

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

HEBREW, GREEK, AND JOSEPHAN READINGS
IN THE STORY OF NAHASH (1 SAMUEL 10–11):
BACKGROUND, COMMENTARY, AND ANALYSIS

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Introduction

The Book of Samuel is notoriously one of the most corrupted parts of the Masoretic Text (MT). By contrast, the Septuagint (LXX) of the same portion (known as 1–2 Reigns) has often been regarded as “the source of greatest value for the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible.”¹ There, it is said, the LXX contains an unusually high number of variants “superior” to MT. Of course, this has attracted much scholarship, and especially so since 1952 when fragments of four biblical scrolls covering portions of Samuel were found at Qumran (1QSam, 4QSam^{a-c}). One of them, 4QSam^a (4Q), is among the most extensively preserved of the entire site,² and it agrees to an impressive extent with readings of the LXX against MT. From its first publication,³ the scroll was characterized as a Septuagintal (“Egyptian”) text type, giving birth in part to the theory of “local texts.” Indeed, 4Q witnesses readings in a Hebrew manuscript that hitherto had only been seen in the LXX (and its daughter translations) and corroborated by Josephus’ *Antiquities of the Jews* (*Ant.*). But, being dated to ca. 50 BCE, the text preserved in this manuscript was certainly older than Josephus and plausibly older than LXX.⁴ For these reasons and others, 4Q has been called “one of the most important and most instructive biblical manuscripts” found to date.⁵

One intersection of readings found only in the LXX, 4Q, and *Ant.* is an extended introduction to the scene that begins MT chapter 11, the so-called “Story of Nahash.” Yet, while the three longer witnesses all provide details not found in MT, they do not easily harmonize with one another. In appreciation of this fact, though 4Q was enlisted early on as a Septuagintal text,

¹ This trend was observed by Emanuel Tov, “The Methodology of Textual Criticism in Jewish Greek Scriptures, with Special Attention to the Problems in Samuel–Kings—The State of the Question,” in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 72 (Leiden; Atlanta: Brill; Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 496.

² Though still, it is fragmentary: “just under fifteen percent of the text of Samuel is extant” (*DJD XVII*, 3). Others estimate that only eight percent of the scroll itself (at a small variance with the length of MT Samuel) is extant (Edward D. Herbert, “4QSam^a and Its Relationship to the LXX: an Exploration in Stemmatological Analysis,” in *IX Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Cambridge, 1995*, ed. Bernard A. Taylor, Septuagint and Cognate Studies 45 (Atlanta: SBL, 1997), 38.

³ F. M. Cross, “A New Qumran Biblical Fragment Related to the Original Hebrew Underlying the Septuagint,” *BASOR* 132 (1953): 15–26.

⁴ 4Q was dated paleographically in F. M. Cross, “The Ammonite Oppression of the Tribes of Gad and Reuben: Missing Verses from 1 Samuel 11 Found in 4QSamuel^a,” in *The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Samuel*, edited by Emanuel Tov (Jerusalem: Academon, 1980), 105, and subsequently confirmed. The LXX 1–4 Reigns was likely first translated in the early second century BCE, though the earliest complete witness to this translation (Vaticanus) for the books of Samuel (1–2 Reigns) is fourth century CE Josephus’ *Antiquities* was published in 93/94 CE.

⁵ Eugene Ulrich, “The Samuel Scrolls,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Developmental Composition of the Bible*, Text of the Bible at Qumran (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 73.

that theory has been revised by its progenitors (now calling it a “Palestinian” type)⁶ and abandoned by others. Still, questions remain as to the manuscript’s relationship with LXX, MT, their common ancestry, and other possible text strands current in the Second Temple Period. As well, while Josephus’ reproduction of the biblical history often strays from MT, consensus has not been reached as to what source(s) he was reliant upon for other data, and for this, the textual tradition behind 4Q has entered the running. This paper, therefore, surveys the backgrounds of the text-critical task and of the witnesses at hand. Then, it examines the divergent readings between the witnesses in a commentary on this intersection, the Story of Nahash. Then finally, it analyzes the relationships of those witnesses overall.

Background

With the case of Samuel being as complicated as it is, an accurate analysis must be informed by the greater field of text criticism. Focus on only a handful of verses will quickly lose touch with the real literary and transmissional history of the book and corpus. To borrow the phrase, “literature is not mathematics.”⁷ Rather, context is necessary, and key assumptions underlay every critical exercise. Most important are one’s goal and one’s text theory. Then, specifically, when dealing with the Story of Nahash, one must beware of the history and character of each witness, MT, LXX, 4Q, and *Ant*.

Assumptions

As to the first assumption, this paper uses the goal modeled by Emanuel Tov.⁸ Its aim is not to discover what was *the* original reading of 1 Samuel 10–11, but rather what reading among the extant witnesses was original relative to the others. With most works of the Bible, Tov despairs of the possibility to reconstruct the original text (as in “the *ipsissima verba* of the biblical authors”). He also recognizes the complication of multiple literary stages⁹ in many books, which would each have been considered authoritative when released, probably copied,

⁶ Cross clarified: the Egyptian text, evidenced in the Original Greek translation of Samuel and presumably its Hebrew *Vorlage*, was “ultimately a branch of the Old Palestinian text of the fifth or at latest fourth century [BCE].” See F. M. Cross, “The Evolution of a Theory of Local Texts,” in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, eds. F. M. Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1975), 311–12.

⁷ Michael Avioz, *Josephus’ Interpretation of the Book of Samuel*, Library of Second Temple Studies 86 (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 195 n. 101.

⁸ Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed., rev. and exp. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 165–69 (hereafter, *TCHB*).

⁹ He identifies literary stages by large-scale content changes of an editorial nature; *ibid.*, 283–84.

and subsequently impossible to eradicate when superseded. These plural “determinative” texts are of equal interest, because they can pinpoint the first appearance of given readings and illuminate other studies from an historical perspective.¹⁰ But the primary text-critical goal is to trace all readings created by *transmission* to each edition, never minding any target edition or date for the text to be recovered.¹¹

On the one hand, Tov’s general despair of recovering an original text is, I think, unwarranted. On the other hand, it is self-evident that later, “final” forms¹² may in principle be as valuable for historical-exegetical purposes as the “originals.” That is, every intermittent form has explanatory power and historical value, even if some will have more than others.¹³ In the case of Samuel, the book does not present itself as a work written originally by a single author or upon a single occasion. It bears the marks of an authorial *tendenz* and of a developed literary technique in the final, canonical editions that have come down to present in Judaism and Christianity—which characteristics are true even between the book’s segments widely recognized as self-contained units.¹⁴ But those units, their transitions, their editorial comments, all of which Samuel is composed, also self-consciously indicate a multi-stage composition. That early stages survive

¹⁰ Along these lines, Würthwein and Fischer write, “[T]he task of textual criticism should not be limited to reconstructing only one of the final literary texts, but should distinguish between earlier and later editions of the text in preparation for further research by literary and redaction criticism” (Ernst Würthwein and Alexander A. Fischer, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*, Erroll F. Rhodes, trans., 3rd ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014], 169).

¹¹ For example, Bruce Waltke is one who aims to recover the text at the end of the first century CE. Anything earlier, he argues, is handed over to the literary critic (see his essay “How We Got the Bible: The Text and Canon of the Old Testament,” in *The Bible at Qumran: Text, Shape, and Interpretation*, Peter W. Flint, ed., *Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 27–50).

¹² In this context, a final form means a “finished literary product (or one of its earlier stages)” intended to be transmitted (Tov, *TCHB*, 165). Incomplete forms, such as notes or abbreviated texts, as well as erroneous forms, which render a text nonsensical, are of inherently lesser value.

