

## IV. BHS CRITICAL APPARATUS

**A. RELATIONSHIP OF THE TEXT TO MANUSCRIPTS.** The second Rabbinic Bible was published in Venice in 1524/25, only eight years after its predecessor. It was apparently based upon twelfth century or later manuscripts and was edited by Jacob ben Chayim. From the time of its publication until 1936 it was the virtual "textus receptus" for both Jews and Christians. (A Rabbinic Bible contains the Masoretic Text (with Masora), the Targums, and Rabbinic commentaries all on the same page.) The first two editions of BHK were based upon the Ben Chayim text; but with the publication of the third edition in 1936, a different source was used. Like the third edition of BHK, the BHS text is a reproduction of Codex Leningradensis, a medieval manuscript in the Tiberian tradition dating to about 1008 A.D. One man, Samuel ben Jacob, is claimed by its colophon to have written, pointed and provided the Masora for the manuscript. (A colophon is a short statement at the end of a manuscript which provides details about the Masoretes, the sources used, the date of its completion, or other information about the manuscript. A Codex is a manuscript with separate pages in book form as opposed to a scroll. While scrolls can still be found in synagogues, the codices began to replace the scrolls for popular use around the seventh or eighth century A.D.) The colophon of Codex Leningradensis also claims that the manuscript represents the Ben Asher tradition, a claim justified by recent research. The significance of Codex Leningradensis is that it is the oldest known

manuscript of the complete Hebrew Bible based upon the Ben Asher tradition. Codex Leningradensis is provided in BHS without significant alteration. The critical apparatus at the bottom of the pages in BHS indicates portions where other manuscripts or versions differ or where scholarly research brings the BHS text into question. The critical apparatus for different books of the Bible were compiled by different editors. The editor of each book is identified on the back of the title page of BHS.

**B. ASSOCIATING ENTRIES TO THE TEXT.** The critical apparatus is keyed to small raised letters of the English alphabet which appear within the text. A small letter immediately following a word indicates that the associated critical note applies to the preceding word only. A small letter may also appear under a maqqēḇ, in which case the note applies to the word up to the maqqēḇ. If the small letter immediately precedes a word, one of two situations is indicated. If the word is the first word of a verse and the small letter is not repeated in that verse, then the critical note applies to the entire verse. If the small letter is repeated, regardless of whether or not the word is the first word of the verse, then the critical note applies to all the text between the first and second instances of the same small letter.

The small letters start anew in sequence with "a" for each new verse (unless a note carries over to the following verse.) Thus there will be several a's, b's, c's, etc. on a single page. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the small letter in the apparatus follows the correct verse (indicated by boldface numbers in the apparatus) and the correct chapter (indicated by a boldface "Cp" and the chapter number in the apparatus.) Each individual note is separated from the subsequent note by a set of parallel vertical lines ( || ).

**C. TRANSLATING THE SYMBOLS.** Most of the symbols used in the critical apparatus are explained in BHS pp. XLIV-L. The more common of these are also included at the end of Rügler's *An English Key*. When citing sources, the apparatus will use a symbol which indicates a major tradition (called "versions", such as Septuagint, Samaritan Pentateuch, etc.) This may or may not be followed by superscript symbols which identify specific manuscripts. (If no version or manuscript is referred to, the note following is a suggestion by the editor of the critical apparatus for that book.) Unfortunately, not all the symbols used are explained in BHS and the same symbols may sometimes be used in different ways by different editors. Wonneberger's *Understanding BHS* can be consulted for a complete explanation of all symbols appearing in BHS. An efficient method of entering Wonneberger's work for this purpose is to turn first to the index of symbols on pp. 87-88.

The following is a list of a few of the more common symbols used but not explained in BHS which will usually suffice for the beginning student.

