men. All eight DSS Daniel manuscripts go directly from the equivalent of MT 3:23 to MT 3:24 without any addition. This absence does not prove the additions are secondary — absence of evidence is not evidence of absence — but it means the DSS provide no positive support for the Semitic-original theory.

The question of original language:

Were the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men originally composed in Hebrew or Aramaic and translated into Greek? Or were they composed in Greek?

Evidence for a Semitic original: - The Greek contains Semitisms (Semitic idioms underlying the Greek) detectable by analysis - Carey Moore (*Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah: The Additions*, Anchor Bible 44, 1977) argues for a Hebrew Vorlage based on stylistic analysis - The prayer's content and theology are thoroughly Jewish and consistent with Second Temple Hebrew prayer literature

Evidence for Greek composition: - No Hebrew or Aramaic manuscript of these additions has been found — including at Qumran - The additions integrate smoothly with the Greek narrative context - Some scholars (Collins) remain agnostic, noting the evidence is insufficient to determine the language of composition

Current consensus (Harrington, Collins): The additions were most likely composed in Hebrew or Aramaic and translated into Greek, but certainty is not possible without Semitic manuscripts.

Addition Two: Susanna

Location: In most Greek manuscripts, Susanna appears **before** Daniel 1 as a kind of prologue establishing Daniel's wisdom. In the Theodotion version, it appears **after** Daniel 12 as an appendix. In Origen's Hexapla it appeared after chapter 12. The difference in placement between the OG and Theodotion traditions is itself significant.

The Narrative:

Susanna is a wealthy Jewish woman in Babylon, wife of the respected Joakim. Two elders of the Jewish community lust after her and attempt to coerce her into sexual relations. She refuses; they falsely accuse her of adultery with a young man. She is condemned to death. The young Daniel, filled with wisdom, intervenes: he cross-examines the two elders separately, asking each under which tree they witnessed the alleged act. They give contradictory answers (one says "a mastic tree," the other "an oak tree"). Their false testimony is exposed, they are executed under the lex talionis, and Susanna is vindicated.

OG vs. Theodotion of Susanna:

The OG and Theodotion versions of Susanna differ substantially — more so than in any other addition. The OG is shorter; Theodotion is longer and more dramatic. Key differences:

- **OG**: Susanna's beauty is not described; she prays silently before Daniel intervenes; the narrative is more compressed
- **Theodotion**: Susanna's beauty is explicitly described (*"very delicate and beautiful"*); her prayer is given in full; the dramatic cross-examination is more detailed

DSS Evidence for Susanna:

No Qumran manuscript contains Susanna. The DSS evidence for Susanna is entirely absent.

The question of original language:

The Semitic-original question is more complex for Susanna than for the Prayer of Azariah: - Julius Africanus (c. 160–240 C.E.) already raised the question, arguing to Origen that the wordplay on trees (*schinos/schizō*, mastic/split; *prinos/pristhai*, oak/saw) works in Greek but not in Hebrew or Aramaic. If the original was in Hebrew or Aramaic, the wordplay would be different or lost. - Origen acknowledged the wordplay argument but maintained the story's canonical authority. - Carey Moore argues that the wordplay could have been introduced by the Greek translator from a Semitic original without the pun. - Louis Hartman argues the wordplay is constitutive of the narrative's conclusion (it is the *mechanism* of the vindication) and therefore Greek composition is more likely.

Current scholarly assessment (Collins, DiLella): The wordplay argument is the strongest internal evidence against a Semitic original for Susanna. Most scholars remain uncertain but acknowledge that Greek composition is a genuine possibility — unlike the Prayer of Azariah, where the evidence slightly favors a Semitic original.

Addition Three: Bel and the Dragon

Location: Appended after Daniel 12 (MT chapter 12) in all Greek manuscript traditions.

The Two Episodes:

Bel: The Persian king Cyrus confronts Daniel about his refusal to worship the idol Bel. The king asks why Daniel does not worship, since Bel is clearly a living god who consumes great quantities of food each day. Daniel challenges this: he spreads ashes on the floor of Bel's temple at night. In the morning, footprints are visible in the ash — those of the priests and their families who secretly ate the offerings. The idol is exposed as a fraud; the priests are executed.