¹³ Here, the two editions of Jeremiah are prime examples, on which I have written elsewhere. It is plausible that Jeremiah and/or his disciples were responsible for both recensions. The two have persisted alongside one another from very early, in the LXX and MT. Discovery of 4QJer^{bd} at Qumran confirmed that a Hebrew tradition had contained distinctively LXX readings prior to that translation’s existence. This was valuable for understanding both the historical activity of the authors and recipients at the time of composition and the recensions’ reception history thereafter, and for the exegetical purpose behind changes made in the later edition of the book.

¹⁴ Regrettably, there is not yet, a commentary on the Septuagint of Samuel in circulation, such as those that exist with MT as a base text. The Samuel volumes SBL and Brill Septuagint series are forthcoming. For these, from a literary-synchronic perspective, see especially J. P. Fokkelman’s four-volume work, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel: A Full Interpretation Based on Stylistic and Structural Analysis*, 4 vols. *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1981–93) and his introduction to the series (1:1–20); but also the smaller, more general works that examine Samuel frequently in their studies: Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, rev. and updated ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), *infra*; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Reading of Drama* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), especially 186–229.

in the witnesses today is, from the start, a possibility that must be assumed and a trail that must be followed in its own right. Therefore, the primary/secondary nature of every reading relative to the others is sought, going as far back into the text's history as possible within the limits of the text critical procedure.¹⁵ This is my goal with the Story of Nahash.

Already, it will be apparent that the second key assumption, the text theory, which underlies the present analysis is close to Paul de Lagarde's concept of an *Urtext* (1863). This is so with respect both to the Hebrew Samuel and its Greek translations.¹⁶ That is, the basic framework into which the evidence seems best to fit is a linear, genetic one; a "family tree" of textual history. The "pristine texts" theory (also called "vulgar texts") proposed by Paul Kahle (1915), positing multiple alternative texts that emerged in parallel, unmixed with one another, but subsequently were consolidated—this is a theory I think is not borne out by the evidence. Granted, a parallel or "horizontal" element is at play, since multiple stages of a book may have been in circulation concurrently and since revisions to translations were continually being produced.¹⁷ But this differs from Kahle's view by seeing both literary editions and translation revisions as still being "vertically" related to their predecessors.

The "local text" theory of W. F. Albright and F. M. Cross (1953 ff.) does not seem to fit either. For, though it borrows the concept of a common *Urtext*, it reduces all textual witnesses into three "families," supposed to have arisen between the fifth and first centuries BCE, and it assumes that they arose "in complete isolation" from one another in either Palestine, Egypt, or Babylon.¹⁸ These families, then, evince common characteristics and readings, so much that they can be generalized in contradistinction to one another as superior or inferior. As a result, any given manuscript can be placed within a family, judging by its general characteristics, and thus the location of its ancestral archetype can be known. Ironically, however, it seems that the manuscripts prompting this idea's development are what defeat it: they were all found at

¹⁵ See Würthwein and Fischer, *Text of the OT*, 163–65; Tov, *TCHB*, 283–85.

¹⁶ Here I am reliant on the analyses provided by Tov (*TCHB*, 169–74), Paul D. Wegner (Paul D. Wegner, *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible: Its History, Methods & Results* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006], 64–70), and Natalio Fernández Marcos (*The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson [Atlanta, GA; Leiden: Society of Biblical Literature; Brill, 2000], 73–76).

¹⁷ See Natalio Fernández Marcos, *Scribes and Translators: Septuagint and Old Latin in the Books of Kings*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 54 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 15–26.

¹⁸ F. M. Cross, "The Contribution of the Qumran Discoveries to the Study of the Biblical Text," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, eds. F. M. Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1975), 282–84; "The Evolution of a Theory of Local Texts," 310.

Qumran, and at least some, probably many of them, were copied there. There was simply too much inter-penetration between the three named regions to sustain distinct text types in each for long. Thus, the reduction of witnesses into these three families is too simplistic.

In brief, I assume that the Story of Nahash in every witness can be traced back first to a single ancestor in its own language and then subsequently to a common ancestor in Hebrew. Locality could be a factor in tracing a text's genealogy, but the latter cannot be "pigeon-holed" to a supposed local text type. This is supported by the broader histories of the three biblical texts and one extra-biblical text that witness the story. Their histories are turned to next.

Witnesses

The Masoretic Text (MT)

The consonantal text of the MT tradition has been "more or less frozen since at least the third century BCE."¹⁹ The discoveries at Qumran confirm that "competing" text forms existed in the Second Temple Period.²⁰ Yet, there is also evidence in "deuterocanonical" and rabbinic writings,²¹ corroborated also by findings in the Judaean desert,²² that some control over the

¹⁹ Tov, *TCHB*, 26.

²⁰ Tov (*ibid.*, 186–87) in fact eschews the language of competition, postulating that "multiple originals" may have been accepted as equally authoritative within some sects of Judaism, e.g., Qumran.

²¹ The quasi-historical book of 2 Maccabees sites a library established in the temple precincts by the prophet Nehemiah (2:13), and this being the precedent followed by Judas Maccabeus in approx. 164 CE (2:14). Several Talmudic references indicate an exemplar (or multiple concurring exemplars) kept there, dubbed the "Scroll of the Temple Courts" (*Sof.* 6.4; cf. *Y. San.* 2.20c; *Sifre Deut* 160a). Others preserve traditions of "proofreaders of the Torah" and instances of their method, who took their wages from the temple treasury chamber (*b. Ned.* 37b–38a, *b. Ket.* 106a). See further citations in Emanuel Tov, "The Text of the Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek Bible Used in the Ancient Synagogue," in *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible, and Qumran: Collected Essays*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 121 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 178–79 n. 33–38.

Waltke and O'Connor also write: "The seven rules of biblical hermeneutics, compiled by Hillel the Elder at the time of Herod, demanded an inviolable, sacrosanct, authoritative text. The exegetical comments and hermeneutical principles of tannaim (teachers of the first two centuries CE), notably Zechariah ben ha-Kazzav, Nahum Gimzo, Rabbi Akiva, and Rabbi Ishmael, presuppose that in this period a single stabilized text had attained unimpeachable authority over all others. Justin Martyr complained that the rabbis had altered the venerable LXX to remove an essential arm from the Christian propaganda, which also demonstrates that the rabbis desired an authoritative text." (Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990], 20.)

²² According to Tov, "All the 25 texts that were found in the Judean Desert at sites other than Qumran display *almost complete identity* with codex L [the medieval exemplar of MT]" (emphasis mine) These fragments found principally at Masada, Naḥal Hever, and Wadi Murabba'at are variously dated between 50 BCE and 115 CE. Wegner sees this as indicating control beginning in the mid-first century CE. However, Tov supposes that the exercise of copying and proofreading from (a) central exemplar(s) began even earlier, estimating that the Judean Desert manuscripts were the very kind of "corrected scrolls" referred to in rabbinic literature. For, the hands that left

biblical texts was exercised from Jerusalem's temple precincts until the latter were destroyed in 70 CE. The fact that a variety of text forms existed at Qumran may be due to the settlement's nature as a sectarian community or, at least, one not so aligned with the temple authority in scribal practice. It was not alone in this, however. For example, the Samaritan community, with its own distinctive text of the Pentateuch, appears to have been stable since the first century BCE. Thus, the persistence of alternate Hebrew text strands²³ alongside the "authorized" text in the Second Temple Period is evidence that there was no conscious effort to standardize or unify the so-called "proto-MT tradition" (M) at that time. Tov seems right to conclude, "[T]here must have been an approach of textual rigidity in the temple and its circle of influence, while in other circles textual freedom was the rule."²⁴

However, the base (or consonantal) text of this "M" became accepted as authoritative by all Jewish communities in the first century CE. This was probably due to events such as the destruction of the temple and the dying out of organized communities that maintained competing traditions.²⁵ From then on it can be observed that anachronisms, idiosyncrasies, and even known errors, while being painstakingly transmitted without revision, were critically annotated by the scribes transmitting M in their own systems.²⁶ Some variety of vocalization—and, naturally, the orthographic expressions of it—persisted until this element was standardized by the Masoretic schools in the Medieval Period. It was not until then that the, strictly speaking, "Masoretic" elements were added. Yet, this underlying branch of the textual family tree is rightly called *proto-Masoretic* in research. For, its tight unity of witness, its use as the basis for many ancient versions or as the standard for revisions, and its exclusive use in early rabbinic circles up to the time of the Masoretes—these all validate such a tradition-centric name.

