

Textual Criticism October 2015

Emanuel Tov

1. Ancient texts of the Hebrew Bible (MT medieval texts, Dead Sea Scrolls, LXX, Peshitta, Targumim, Vulgate). Modern editions of these texts.
2. Ancient versions need to be retroverted to Hebrew. MT is complete, and usually is a good text, often the best text. In the Torah it is the best text.
3. Evaluation of readings: task of scholars when faced with differences between ancient witnesses. This is an ongoing task reflected in modern commentaries and editions.
4. Subjectivity of textual evaluation, and difficulties faced. Scholars will never agree in their textual evaluations.
5. Task of modern translators. Follow guidelines, critical editions or follow MT?
6. Some examples of differences between the textual witnesses of Hebrew and translated Scripture.

1 Sam 17:4

MT (A champion of the Philistine forces stepped forward; his name was Goliath of Gath), and he was **six** cubits and a span tall. גְּבוּהוֹ שֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת וְחֵט.

4QSam^a = LXX (NETS): (And a mighty man came out from the ranks of the allophyles; Goliath was his name, from Geth;) his height was **four** cubits and a span.

Gen 2:2 וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי (מִלְאֲכָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה)

(= 𐤏^O Ps-J N 𐤎) <preferable>

On *the seventh* day God completed (the work that He had been doing) = most translations

וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי (מִלְאֲכָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה)

= 𐤏 καὶ συνετέλεσεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἕκτῃ = S

On *the sixth* day God completed (the work that He had been doing) = REB

1 Sam 1:23 וַיִּזְכֹּר יְהוָה אֶת דְּבָרֹוֹ (= 𐤏 𐤎)

May the LORD fulfill *His* word.

4QSam^a [אֲךָ יִקָּם יְהוָה הַיּוֹצֵא מִפִּיךָ] (= 𐤏)

[May the Lo]RD [fulfill] *that which* comes out of your mouth

- Gen 4:8 ז ויהי בהיותם בשדה א ויאמר קין אל הבל אחיו
 Cain said to his brother Abel. And when they were
 in the field (= \mathcal{T}^O). *NJPS*: "Cain said to his brother
 Abel ... and when they were"
 ז ויאמר קין אל הבל אחיו נלכה השדה ויהי בהיותם בשדה
 ($\approx \mathcal{G} \mathcal{T}^{Ps-J N \mathcal{S} \mathcal{V}}$)
 Cain said to his brother Abel: "*Let us go out to the field.*"
 And when they were in the field = *NRSV*
- 1 Sam 13:1 ז בן שנה שאול במלכו ושתי שנים מלך על ישראל (= \mathcal{V} ; $\approx \mathcal{T}$)
 literally: Saul was *one year* old when he began to reign;
 and he reigned *two years* over Israel.
NRSV Saul was ... years old when he began to reign; and he
 reigned ... *and two years* over Israel.
- Gen 10:4 ז ובני יון אלישה ותרשיש וכתים ודדנים (= $\mathcal{T}^O Ps-J N \mathcal{V}$ and \mathcal{V}
 in 1 Chr 1:7)
 The descendants of Javan: Elishah and Tarshish, the
 Kittim and *Dodanim*.
- 1 Chr 1:7 ז ובני יון אלישה ותרשישה וכתים ורודנים (= ז and \mathcal{G}
 $\rho\acute{o}\delta\iota\omicron\tau$ in Gen 10:4)
 The descendants of Javan: Elishah and Tarshishah, the
 Kittim and *Rodanim*.