The Dragon: Cyrus points to a living serpent worshiped as a god and challenges Daniel to deny that *this* is a living deity. Daniel feeds the dragon a compound of pitch, fat, and hair, causing it to burst. The Babylonians protest; Daniel is thrown into the lion's den (a second lion's den narrative, distinct from Daniel 6). The prophet Habakkuk is supernaturally transported from Judea to Babylon (carried by an angel holding him by his hair) to bring Daniel food. Daniel is delivered; his accusers are devoured by the lions.

OG and Theodotion of Bel and the Dragon:

The OG and Theodotion differ significantly in attribution. The OG superscription reads: *"From the prophecy of Habakkuk the son of Joshua of the tribe of Levi."* The Theodotion superscription reads: *"From the prophecy of Daniel."*

This is a fundamental difference in authorial attribution. The OG presents Bel and the Dragon as a prophecy of Habakkuk; Theodotion (followed by virtually all subsequent Christian tradition) presents it as part of Daniel.

DSS Evidence for Bel and the Dragon:

No Qumran manuscript contains Bel and the Dragon. The DSS evidence is entirely absent.

The question of original language:

Unlike Susanna, Bel and the Dragon contains no wordplay that specifically requires Greek. Semitic originals have been proposed by multiple scholars. A Hebrew fragment (4Q551) found at Qumran has sometimes been associated with Bel and the Dragon traditions, though its identification is disputed.

Part Four: The Seventy Weeks — Daniel 9:24–27

The Seventy Weeks prophecy is the most extensively discussed passage in Daniel for both Jewish and Christian interpretation, and the passage where the MT, OG, and Theodotion show the most significant verbal variants with direct theological consequences.

MT/Aramaic (ASV) — Daniel 9:24–27: Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.

Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto **the anointed one, the prince** (*māshîaḥ nâgîd*), shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troubled times.

And after the threescore and two weeks shall **the anointed one** (*māshîaḥ*) be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined.

And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.

OG — Daniel 9:24–27: The Old Greek of this passage differs substantially from the MT at several points — most significantly at 9:26:

And after the sixty-two weeks, ***the anointing and the judgment*** *shall be destroyed, and there shall be none; and he shall destroy the city and the sanctuary with the leader who is coming.*

Theodotion (Brenton) — Daniel 9:24–27: Seventy weeks have been determined upon thy people, and upon the holy city, for sin to be ended, and to seal up transgressions, and to blot out the iniquities, and to make atonement for iniquities, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal the vision and the prophet, and to anoint the Most Holy.

And thou shalt know and understand, that from the going forth of the command for the answer and for the building of Jerusalem, until **Christ the prince** (*Christou archon*), shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks…

And after the sixty-two weeks, **the anointing shall be destroyed, and there is no judgment in him**: and he shall destroy the city and the sanctuary with the prince that is coming.

4QDan^a (DSS): The fragments of Daniel 9 in the DSS are too small at this point to clearly adjudicate between traditions, but what is preserved aligns with the MT/Aramaic base text.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR — Major]** MT: *"the anointed one, the prince"* (*māshîaḥ nâgîd*) — Theodotion: *"Christ the prince"* (*Christou archon*). Theodotion renders the Hebrew *māshîaḥ* as *Christos* — the Greek equivalent — rather than transliterating it (as the OG sometimes does) or rendering it descriptively. This means that in the Theodotion version, Daniel 9:25 explicitly reads *"Christ the prince"* — a reading that Christian interpreters from Hippolytus onward identified as a messianic prophecy of Jesus with a specific timetable.

- **[VAR]** MT 9:26: *"the anointed one shall be cut off, and shall have nothing"* (*wĕyikkârêth māshîaḥ wĕ'êyn lô*) — OG: *"the anointing and the judgment shall be destroyed"* — Theodotion: *"the anointing shall be destroyed, and there is no judgment in him."* These three renderings represent meaningfully different texts. The MT's *"and shall have nothing"* (*wĕ'êyn lô*, literally "and nothing to him") is interpreted by Christian exegetes as the Messiah dying without earthly possessions or defenders — a reading applied to the crucifixion of Jesus.

- **[THEOL]** The Seventy Weeks prophecy has been interpreted in three primary ways:

    1. **Historical (Maccabean crisis):** The seventy weeks refer to the period from the Babylonian exile to the Maccabean period (167–164 B.C.E.), with *"the anointed one who is cut off"* being the high priest Onias III, murdered in 171 B.C.E. This is the dominant critical-scholarly reading (Collins, Goldingay).