Be that as it may, in principle MT (and M) do not necessarily preserve the earliest texts of the biblical books in whole nor in part. Besides the known, accumulated errors that have been transmitted and noted from first century CE onward, other changes are known to have been made

them behind "closely followed the guidance of the Jerusalem spiritual center in religious matters." See Wegner, *A Student's Guide*, 93–4; and Tov, *TCHB*, 29–31; "The Text of the Bible Used in the Ancient Synagogue," 177–81.

²³ The classification of discoveries popularized by Tov is: (a) "M-like texts," (b) "Pre-Samaritan texts," (c) texts close to the presumed *Vorlage* of the LXX, and (d) "non-aligned texts" (Tov, *TCHB*, 107–10).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 181.

²⁵ Tov calls this an "historical coincidence" (*TCHB*, 179–80, 187); cf. Würthwein, *Text of the OT*, 15–19.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 19–24.

in MT for euphemistic and theological reasons,²⁷ and some portions bear internal evidence of cross-contamination with manuscripts of other text forms. In the case of Samuel specifically, when comparing MT to the external evidence of LXX, it reflects greater than usual corruption in two directions: (a) its losses via haplography and (b) its editorial expansions.²⁸ It does, however, bear the best witness available today to the Hebrew text controlled and promoted by the spiritual authority of the late Second Temple Period.²⁹ The best complete exemplar of the MT tradition is the Leningrad Codex (in the apparatuses, L), dated ca. 1008 CE. It is reproduced in the analysis below under the heading “MT^L”. My English translations of this text will bear close to the *New American Standard Bible* (1995).³⁰

The Septuagint (LXX)

The text of LXX is not as unified as MT. It has a complex history of revisions made under Jewish and Christian pens. However, as with MT, the basic premise formalized by De Lagarde and widely affirmed since the discoveries at Qumran is accepted here also: most if not all books of the LXX may be traced back to one Greek translation respectively.³¹ The same is safely assumed of Samuel.³² In the words of Würthwein and Fischer, “One could therefore speak in the plural of the original *texts* of the LXX, namely of the first translations and their exemplars, but not of an original LXX.”³³ The term “Original Greek” (OG) is appropriate when used in such a way, i.e., as of a given book but *not* as of a canon. It is “Septuagint” (LXX) that refers to a canon in its Greek dress.

²⁷ Wegner, *Student's Guide*, 50–57.

²⁸ Kyle P. McCarter, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible*, Guides to Biblical Scholarship: Old Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 88–9. One example, for many scholars, of an editorial expansion is the episode of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 16–18, on which, see Tov, *TCHB*, 310–303.

²⁹ This was more pointedly expressed in the original English publication of Tov's *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 28.

³⁰ This choice is due to methodology behind the NASB having a high level of formal equivalence, low text-critical correspondences to forms other than MT, and modern vernacular (as opposed, e.g., to the King James Version). On this justification, see for example, Stephen Daley, *The Textual Basis of English Translations of the Hebrew Bible*, Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), especially 362–94.

³¹ Emanuel Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, 3rd ed., rev. and exp. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 11–12 (hereafter, *TCUS*); Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 64–65, and his evaluation of views, cited in the previous note.

³² Sebastian P. Brock, *The Recensions of the Septuaginta Version of 1 Samuel*, Quaderni Di Henoch 9 (Torino: Silvio Zamorani, 1996), 29–31.

³³ Emphasis original; Würthwein and Fischer, *Text of the OT*, 122.

The LXX began to emerge in the first half of the third century BCE in Alexandria, apparently under the royal sponsorship of Ptolemy II.³⁴ As a project it included only the Torah, but Greek translations of other Scripture books followed for at least a century and a half among Jewish communities, perhaps in Alexandria but likely beyond as well.³⁵ Samuel was likely completed in the early second century BCE, but its provenance is unknown.³⁶

Revisions. Revisions of OG books began early on, “so early that in some cases it almost coincided with the first appearance of the translation.”³⁷ Beginning with one of the earliest known today, the *Kaige* (dated as early as the mid-first century BCE³⁸), all new editions consistently and consciously “Hebraized.” That is, they “corrected” readings toward those in their contemporary M and often modified translation choices to reflect Hebrew linguistics. In some cases, the changes are so systematic that these may be characterized as *recensions* rather than merely revisions (though, the distinction is not ultimately important in this paper).³⁹ Three key revisions were published in the second century CE by Jewish scholars, for which apparently the *Kaige* served as the base text: Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion (G^A, S, T, respectively).⁴⁰

³⁴ The *Letter of Aristeas*, from which this information is gleaned (perhaps which written between 127 and 118 BCE), is pseudepigraphic and layered with legend. However, an “historical nucleus has to be accepted” based on corroborating factors to at least the date, locale, and sponsorship (Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 39–42, 62–63).

³⁵ The translator of Ecclesiasticus, writing in 132 BCE from Egypt, invites his readers’ forbearance since “in the case of the Law itself and the Prophets and the rest of the books [in Greek] the difference is not small when these are expressed in their own language [Hebrew]” (Prologue).

³⁶ Würthwein and Fischer, *Text of the OT*, 101, based on Folker Siegert, *Zwischen Hebräischer Bibel und Altem Testament: Eine Einführung in die Septuaginta*, MJSt 9 (Münster: Lit, 2001).

³⁷ Marcos, *Scribes and Translators*, 22.

³⁸ Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 152; Würthwein and Fischer, *Text of the OT*, 107.

³⁹ The distinction is as yet imprecise. Leonard J. Greenspoon, “The *Kaige* Recension: The Life, Death, and Postmortem Existence of a Modern—and Ancient—Phenomenon,” in *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, 2004*, ed. M. K. H. Peters, (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 5–16.

⁴⁰ The *Kaige* revision was so named by D. Barthélemy (1963) after discovery of a Judean Desert manuscript, 8HevXIIgr dated between 50 BCE and 50 CE. The moniker *Kaige* derives from the text form (of which this manuscript is an example) displaying the practice of translating כִּי or כִּי־וּ as *καίτε* (since *either* the ascensive or copulative use could have been conveyed by the simple *καί*); though, other unique characteristics identify it too.

There is ongoing debate over the distinction between *Kaige* and G^T. Prior to the JD discovery, “proto-Theodotonic” readings were presumed to be layered into G^T, since they could be dated (e.g., by New Testament citations) earlier than the historical Theodotion by nearly two centuries. With the discovery of 8HevXIIgr, Barthélemy concluded that the revisor behind *Kaige* was none other than the very reputed “Theodotion”—but one who lived in the first century BCE. Thus, the tag “*Kaige*-Th” was given to this early revision.

Others, still discerning a revision in the second century CE by the “historical Theodotion,” often continue to borrow Barthélemy’s term, *Kaige*-Th (e.g., *Tov infra TCHB* and *TCUS*). Still others posit a proto-Theodotion revisional layer between *Kaige* and G^T. This paper assumes the position of Marcos (*Septuagint in Context*, 142–54) that 8HevXIIgr represents the *Kaige* revision, which was a slight Hebraistic but non-uniform revision of OG and

In the mid-third century, Christian church father Origen composed his *hexapla*, a critical edition of the LXX. It paralleled six columns containing: (1) the M of his day, (2) a Greek transcription of M, (3–4) G^{AS}, and (5) his own annotated *eclectic* recension of the LXX, into which he incorporated all of M's "pluses." This fifth column took on a life of its own. It was published and circulated separately, and was used as the authoritative text in many churches; though, Origen had not intended it to be.⁴¹ It is therefore called Origen's recension (G^O). Finally, the sixth column of the hexapla was apparently meant to provide further support for Origen's editorial choices in the fifth column.⁴² That so, at times it contained G^T but at other times, other texts, which have been difficult to identify due to the meagerness of extant witnesses.⁴³ In some places, it appears to have been the so-called "proto-Lucianic" or Antiochene text. And though G^O is not particularly useful for an analysis of the Story of Nahash,⁴⁴ this latter text is.