- a minus sign in the superscript of a source citation indicates that the note applies to the tradition cited *except for* those manuscripts listed after the minus sign.
- ? a question mark may indicate that the entry is a question or that the statement contained in the entry is uncertain. Note: the Latin "num" may also be used to indicate that the entry is a question.
- = the equal sign is used to explain or to offer conjecture about the derivation of a form or translation.
- || parallel vertical lines are used to separate entries.
- , ; commas or semicolons are used to separate the parts of an entry. (There is no apparent difference between comma and semicolon.)

- / the slash may indicate that the entry refers to two verses (whose numbers will be on either side of the slash), or it may indicate that the following is an abbreviated presentation of differing forms, or it may simply separate items in respective relationship.
- ° a superscript circle indicates that the preceding number is an ordinal (first, second, etc.) rather than a verse citation.
- ( ) parentheses are used to enclose:
  - citations relating to the edition quoted, or
  - abbreviated presentations of differing forms, or
  - explanatory notes, or
  - symbols for versions which bear the general, but not literal, meaning of the following note.

**NOTE:**

The symbols Ms or Mss always refer to *Hebrew* manuscripts.

**D. VALUE JUDGEMENTS IN TEXT CRITICISM.** In most cases, the BHS editors simply provide variant readings without an evaluation of the relative worth of the version or manuscript in which they appear. Of course, such a decision can be the work of a lifetime and may be subject to considerable controversy. Textual criticism involves the careful consideration of numerous issues which are beyond the scope of this guide. It never reduces to an uncritical acceptance of one reading over another simply because of the version in which it appears. Nevertheless, beginning students may benefit from the following list which, according to Würthwein, p. 112, indicates in descending value "roughly the order of their significance for textual criticism."

Masoretic Text  
 Samaritan Pentateuch  
 Septuagint  
 Aquila  
 Symmachus  
 Theodotion  
 Syriac  
 Targums  
 Vulgate  
 Old Latin  
 Sahidic  
 Coptic  
 Ethiopic  
 Arabic  
 Armenian

**E. TRANSLATING THE ABBREVIATIONS AND LATIN.** Rieger's *An English Key* is invaluable. If you do not have a command of Latin, you should have a copy of it beside you whenever you read BHS. For this reason, it has been included as an appendix to this guide. Simply look up the Latin words or abbreviations in the key to obtain the English translation. When looking up abbreviations, remember that they may or may not be listed in the proper alphabetical order of the entire word which they represent. For instance, the letter "c" is the abbreviation for "cum" (meaning "with".) It will be found not at the beginning of the C's, but near the end. The remaining portion of abbreviated words are shown in parenthesis.

The following is a list of a few words or abbreviations which are either not included in Rieger's key or which require further explanation. Wonneberger's *Understanding BHS* can be consulted for a complete discussion of the BHS critical apparatus.

1. *ast(eriscus)* and *ob(elus)* are included in Rieger's key but are simply translated as "asterisk" and "obelus" respectively. Beginning students may not find these translations sufficient and may wish to know that the asterisk and obelus were symbols used in Origen's Hexapla. The asterisk was the initial bracket for corrective additions from the Hebrew. The obelus was the initial bracket for corrective deletions when the Septuagint contained material lacking in the Hebrew. There was an additional symbol (called metobelus) to close the bracket for both asterisk and obelus, but it is not referred to in BHS. The Hexapla was the Old Testament in six parallel columns. The first column contained the Hebrew text. The second contained a transliteration of the Hebrew into Greek. The other columns contained The Greek Septuagint and three revisions of it. The work was enormous (over 6,000 pages) and probably was rarely, if ever, copied in its entirety. No authentic manuscript of the Hexaplaric Septuagint has survived. Nevertheless, the Hexapla is a major consideration in biblical criticism because of the numerous copies of column five, the Septuagint, which were made and because of the extensive reliance on them by early and medieval Christians. Because the asteriscus, obelus and metobelus were meaningless without the other columns, they were frequently omitted over time until eventually most manuscripts omitted them entirely. Using such manuscripts, it was not possible to determine which passages reflected the Hebrew text and which reflected the Septuagint. Today the term "hexaplaric" is used pejoratively by Biblical scholars.