    2. **Messianic (traditional Christian):** The seventy weeks provide a timetable from Artaxerxes's decree to restore Jerusalem (445 B.C.E. or 458 B.C.E.) to the death of Jesus. The Theodotion's explicit *"Christ the prince"* supports this reading.

    3. **Eschatological (futurist):** The seventieth week is separated from the other sixty-nine by an unspecified gap and refers to a future tribulation period. This is the reading dominant in dispensational Protestant interpretation.

Part Five: The Vision Chapters — Daniel 7 and Daniel 12

Daniel 7:13–14 — The Son of Man

MT/Aramaic (ASV): I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one **like unto a son of man** (*kĕbar ’ĕnâsh*), and he came even to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

OG: And behold, as it were the Son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven, and he came as far as the Ancient of days and was presented before him.

Theodotion (Brenton): And behold, one as the Son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven, and he came on to the Ancient of days, and was brought near before him. And to him was given the dominion, and the honour, and the kingdom; and all peoples, tribes, and languages shall serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed.

NT Usage: - Matthew 24:30: *“they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”* — following Theodotion - Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62: Jesus before the Sanhedrin — *“ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven”* — Theodotion - Revelation 1:7: *“Behold, he cometh with the clouds”* — Theodotion/Daniel 7:13

4QDan^a (DSS): Preserves portions of Daniel 7. The text agrees with the MT/Aramaic at the preserved points.

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** The Aramaic *kĕbar ’ĕnâsh* (“like a son of man / like a human being”) is a simile: the visionary figure is *like* a human being — contrasting with the beasts of the preceding visions. Both the OG and Theodotion render this as *“like a son of man”* (*hōs huios anthrōpou*), preserving the simile. The NT’s application of *“the Son of man”* as a title for Jesus draws on this Danielic background. - **[NT uses Theodotion]** The NT citations of Daniel 7:13 follow the Theodotion version rather than the OG — confirming that Theodotion’s Daniel was in use by NT authors even before Theodotion’s revision was officially adopted by the church. This is the strongest NT evidence for Theodotion Daniel predating its official adoption.

Daniel 12:1–3 — The Resurrection

MT/Aramaic (ASV): And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they

that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

OG: At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince, who stands over the children of thy people: for it is a time of affliction, such as has not come to pass from the time that there was a nation upon the earth until that time. At that time all thy people shall be saved, even those found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the breadth of the earth shall arise, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and many of the righteous as the stars for ever and ever.

Theodotion (Brenton): And at that time Michael the great prince shall stand up, who stands over the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of tribulation, such tribulation as has not been from the time that there was a nation on the earth until that time: at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that is written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting reproach. And the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and some of the many righteous as the stars for ever and ever.

4QDan^c (DSS): Preserves Daniel 12:1–2. Agrees substantially with the MT.

NT Usage: - John 5:28–29: *"all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment"* — clearly echoing Daniel 12:2 - Matthew 13:43: *"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"* — echoing Daniel 12:3

Variance Notes: - **[VAR]** MT: *"many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth"* (*wĕrabbîm*) — OG: *"many of them that sleep in the breadth of the earth."* The OG reads *wĕrabbîm* differently — either a different Hebrew Vorlage or a translator's interpretation of *'ăphar* (dust) as *plateia* (breadth/plain). - **[THEOL]** Daniel 12:2 is the clearest OT statement of **bodily resurrection with two outcomes** — some to everlasting life, some to everlasting contempt. It is the primary OT text for NT resurrection theology. The MT, OG, and Theodotion all agree on the substance of the two-outcome resurrection; the verbal variants are minor and do not affect the theological substance. - **[DSS]** 4QDan^c agrees with the MT at 12:1–2, confirming the standard text.

Appendix A: Summary of Daniel Divergences

Passage	MT/Aramaic	OG (LXX)	Theodotion	DSS	NT	Type
Dan 3:23–24	Abrupt transition	Adds **Prayer of Azariah** + **Song of Three Young Men**	Retains additions	Absent	—	[ADD in OG]