"Antiochene" refers to a text tradition preserved in the writings of the church fathers in the so-called exegetical school of Antioch. Of this school, Lucian was a founder. He produced a Greek recension (G^L) in the fourth century CE., and its characteristics are held to be the standard of the Antiochene tradition.⁴⁵ Yet, the base text that underlies Lucian's recension is disputed. Readings that are characteristically "Lucianic" are known from texts that preceded the man by a

which was later revised by the historical Theodotion in the second century CE. Practically speaking, the compound name *Kaige*-Th obfuscates this view and so is abandoned here (cf. Greenspoon, "The *Kaige* Recension," 11, 16).

⁴¹ In his *Letter to Africanus*, Origen stated his apologetic aims of composing the Hexapla, viz., that with it Christians might engage with Jews fully informed of where their texts differed and, it seems, to answer Jewish accusations that Christians had falsified their Bible (§5). He even explicitly stated that he wished *not* to impose his new text upon the church for public use (§4). Brock, *Recensions of the Septuaginta Version of 1 Samuel*, 37–38. In addition to this, Origen himself continued to use Greek texts that were *not* his own in the commentaries he published afterward on John, Exodus, Isaiah, and Matthew. Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 211.

⁴² H. M. Orlinsky, "The Columnar Order of the Hexapla," in *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations*, ed. Sidney Jellicoe (New York: KTAV, 1974), 378–79.

⁴³ Though the work was monumental (est. 6,500 pages), very little is extant and none at all of Origen's M.

⁴⁴ G^O and all LXX revisions after it are not reliable sources to reconstruct the determinative form of M for three main reasons: (1) though his was a "critical edition" of sorts, Origen did not always note where he revised his Greek and Hebrew *Vorlagen*, (2) G^O (his fifth column) tended to be copied down alone and without its key critical notation system, and (3) Origen seems to have selected whatever Greek reading was nearest to the M of his day as if *that* had been the *Vorlage* of the previous LXX revisions and not the *Kaige*, OG, or their respective Hebrew *Vorlagen*. See Melvin K. H. Peters, "Septuagint," *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:1098–99.

⁴⁵ Marcos inventories G^L's general characteristics as the following: it tends to (a) fill the gaps in the LXX *vis-à-vis* M and "the three" (G^{AST}), (b) contain doublets not in the LXX, (c) insert interpolations to clarify the sense or minimize incorrect grammar, (d) changes out synonyms, (e) Atticizes the Greek, and (f) give stylistic changes, e.g., of preferred prepositions and compound verb forms. "The result is a full text with no omissions" (*Septuagint in Context*, 230).

century or more.⁴⁶ Among these texts, one of special note is the Old Latin (OL, or *Vetus Latina*), which arose in the second century CE as a daughter translation of the OG. As it happens, OL can only be reconstructed from secondary citations. Since no edition of Samuel has been published, study must rely on the apparatuses, such as in the Vulgate and Lucianic texts.⁴⁷ To explain the layers in G^L, it has been proposed that Lucian's base text was either (a) *the* OG or possibly *an* OG⁴⁸ or (b) another recension, dated by Natalio Fernández Marcos to the first century CE.⁴⁹

Specific manuscripts of the LXX are quite important. The three great codices comprising the majority of scholarly knowledge on the LXX are also those on which De Lagarde's theory was formulated. These are majuscules Vaticanus (LXX^B), Sinaiticus (LXX^S), and Alexandrinus (LXX^A). The first two date to the fourth century CE, and the last to the fifth century CE. The best witness to the OG is considered to be LXX^B, since over the entire Hebrew/Aramaic Bible (HB), it has been found "relatively free of corruptions and influences from the revisions of [OG]."⁵⁰ It also contains the complete HB—though not all of the "deuterocanonical" books attached to it in the LXX.⁵¹ By comparison, whereas LXX^A is widely recognized as a mixed text, LXX^S often agrees with LXX^B and, when it does, reflects OG. As for G^L, the witnesses of greatest import are the four signified as boc2e2 in the Brooke-McClean (Cambridge) edition of the LXX.

Greek Samuel. Several factors complicate the untying of the Greek Samuel knot. First, as regards LXX^B, its general character reputed to be a primary witness to OG holds true also in 1–4 Reigns. In his study of Samuel, J. D. Shenkel remarked, "Fortunately, the purity of this codex as a witness to a pre-hexaplaric text seems to be greatest precisely in the Books of Samuel and Kings."⁵² Yet, it is not uniform throughout. Shenkel's work refined a distribution recognized

⁴⁶ Evidence has been cited in the Latin fathers Tertullian (d. 230 CE) and Cyprian (d. 258 CE) and in the Syriac Peshitta (early third century CE). See Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 233.

⁴⁷ The *Vetus Latina* Institut of Beuron is producing an edition based on assembled citations and manuscripts from Pierre Sabatier (d. 1742) and Josef Denk (d. 1927). The volume of Samuel (Regum) is forthcoming. <https://www.herder.de/vetus-latina/edition/textausgabe/>

⁴⁸ Emanuel Tov, "Lucian and Proto-Lucian—Toward a New Solution of the Problem," in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint*, Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum* 72 (Leiden; Atlanta: Brill; SBL Press, 199), 477–88.

⁴⁹ Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 235.

⁵⁰ Tov, *TCHB*, 133.

⁵¹ It is acknowledged that "deuterocanonical" is a Christian (Roman Catholic) nomenclature; there is no evidence that Jews have ever maintained such a category in their doctrine of Scripture.

⁵² J. D. Shenkel, *Chronology and Recensional Development in the Greek Text of Kings* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 8.

earlier by Thackeray (1907) and Barthélemy (1963), which today is broadly accepted. That is, some portions of 1–4 Reigns represent the *Kaige* revision instead of the OG:

Sigla	LXX Text	MT Correspondence	Character of B
α	1 Reigns 1:1–31:13	1 Samuel 1:1–31:13	OG
$\beta\beta$	2 Reigns 1:1–9:27	2 Samuel 1:1–9:27	OG
$\beta\gamma^*$	2 Reigns 10:1–3 Reigns 2:11	2 Samuel 10:1–1 Kings 2:11	<i>Kaige</i>
$\gamma\gamma$	3 Reigns 2:12–21:43	1 Kings 2:12–21:29 ⁵³	OG
$\gamma\delta^*$	3 Reigns 22:1–4 Reigns 25:30	1 Kings 22:1–2 Kings 25:30	<i>Kaige</i>

* $\beta\gamma$ and $\gamma\delta$ collectively = $\beta\delta$

This phenomenon is possibly due to the archetypes of LXX^B, a codex, being scrolls and, at that, scrolls of differing text forms. The compiler may have been unaware or simply unable to attain scrolls of the same form.⁵⁴ Where LXX^B is in the *Kaige* tradition the OG may be sought in other witnesses, like G^L. But every reading must be considered case-by-case, since LXX^B, even in OG sections, may have been influenced, however slightly, by the hexapla or other Hebraized revisions. A given reading's attestants are at best only secondary to its explanatory power *vis-à-vis* other readings. As it happens, the Story of Nahash falls into Thackeray's (et. al) section α , which is generally OG. Still, this caution is employed below.

