

Messiah in the Tanach, 02

Versions of the Tanach

- Judean (from before 12th cent BCE)
- Samaritan (from 8th cent BCE)
- Babylonian (From 6th cent BCE)
- Essene (Qumran, from 1st cent BCE)

Hebrew scribes (copyists)

- Kings and priests (from 10th cent BCE)
- Scribes (51x, from 10th cent BCE)
- Sons of the prophets (from 8th cent BCE)
- Synagogues (from 6th century BCE)
- Masoretes (from 7th century CE)

Other language versions

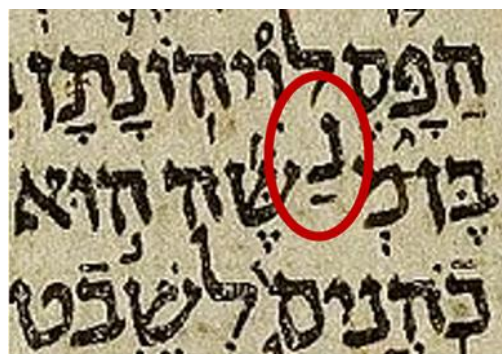
- Syrian Aramaic (from 7th cent BCE)
- Judean Aramaic (from 5th cent BCE)
- Common Greek (from 3rd cent BCE)
- Classical Latin (from 5th cent CE)

Oldest extant copies

- Inscriptions (from 10th century BCE)
- Dead Sea Scrolls (from 2nd century BCE to 1st century CE)
- Greek codices (from 4th century CE)
- Aramaic Targums (from medieval CE)
- Masoretic scrolls (from 10th century CE)
- Critical editions (20th century CE)

In this module

- Christian=Jewish, not Gentile 'church'.
- MT (Masoretic text) from 10th cent. CE.
- 1st task = establish the (original) text.
- Greek LXX 1000 years before the MT.
- All versions have variant 'readings'.
- MT still overall the best Tanakh text.
- MT post-Christian, anti-Christian bias.
- MT treats prophetic texts as historic.



Example of a Masoretic Text variant

¹ Jonathan, the son of Gershom son of Manasseh, and his descendants served as priests.

Judges 18:30 *Tanach* (JPS 1985)

- Manasseh: In some manuscripts = Moses.
- MT inserts a raised nun ('n'). Rabbis commented that it were unseemly for Moses to have an ungodly 'son'.

Numbers 24:7

Their boughs drip with moisture.

Their roots have abundant water.

Their king shall rise above Agag.

Their kingdom shall be exalted. NJPS

- Agag: All versions read 'Gog' = Ezekiel 38:3, an end-time (messianic) scenario. If Agag, then the king = David. If Gog, then the king = Messiah.

Numbers 24

⁹ They crouch, they lie down like a lion, like the king of beasts... (NJPS 1985)

- An allusion to Genesis 49:9-10, an apparent predictive prophecy.

¹¹ What this people will do ... in days to come. (NJPS 1985)

- Literally, 'in the end of days' (JPS 1917), the messianic age to come.

2 Samuel 23:1

The utterance of David son of Jesse,

The utterance of the man set on high,

The anointed of the God of Jacob,

The favorite of the songs of Israel. (NJPS 1985)

- 'Set on high' (MT, 'âl) = David.
- 'God raised up' (4QSama) = David?
- 'utterance ... about the man whom the Lord anointed' (LXX, epi, 'al) = messiah.

Psalms 72:5

¹ O God, endow ... the king's son with Your righteousness; ² that he may judge Your people rightly...

⁵ Let them fear You as long as the sun shines, ⁶ Let him be like rain...

- Let them: LXX reads, 'Let him fear...'
- Context: Singular 'he/him'.
- Context: Future: ¹¹ 'nations serve him.'

Isaiah 9:6 [Heb. 9:5]

⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; ... and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. NRSV

⁶ ... He has been named "The Mighty God is planning grace, The Eternal Father, a peaceable ruler." NJPS 1985

גִּבּוֹר	אֱלֹ	יֹעִיץ	פֶּלֶא	שְׁמוֹ	וַיִּקְרָא
Might	God-of	One-Giving-Counsel	Wonder	name-of-him	and-he-called
וּלְשָׁלוֹם	הַמְּשָׁרָה	לְהַמְרִיבָה	שָׁלוֹם:	שֶׁר-	אֲבִיעֶד
and-to-peace	the-government	to-increase-of	Peace	Prince-of	Father-Everlasting

- Paštâ: Disjunctive accent (= comma).
- Called: Assumed 'theophoric' names.
- The: Names take no definite article.
- Belief: No human child a divine Being.

⁷ ... Upon David's throne and kingdom,
That it may be firmly established
In justice and in equity

Now and evermore. Isaiah 9 NJPS 1985

³² You will ... bear a son.... He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David... 33 forever... Luke 1 *NRSVue*

Isaiah 9:6 [Greek Septuagint]

⁶ A child was born for us, a son also given to us... He is named Messenger of Great Counsel, for I will bring peace upon the rulers, ... upon the throne of David and his kingdom ... forevermore. *NETS*

- Named: Actor not identified.
- I will: Actor not certain.
- Forevermore: Messianic future.

Psalm 22:16 [Hebrew 22:17]

¹⁶ Dogs surround me;
a pack of evil ones closes in on me,
like lions [they maul] my hands and feet.

- Lions: MT 'as a lion' *ka-'arî*.
- [Maul]: Versions have 'pierced'.
- Nahal Hever: Discovered 1999, from AD 50-68, reads *k'rû* 'pierced'.

'Pierced my hands and feet'

- Probable original reading of Isa. 9:6.
- Is not cited as messianic in the NT.
- John 19:34 'soldiers pierced his side.'
- John 19:37 'Scripture says "They will look on him whom they have pierced"'.
• Same Gk verb used in LXX Zech. 12:10.
- 'My Hands and feet' (Psa. 22:16) ≈ "my hands and my feet' (Luke 24:39).

Conclusion

- Bible interpreters' first task remains to ascertain the original text.
- Post-Christian Masoretes rendered some possible predictions as historical.
- Masoretic Hebrew manuscripts date from circa the 10th century CE.
- Samaritan, Greek, Syriac, and Latin versions may preserve older texts.

<http://tanach.site>