Passage	MT/Aramaic	OG (LXX)	Theodotion	DSS	NT	Type
Dan 4	12-chapter structure	~1/3 longer; different narrative frame	Follows MT	MT-aligned	—	[ADD + ORDER in OG]
Dan 6:1	Age of Darius not given	Adds age of Darius (62 years)	Follows MT	MT-aligned	—	[ADD in OG]
Dan 7:13	*kĕbar ʾĕnâsh* (like a son of man)	*hōs huios anthrōpou*	Same	MT-aligned	Matt 24:30; 26:64 — **follows Theodotion**	[VAR — minor]
Dan 9:25	*māshîaḥ nâgîd* (anointed one, prince)	*chrisma* (anointing)	***Christou archon*** (Christ the prince)	MT-aligned	—	[VAR — Theodotion renders *Christos* explicitly]
Dan 9:26	Anointed one "cut off, has nothing"	"anointing and judgment destroyed"	"anointing destroyed, no judgment in him"	MT-aligned	—	[VAR — three different renderings]
Dan 12	Ends at 12:13	Adds **Bel and Dragon**	Adds **Bel and Dragon**	Ends at 12:13	—	[ADD in OG and Th]
Before Dan 1 / after Dan 12	Absent	**Susanna**	**Susanna**	Absent	—	[ADD in OG and Th]
Bilingual structure	Hebrew/ Aramaic switches at 2:4b and 8:1	Not visible (all Greek)	Not visible (all Greek)	Confirmed same switch points	—	[STRUCTURAL]

Appendix B: The Canonical Status of the Additions

The canonical status of the three addition complexes (Prayer of Azariah / Song of the Three Young Men; Susanna; Bel and the Dragon) is the primary point on which Christian traditions diverge:

Roman Catholic: The additions are **deuterocanonical** — part of the canonical scriptures, but distinguished from the protocanonical books. The Council of Trent (1546) formally defined the deuterocanonical books as canonical. The additions appear in the Catholic Bible as part of Daniel.

Eastern Orthodox: The additions are **canonical** — accepted without the formal distinction of protocanonical vs. deuterocanonical. Orthodox Christianity uses the LXX (with the additions) as its Old Testament.

Protestant: The additions are **apocryphal** — valuable for edification but not canonical scripture. The Reformers followed Jerome's principle of *Hebraica veritas* (the Hebrew truth) — what is not in the Hebrew Bible is not canonical. The Westminster Confession (1647) explicitly lists the books of the Apocrypha as not part of the canon.

Judaism: The additions are not canonical. Rabbinic Judaism accepts only the Hebrew/Aramaic 12-chapter Daniel.

The DSS evidence: The complete absence of the additions from all eight Qumran Daniel manuscripts does not prove the additions were not written by Jews — they may have been composed after the Qumran period or in communities not represented at Qumran. But the DSS evidence does confirm that the 12-chapter Hebrew/Aramaic Daniel was the established text in Second Temple Judaism, and no Second Temple Jewish community at Qumran used the additions as part of their Daniel text.

Appendix C: Daniel and the New Testament — An Accounting

Daniel is the OT book most extensively underlying the Book of Revelation. The following are the major NT citations:

NT Reference	Daniel	Tradition	Content
Matt 24:15	9:27; 11:31; 12:11	MT/Th	"Abomination of desolation"
Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 14:62	7:13	**Theodotion**	"Son of man on clouds"
John 5:28–29	12:2	MT/Th	Two-outcome resurrection
1 Cor 6:2	7:22	MT/Th	Saints judging the world

NT Reference	Daniel	Tradition	Content
Rev 1:7	7:13	**Theodotion**	"Coming with clouds"
Rev 1:13–15	7:13; 10:5–6	**Theodotion**	Son of man vision
Rev 4:7	7:4–7	MT/Th	Four beasts
Rev 12–13	7; 8; 11	**Theodotion** throughout	Apocalyptic framework
Rev 19:20	7:11	MT/Th	Beast destroyed

Finding: The NT uses Theodotion Daniel more than the OG Daniel — confirming that Theodotion's revision was in use before its official adoption by the church, and that the NT authors had access to a proto-Theodotion text type.

Appendix D: Essential Scholarship for Daniel

Primary Text Editions

- Geissen, A., et al., eds. *Daniel*. Biblia Hebraica Quinta 14. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2016. [MT/Aramaic BHQ]
- Ziegler, J., and O. Munnich, eds. *Susanna, Daniel, Bel et Draco*. Septuaginta XVI/2. 2nd ed. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999. [OG and Theodotion critical edition — Göttingen]
- Skehan, P.W., E. Ulrich, J. Sanderson, et al. *Qumran Cave 4: X, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XIV. Oxford University Press, 1995. [Includes Cave 4 Daniel]
- Ulrich, E., et al. *Qumran Cave 4: XI, Psalms to Chronicles*. Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XVI. Oxford University Press, 2000. [4QDan^{a-e}]

English Translations

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