A second factor of complication is worthy of mention. It is true that, while G^L in most books tends to reflect M, yet in 1 Reigns it is an important witness to OG *instead*.⁵⁵ This is not without debate,⁵⁶ nor does it mean that OG can be gleaned *ipso facto* by mere reference to G^L. The aforementioned layer(s) of revision(s) in G^L must be sifted by comparison with OL or other possible corroborators. Where G^L disagrees with LXX^B and yet agrees with OL, it likely preserves the pre-hexaplaric reading—in the absence of others with more explanatory power. When it comes to comparison with 4Q, although there is not an overwhelming pool of evidence,⁵⁷ Richard Saley has demonstrated that there is a thin layer of distinctive agreement

⁵³ The reason for this difference is versification. The MT and LXX represent different arrangement of the same basic material: what are chapters 20 and 21 in MT are chapters 21 and 20 in LXX.

⁵⁴ Tov, "Methodology," 492.

⁵⁵ Tov, *TCHB*, 147; Bruce M. Metzger, "The Lucianic Recension of the Greek Bible," in *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations*, ed. Sidney Jellicoe (New York: KTAV, 1974), 279–80.

⁵⁶ Brock concluded that for 1 Reigns the Lucianic text contains elements of diverse origin and value leading up to its present form (ca. 300 CE). *The Recensions of the Septuaginta Version of 1 Samuel*, 305–307.

⁵⁷ In fact, Brock (*ibid.*, 217–19, 223) thinks it impossible to use OL as a witness to material pre- ca. 300 CE, due to the likelihood of its being under continuous influence of Greek texts from its inception. Nevertheless, there is broad support for its usage; see discussion in Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 232–36.

between 4Q and G^L.⁵⁸ Thus, as a rule, G^L is a relevant witness to any common ancestry between LXX and 4Q. These factors will be carefully balanced when evaluating the Story of Nahash. The Cambridge edition, which reproduces LXX^B in Samuel, is what I have used below. A *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007) is used for the English rendering and some analysis.⁵⁹ These are then supplemented by the critical editions of the Antiochene-Lucianic texts, produced by Taylor (1992) and by Marcos and Saiz (1989).⁶⁰

4QSam^a (4Q)

The historic significance of 4QSam^a has already been cited. The Story of Nahash is found on just one fragment of that scroll, covering 1 Samuel 10:24–11:2 (column X, fragment a).⁶¹ Although, it is possible that other narrative elements related to Nahash have been lost in the lacunae between this fragment and other fragments of the same and adjacent columns (X, frgs. b–c; XI, frg. a). This will be discussed in the commentary below, and detailed attention will be given to the central story (10:27–11:1). But this is only a small portion of the text recovered in the twenty-seven surviving fragments of the 4Q scroll.

Those fragments contain material from almost every chapter of MT Samuel, and they align with MT's ordering of material *by chapter*, as discerned by their columns and margins.⁶² Of course, the chapter divisions were a Medieval invention, but they do give the modern reader a tool to see the text's overall organization and to show where agreement lies, such as here. There is large agreement. Yet, significant variances of different kinds do emerge.

4Q has been characterized as closer in form to the *Vorlage* of LXX and to the *Vorlage* of Chronicles than to the text of MT. Its closeness to the LXX is especially apparent where there are

⁵⁸ Richard J. Saley, "Proto-Lucian and 4QSam^a," *BIOSCS* 41 (2008): 35, 45.

⁵⁹ Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Translation of the Book of 1 Kingdoms (pp. 244–70) was headed by Bernard A. Taylor, with his own scholastic introduction. Taylor's acumen is proven by his work on the Lucianic text (see the following note).

⁶⁰ Fernández N. Marcos and J. R. Busto Saiz, *El texto antioqueno de la Biblia Griega*, vol. 1, *1–2 Samuel*. Textos y Estudios "Cardenal Cisneros" 50 (Madrid: Instituto de Filología, 1989); Bernard A. Taylor, *The Lucianic Manuscripts of 1 Reigns*, 2 vols., Harvard Semitic Monographs 50 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992–93).

⁶¹ This is according to the numbering of *DJD XVII*. By the numbering of the Leon Levy Library, this same leather tatter is plate 1096, fragment 6.

⁶² The unattested chapters are 1 Sam. 13; 16; 19; 20; 22; 29; and 2 Sam. 9. See the full listing of texts covered in Eugene Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 134 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 788–89; see also the reconstruction by Andrew Fincke, *The Samuel Scroll from Qumran: 4QSam^a Restored and Compared to the Septuagint and 4QSam^c* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), esp. 4–5.

clustered variants, such as in the Song of Hannah (1 Sam 2) and in the story of David’s Census and Plague (2 Sam 24). And as for Chronicles, Ulrich sites 42 readings in which 4Q and Chronicles agree against MT.⁶³ This presents an interesting issue in its own right, but since Chronicles does not witness to the story of Nahash, it must be reserved for another study. Suffice it to say for the present that from a “bird’s eye view,” 4Q plausibly represents an early text form, possibly even arising between the final stages of Samuel and Chronicles.

Still, *vis-à-vis* MT Samuel, readings are found in 4Q of both primary and secondary status. Many pertain only to transmissional errors, but some also to small insertions and some even to both at once. These are of a small nature. For example, in one case, 4Q appears to partially witness a reading more original than MT while also embellishing it:

MT 1 Sam. 1:24	בַּפָּרִים שְׁלֹשָׁה	with three bulls
4QSam ^a	בפר בן [בקר משלש	with a bull, the calf of a cow, three years old
LXX 1 Reigns 1:24	ἐν μὲν ἰσχυροῦ τριετίζοντι (= בפר משלש)	with a three-year-old bull

LXX in this case shows that MT’s poor grammar actually reflects an error in word division and thus an insertion of the *mater lectionis* letter ך. On the other hand, reasonably assuming that the publisher’s reconstruction is correct, 4Q inserts an embellishment between the words that it had faithfully retained.

The variety of divergence found in 4Q from other witnesses was summarized in Donald Parry’s analysis, counting 81 unique readings. Among these, he showed, no single variant type was dominant.⁶⁴ Of note, Josephus also corroborates six of these readings, again, standing *against* MT and LXX.⁶⁵ Parry concluded, “[T]he uniqueness of 4QSam^a may as easily have arisen from scribal activity within the Masoretic tradition as from that of 4QSam^a.”⁶⁶ He then provided example categories for the creation of variant readings, all of which were either of an unintentional nature or did not effect meaning. But his evaluation was admittedly not exhaustive and it excluded the large variance in the Story of Nahash in such a way that skews the data. As I will show, this reading is also laden with unique elements.

⁶³ Ulrich, *The Qumran Text*, 163.

⁶⁴ Donald W. Parry, “Unique Readings in 4QSam^a,” in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries*, eds. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov (London; New Castle, MI: British Library; Oak Knoll Press, 2002), 215.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 209; cf. Eugene Ulrich, *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 165–73. Note, however, that Ulrich includes the Story of Nahash, whereas Parry does not.

⁶⁶ Parry, “Unique Readings,” 215.

Moreover, there are other cases where 4Q's uniqueness seems likely not to have arisen from mere "scribal activity." For example, Edward Herbert detects several lines of material in 4Q's lacunae around MT 1 Samuel 10:18–25 (preceding the Story of Nahash), which he shows must be additional to MT, based on the measuring of 4Q's columns and the known data points within them. It would be unique material, however, for which no other witness can be adduced.⁶⁷ It is such cases that rightly prompt the question of whether 4Q preserves an *edition* (recension) distinct from MT, rather than either one of them simply being corrupted.