2. *fut* = future

3. *hi* = hiphil

4. *hit* = hithpael

5. *ho* = hophal

6. *K* = k<sup>e</sup>tîb
7. *ni* = niphāl
8. *num* = indicates that the entry is a question
9. *ob* = (see "ast" - #1)
10. *pi* = piel
11. *pu* = pual
12. *Q* = q<sup>e</sup>rê
13. *Seb* = s<sup>e</sup>bîr (see III-C-1-g)
14. *Tiq Soph* = (tiqqune sopherim) means "scribal corrections" (see III-B-1-h)

## V. THE ACCENTS

**A. GENERAL.** There are two accentual systems in the Hebrew Bible. Psalms, Proverbs and most of Job constitute the "Three Books" of poetry. These books have their own system of accents which differs somewhat from that of the remaining "Twenty One Books." Accents serve three purposes. Primarily they are musical (or cantillation) marks, but they also indicate accentuation and semantic division. Paragraph V-D below discusses the musical values of the accents. This and the following two paragraphs discuss accentuation and semantic division. Although not properly accent marks, pasēq, maqqēp̄ and metheg are related to the accent system in differing ways. These marks are discussed in paragraphs II-C-1,2,3.

The accents are divided into two groups called "disjunctive" and "conjunctive". The disjunctive accents are usually on the last word of a phrase, clause, or other semantic unit. Note that semantic units (i.e. units of meaning) do not always coincide with syntactical units. Thus an 'atnah, for example, may occur in the middle of a clause, but usually signifies some discrete sense of meaning. (The word "unit" in the tables on the following pages refers to semantic units as distinguished from purely syntactical.) In general terms, the accents listed under "group 1" on the following pages divide the verse; the accents under "group 2" divide the two halves; the accents in "group 3" are subordinate to those in "group 2"; etc. As a general rule, only those accents in "group 1" and perhaps those in "group 2" should be taken into consideration in translation at the beginning or

## Signs and Versions

### Signs:

- + — it adds, they add
- > — is wanting in, is absent in
- \* — the form of the word is a probable conjecture

### Manuscripts and Versions:

- a* — Aquila's Greek translation of the OT
- Ⲁ — The Arabic version of the OT
- C — The Cairo Codex of the Hebrew Prophets
- Ⲛ — A reading of one or several Hebrew manuscripts from the Cairo Geniza
- Ed, Edd — One or several editions of the Hebrew OT
- Ⲅ — The Septuagint
- K — The Ketib
- L — The Leningrad Codex of the Hebrew OT
- Ⲍ — The Masoretic text of the OT
- Ms, Mss — One or several medieval manuscripts of the Hebrew OT
- Occ — An Occidental reading
- Or — An Oriental reading
- Q — The Qere
- Ⲓ — A reading of one or several Hebrew manuscripts from Qumran
- ⲛ — The Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch
- ⲛ<sup>T</sup> — The Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch
- σ' — Symmachus' Greek translation of the OT
- Ⲥ — The Syriac version of the OT
- Ⲯ — The Targum(s)
- θ — Theodotion's Greek translation of the OT
- Ⲫ — The Vulgate

### Books of the Old Testament:

Gn Ex Lv Nu Dt  
 Jos Jdc 1S 2S 1R 2R  
 Jes Jer Ez Hos Jo Am Ob Jon Mi Na Hab  
 Zeph Hag Sach Mal  
 Ps Hi Prv Ru Cant Qoh Thr Est Da Esr Neh  
 1Ch 2Ch

### Apocrypha/Deuterocanonicals and Pseudepigrapha:

Est apokr 1Makk Sir Jub

### Books of the New Testament:

Mt Mc Lc J Act  
 Rm 1Ko 2Ko G E Ph Kol 1Th 2Th 1T 2T Tt  
 Phm Hbr Jc 1P 2P 1J 2J 3J Jd  
 Apc

For all other symbols, consult Sigla et Compendia in the Prolegomena to Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.