Ulrich, for one, rejects the term "edition." He examines five passages that are often cited as evidence of 4Q's literary distinctiveness: the story of Hannah's vow (1 Sam 1), Hannah's Song (1 Sam 2), the Story of Nahash (1 Sam 10–11), David and Goliath (1 Sam 16–18), and David's census and plague (2 Sam 24). Though he finds 4Q to have a different version of the story of David and Goliath (1 Sam 16–18)—which incidentally is *barely* witnessed in 4Q by portions of only ten scattered verses—yet he does *not* find it to be part of an intentional, systematic effort across the scroll.⁶⁸ The other passages, he says, exhibit in both MT and 4Q "numerous innocent and predictable, but not patterned or coordinated, additions, and each has suffered either losses or double renderings or corruption."⁶⁹ In the Story of Nahash, he argues that even if the variant paragraph had been an editorial insertion, "no other similarly motivated additions are found," and thus 4Q would *not* represent a proper edition.⁷⁰

Rofé makes the opposite case. He even goes so far as to propose the scroll should go by its siglum, 4Q51, or by a new moniker, such as "Reworked Samuel" or *Midrash Sefer Shemuel*, rather than 4QSam^a, which implies it is a biblical copy.⁷¹ For, he thinks 4Q represents a midrashic tendency. That is to say, it is a commentary that rewrites an older story to fit the concepts and tastes of a new generation, approximately fourth century BCE. Unlike a typical commentary, a midrash, he says, is incorporated into the text throughout. Rofé also examines five pericopes (the same as Ulrich, only substituting the sin of the Elides [1 Sam 3] for David

⁶⁷ Herbert, "4QSam^a and Its Relationship to the LXX," 53.

⁶⁸ Ulrich, "The Samuel Scrolls," 107–108.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷¹ Alexander Rofé, "4QMidrash Samuel?—Observations Concerning the Character of 4QSam^a," *Textus* 19 (1998) 65; "Midrashic Traits in 4Q51 (So-Called 4QSam^a)," in *Archaeology of the Books of Samuel: The Entangling of the Textual and Literary History*, eds. Philippe Hugo and Adrian Schenker, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 132 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 76.

and Goliath). In each of these he claims that 4Q reflects either harmonistic corrections, amplifications, or nomistic corrections in some degree, making it unlike the other two Samuel scrolls found at Qumran. The lack of consistency throughout the scroll, he says, is due to the nature of the content in each pericope. Only some sections required midrashic treatment.

Space prohibits any further foray into their arguments. But when combined with the data observed by Herbert, Rofé's general appraisal seems the more accurate.⁷² There are indeed large portions of 4Q's text, whether preserved or presumed, that are absent from MT and LXX as well as clusters of small variants between them in which 4Q appears to have "corrective" readings. Thus, suffice it to say that even before examining the Story of Nahash, 4Q may be seen to represent either a distinct edition of the biblical text or, if Rofé is correct, a midrash of it. In either case, some readings were likely created by premeditation, not spontaneously.

A final note on this witness, in the commentary section, the given reconstruction of 4Q is that of its publisher Cross, republished by Ulrich; though, the reconstructions of Fincke and Goldstein were considered also.⁷³ Though the annotated English translation of *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (1999)⁷⁴ was used, I have often departed for the sake of clear comparative analysis.

Josephus' Antiquities (Ant.)

Finally, evaluation of Josephus' contribution to this issue must be understood in light of the nature of his work. *Antiquities* is not simply a biblical manuscript, but a retelling of the historical accounts contained in the Bible's "antiquities." In his prologue to *Ant.*, Josephus explained his method:

Now I have undertaken the present work, as thinking it will appear to all the Greeks worthy of their study; for it will contain all our antiquities, and the constitution of our government, *as interpreted out of the Hebrew Scriptures* [ἐκ τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν μεθρημηνευμένην γραμμμάτων]. ... As I proceed, therefore, I shall accurately describe what is contained in our records, in the order of time that

⁷² Some of Rofé's arguments, however, I find tenuous. For example, what he calls the "conspicuous discrepancy" of when the plague was stopped in 2 Sam. 24 (pp. 77–78), is presumptuous, when after all the reading can be understood sensibly as it stands. In addition, the presence of an angel in 1 Chron. 21 being grounds for identifying the presence of an author distinct from the rest of Chronicles (pp. 78–79)—this is an argument from silence, i.e., the absence of angels elsewhere (but cf. 2 Chron 32:21). MT's relationship with 4Q and 1 Chron. 21 should not be established upon these presumptions.

⁷³ Fincke, *The Samuel Scroll*; Ronnie Goldstein, "More on the Story about Nahash in 4QSam^a: Its Purpose and Diffusion / מגמתו ותפוצתו, עוד על סיפור נחש במגילת שמואל מקומראן (4QSam^a)," *Shnaton / שנתון* (2013): 17–25.

⁷⁴ Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (New York: HarperOne. 1999).

belongs to them; for I have already promised so to do throughout this undertaking, and this without adding anything to what is therein contained, or taking away anything therefrom. (*Ant.* 1.5, 17)

Josephus then apologizes for a brief tribute to the example of Moses, saying otherwise, “those that read my book may wonder how it comes to pass that my discourse, which promises an account of laws and historical facts, contains so much of philosophy” (1.18). For, in Josephus’ eyes, Moses the lawgiver was a first-order philosopher.

All at once, then, Josephus claims *both* total faithfulness to the text without additions *and* the freedom to interpret his texts as he sees fit (cf. also 4.197). He thought himself to follow the example of Moses, who both prefaced and explained the law which he was beholden to hand down from God (cf. 1.18–26). Or as Feldman thinks, he viewed himself as carrying on the tradition of the Septuagint, loosely interpreting for a Greek-speaking audience.⁷⁵ Whatever Josephus’s motive for stating his intent in this dualistic way,⁷⁶ it is at least true that Josephus expressed an intent ideologically to embellish on the facts contained in the Bible, even if only with explanations of facts already contained therein. In practice, this is a subjective principle and a “slippery slope.” It becomes difficult to estimate how far afield Josephus wandered at given junctures from his written *Vorlage(n)* with commentary. As 4Q has shown, such commentary may in fact prove to be the readings of editions otherwise unknown to us at present. At the very least, *Ant.* must be treated as a paraphrase, not a copy of Samuel, but with editorial value.

Besides this, *Ant.* must also be assumed to have taken information from external sources, insofar as Josephus considered them necessary to his interpretation. That is, a plus in *Ant.* may represent a plus in a *Vorlage*, but not one necessarily considered by him to be in the category “Hebrew Scripture.” He cites numerous influential authors of the Greco-Roman world by name, and seems to borrow unashamedly from the sophisticated Jewish Alexandrian, Philo.⁷⁷ Even

⁷⁵ Louis H. Feldman, “Use, Authority and Exegesis of Mikra in the Writings of Josephus,” in *Mikra: Text, Translatin, Reading & Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism & Early Christianity*, eds. Martin Jan Multer and Harry Sysling (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 469.

⁷⁶ Alexander defends Josephus as sincerely believing that he was faithful to the text. Philip S. Alexander, “Retelling the Old Testament,” in *It Is Written—Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars*, eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 113.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 474.

deeper into the Jewish world, however, he likely had a continuing connection to rabbinic literature, to Aramaic translations, and thus also to Jewish legend—while writing his *Ant.*⁷⁸

It has been well-established that on account of his incorporation of legend, at times, into his history and on account of his “typical midrashic fashion,” *Ant.* falls squarely into the wider genre of *rewritten Bible*.⁷⁹ Philip Alexander studied *Ant.* alongside three other works usually included in this genre—Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon, and *Liber Antiquitatum*. He describes the genre as including works that fit the following description: (a) a narrative following a chronological order, (b) a free-standing composition replicating a biblical book, but (c) not being intended to replace the biblical book, (d) is “centripetal,” in that it returns to the book again and again, (e) is selective, in that it omits some biblical material, abbreviates others, and expands others, (f) is intended to produce an interpretive reading of the Bible and (g) is singular in that interpretation (as opposed to rabbinic literature), (h) is indirect, by avoiding explicitly exegetical comment, and (i) makes use of non-biblical tradition and sources.⁸⁰ This aptly describes Josephus.

One further background note on *Ant.* is pertinent. Namely, a few motivations are both explicit and implicit within it, which may have import to the Story of Nahash. Josephus had been an officer in the Jewish Revolt against Rome that was crushed in 70 CE. However, to escape death he surrendered to the Romans in 66 CE in a dishonorable way.⁸¹ Then, by “prophesying” that the Roman general Vespasian would become emperor (which he did in 69 CE), Josephus curried royal favor. This has been recognized as influencing Josephus’s writings, most notably in that he was disliked by some Jews. But also, he frequently begins sections of his narratives by framing them with military conflict.⁸² It may be for both of these reasons, then, that Josephus fancied to identify with Saul, someone disliked in retrospect but still a military hero.⁸³ These help to explain the ponderous, divergent treatment Josephus gives to the Story of Nahash.

⁷⁸ Avioz, *Josephus’ Interpretation*, 10–12.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 5–10; Alexander, “Retelling the Old Testament,” 113–14.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 116–18.

⁸¹ He had been part of a suicide pact with other escapee soldiers, who one-by-one killed each other until Josephus was among the last two survivors. Josephus persuaded his compatriot to turn themselves over to their besiegers and live, though, some four hundred men had already died by keeping the pact. F. F. Bruce, “Josephus, Flavius,” in *New Bible Dictionary*, eds. D. R. W. Wood, et. al (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996), 611.

⁸² Avioz, *Josephus’ Interpretation*, 17.

⁸³ Feldman, “Mikra in the Writings of Josephus,” 486.

Concerning the text of *Ant.*, since its lexeme and syntax are not as important as the literary content which they encode, excerpts from it will be given in English from Whiston's translation (1987), with the critical Greek text of Niese in the footnotes.⁸⁴

Commentary

With this background accounted for, the text of the Story of Nahash—which at points is quite complex—can be ably approached. I will attempt to do so here in a commentary, highlighting the significant variants. The overall literary structure found in MT Samuel and LXX 1–2 Reigns are substantially the same,⁸⁵ and they are corroborated by 4Q.⁸⁶ In each, the Book of Samuel might as well be called “The Book of David,” since he is its main character.⁸⁷ It is organized around the events that led to the creation of Israel's monarchy, then to David's divine election, opposition, accession to the throne, successes, scandals, and perils.⁸⁸ A large portion of 1 Samuel (1 Reigns) is devoted to the man who becomes David's foil, Saul son of Kish. He is introduced in chapters 8–12, which may be considered one act⁸⁹ describing the transition of Israel's government from the prophet-judge Samuel to the new, at first reluctant, king Saul. Within that act, the Story of Nahash records events that serve to solidify the new kingdom by Saul's heroic deeds. It stretches over two scenes that are a self-contained unit, with the crucial textual issue being at their transition.⁹⁰ They proceed thus: scene one, Saul's *presentation* as king to the people; transition, the Story of Nahash proper; and scene two, Saul's *proving himself* to be king by rescuing Jabesh-Gilead.

⁸⁴ William Whiston, trans., *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987); Benedikt Niese, *Flavii Josephi Opera*, 7 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1885–95).

⁸⁵ In the introduction to his translation of 1 Reigns (NETS), Bernard A. Taylor notes that only the following verses from MT are not found in LXX^B: 13:1; 17:12–31, 41, 50; 18:1–5, 10–11, 17–19; 23:12. In 3 Reigns, the story is quite different, with large sections of MT not found in LXX and vice versa, transposed material, and material drawn from MT of Chronicles.

⁸⁶ See “4QSam^a (Q4)” under Witnesses above.

⁸⁷ David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids; Baker, 2004), 29.

⁸⁸ In some of the versions and recensions, the divide between 2 and 3 Reigns falls after what is in MT 1 Kings 2:11, which means these editions of Samuel would include the ascension of Solomon after David (1 Kings 1:1–2:10).

⁸⁹ Fokkelman, *Vow and Desire*, viii.

⁹⁰ Writes McCarter (*1 Samuel*, 205): “The story of Saul's victory in 10:27b–11:11 is thus a single narrative unit embraced by notices about the response to his kingship in 10:26–27a and 11:12–15. Clearly the purpose of this arrangement is to show that Saul, who was already king *de jure*, has now become king *de facto*... and earned the loyalty of all Israel. Yahweh's new plan for the leadership of his people is now in effect.”

Scene One: Saul's Presentation as King

Chapter 10 records two episodes in which Saul is made king, and in which MT and LXX agree in their narrative content. Samuel first anoints Saul privately (10:1), after which, Saul goes home and does nothing about it (10:16). Then Samuel calls an assembly to proclaim him publicly as God's choice for king, though God was reluctant to install any king at all (10:17–19). At the assembly, Saul tries to avoid being seen, for he too is reluctant (10:20–22). But he is found out, “taken,” and ordained (10:23–24). At this point, 4QSam^a begins to contribute its witness.

MT ^L 10:25–27	4QSam ^a col. X, frg. a	LXX ^B 10:25–27
<p>25 וַיִּדְבֹּר שְׂמוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם אֵת מִשְׁפַּט הַמְּלָכָה וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּסֵפֶר וַיִּנַּח בְּפָנָי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁלַח שְׂמוּאֵל אֶת־כָּל־הָעָם אִישׁ לְבֵיתוֹ: 26 וְגַם־שְׂאוּל הִלְךְ לְבֵיתוֹ גְּבַעְתָּה וַיִּלְכּוּ עִמּוֹ הַחֵיל אֲשֶׁר־נָגַע אֲלֵהֶם בְּלָבָם: 27 וּבְנֵי בְלַעַל אָמְרוּ מַה־ יִשְׁעֲנֶה זֶה וַיִּבְרָאוּ וְלֹא־הִבִּיאוּ לוֹ מִנְתָּה וַיִּקְהֵ כְּמִתְרִישׁ: פ</p>	<p>[vacat] 2 וידבר שמואל אל העם את משפט ה[מלך] ויכתב בספר וינח לפני יהוה 3 [וישלח שמואל את] כ[ו]ל ה[עם] וילכו איש למק[ו]מ[ו] ג[ו]ם [ש]אוּל־ה[לך] לביתו גבעתה 4 [וילכו] בני החיל אשר נגע יה[ו]ה בלבבם vacat ובני הבליעל א[מרו] מ[ה] יושיענו 5 [זה וי]ב[ר]או וְלֹא הִבִּיאוּ לוֹ מִנְתָּה vacat []</p>	<p>25 καὶ εἶπεν Σαμουηλ πρὸς τὸν λαὸν τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ἔγραψεν ἐν βιβλίῳ καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐνώπιον κυρίου. καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν Σαμουηλ πάντα τὸν λαόν, καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἕκαστος εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτοῦ. 26 καὶ Σαουλ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ εἰς Γαβα, καὶ ἐπορεύθησαν υἱοὶ δυνάμεων, ὧν ἦψατο κύριος καρδίας αὐτῶν, μετὰ Σαουλ. 27 καὶ υἱοὶ λοιμοὶ εἶπαν Τί σώσει ἡμᾶς οὗτος; καὶ ἠτίμασαν αὐτὸν καὶ οὐκ ἤνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα.</p>

Here the manuscripts differ in a number of details, summarized by the table below. These are represented by four different relationships of agreement/disagreement. Josephus, however, is too free in his writing to correspond to any other witness on this level of detail.

MT ^L	4QSam ^a	LXX ^B (retroverted)
4Q = LXX ≠ MT		
10:25 משפט המלכה the ordinance of the kingdom	2 משפט ה[מלך] the ordinances of the kingship	τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ βασιλέως (משפט המלך) the just claim of the king
10:25 —	3 וילכו and they went	καὶ ἀπῆλθεν (וילכו) and they went
10:25 איש לביתו each to his house	3 איש למקומו each to his place	ἕκαστος εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτοῦ (איש למקומו) and they went, each to his place
10:26 וילכו ... החיל and the valiant went	4 [וילכו] בני החיל and sons of the valiant went	καὶ ἐπορεύθησαν υἱοὶ δυνάμεων (וילכו בני חיל) and sons of power went
10:26 אלהים God	4 יה[ו]ה the LORD	κύριος (יהוה) the Lord

4Q ≠ MT = LXX

10:26	עִמּוֹ with him	— —	μετὰ Σαουλ (עם שאול) with Saul
10:27	וּבְנֵי בְלִיעֵל But sons of <i>belial</i>	4 וּבְנֵי הַבְּלִיעֵל But sons of the <i>belial</i>	καὶ υἱοὶ λοιμοὶ (ובני בליעל) And some pestilent sons

4Q = MT ≠ LXX

10:26	וַיֵּלְכוּ... הַחַיִּל and the valiant went	4 וַיֵּלְכוּ [בְּנֵי הַחַיִּל] and sons of the valiant went	καὶ ἐπορεύθησαν υἱοὶ δυνάμεων (וילכו בני חיל) ⁹¹ and sons of power went
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4Q ≠ MT ≠ LXX

10:26	עִמּוֹ with him	— —	μετὰ Σαουλ (עם שאול) with Saul
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Analysis of these details can focus on the first two relationships; the others contribute along the way.

4Q = LXX ≠ MT

In five details, 4Q displays its celebrated agreement with LXX against MT. Retroversion of the LXX into Hebrew shows a close resemblance. But this requires some qualification. Cross's reconstruction of 4Q presumes identity in some places that are not preserved. In one case it is conjectural, rendering משפט ה[מלך] in 10:25, as opposed to MT's משפט המלכה. This is based solely on parallels in 1 Samuel 8:9, 11,⁹² even though MT and 4Q agree in these latter two verses (both give משפט המלך). Conversely, βασιλεύς does render מְלוֹכָה elsewhere in Reigns of LXX^B, namely III 20:7 [21:7] and IV 25:25, the first of these also being in an OG section. As a basis, then, Cross's supporting texts, though near in proximity, are not by themselves adequate to presume an agreement with LXX against MT at this juncture. It is in fact impossible to reconstruct line 2 of this fragment in such a way that detects support for LXX or MT against the other. Only four letters are preserved. It may, in fact, have agreed with LXX, but in the absence of stronger evidence, the *lectio difficilior*, MT, is likely the earlier reading.⁹³ After all, both are readable; “law of the king” and “law of the kingship” would amount to the same thing: the laws

⁹¹ בְּנֵי־חַיִּל in MT is always translated as anarthrous in LXX^B (10x), seven times being specifically υἱοὶ δυνατοῦ/δυναμεως.

⁹² Cross, *DJD XVII*, 67.

⁹³ McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 191.

concerning the new office of king, which were given in chapter 8.⁹⁴ At some point in transmission, then, it seems a scribe smoothed out 10:25 or conformed it to the close-by 8:9, 11.

Other agreements between LXX and 4Q are stronger. Though, they do not as yet allow generalization about the primacy of either Hebrew text relative to the other. In the next of them, whereas 4Q (X, a, 3) has the fuller reading וילכו, the MT of v. 25 with its “minus” here is both readable and thrifty, which hints that it may be earlier.⁹⁵ Yet whereas MT has איש לביתו in the same verse—as opposed to איש למקומו in 4Q—MT may be the later. It is likely a scribal harmonization so as to balance the phrase with v. 26 (וגם־שאול הלך לביתו).⁹⁶ In the fourth detail, however, this harmonizing tactic can be detected in the reverse order. 4Q (X, a, 4) reports that בני החיל went with Saul, instead of simply החיל, for it was בני הבליעל who scorned Saul in the next moment. MT lacks this formal equivalence of the “sons,” but it has no clear reason for doing so, if it had originally been present in its archetype. Therefore, its reading without the “sons” may be earlier.⁹⁷ In the end, it seems there were multiple levels of influence in both directions.

4Q ≠ MT = LXX

The apparent agreements between LXX and MT *against* 4Q are weak by comparison to the above. In the first of them, while the LXX phrase “with Saul” (10:26) approximates MT, it is

⁹⁴ Hoffner, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 1 Sam 10:25.

⁹⁵ In this sentence, MT’s syntax makes sense without a second verb, or rather with it, simply under ellipsis. That is, לביתו would be the indirect object of וישלח, and איש, the distributive modifier of כל העם, respectively.

⁹⁶ Though, the ascensive compound conjunction וגם, found in both MT and 4Q, could as well anticipate a repetition of the object that preceded it (ביתו). Whereas one would expect the newly appointed king Saul to act on his own accord, rather than be “dismissed” by Samuel as the people were, this repetition may emphasize the opposite. Tsumura (*First Book of Samuel*, 217–18) thinks MT draws out the foreboding weakness of Saul, since he simply goes back home to his normal work (11:5), painting Samuel as the one who is *de facto* still in charge.

⁹⁷ Based on this parallel, Youngblood (“1, 2 Samuel,” 633) and Klein (*1 Samuel*, 96) prefer the 4Q reading as more original. However, בני בליעל (or בת בליעל) is a fixed idiom, occurring 10x in the HB (over a third of all occurrences of בליעל), which would not want for *formal* parallel in order to draw contrast. Besides, בני החיל occurs only once else, in Judges 21:10, and the story there, as will be shown, Goldstein argues, was the text that prompted the harmonistic expansion that is in 4Q (see his article below).

Additionally, חיל is polysemous, sometimes meaning the more basic, general concepts of “power” or “wealth,” sometimes the derived, specific concepts of “army” or “upper class” (*HALOT*, 311). And though division between these is not precise, it seems that when the general is meant *it is never articular except when preceded by a noun in construct* (13x). (One exception is Deut. 8:17 [החיל הזה], where חיל is articular merely as an antecedent to the demonstrative pronoun זה.) Therefore, החיל could be used in 1 Sam. 10:26 with the more specific meaning of a collective singular, but not necessarily as technical as “the army” (*pace* Smith, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 74; McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 191; Driver, *Notes*, 85). Firth suggests חיל is at times used with both the senses of military prowess and wealth, “since normally only the wealthy could indulge in the military training necessary to prepare for army service” (*1 & 2 Samuel*, 133; cf. Neh 3:34). Tsumura (*First Book of Samuel*, 217–18) is also rightly content to understand this as simply “the band” of “valiant men.” For these reasons, and because it is the *lectio difficilior* but still coherent, 4Q and LXX are probably secondary adjustments.

in a different position: the end of the sentence. This could indicate that it was added for clarity or to aid with referent tracking. After all, MT does not refer to Saul by name but only by “him” (4Q ≠ MT ≠ LXX), so LXX seems to be an improvement in style. Of the two possible scenarios, it is less likely that (a) the phrase was found in V^{OG} but moved and altered than that (b) it was simply added by the translator or a later copyist.

In the second agreement, while both LXX^B and MT have “sons of *belial* [or pestilence]” in an anarthrous state, there is some variety within the Greek manuscripts. Thirteen minuscules⁹⁸ plus LXX^A preserve this moniker with an article: οἱ υἱοὶ λοιμοὶ (“*the* sons of pestilence”). Though this is still not isomorphically equal to 4Q’s בני הבליעל, it does reflect a similar perception of the phrase as being somehow definite, like that of a title or class. This raises the possibility that the Greek manuscripts with an anarthrous reading (υἱοὶ λοιμοὶ) had archetypes that were articular, perhaps even identical to 4Q, but which they revised to match MT.

On the contrary, though, manuscripts that include the article could as easily have been modified for exegetical reasons. That is, by simply adding the article, the copyists could have indicated their understanding that the sons of *belial* mentioned on this occasion were contiguous with those mentioned by the same title throughout the book of Samuel—the so-called “familiar” use of the article, common in Greek syntax. This is supported by the fact that, in the sections where LXX^B represents OG of Samuel, בליעל is translated λοιμὸς six out of seven times (the one exception being 3 Reigns 20:10). That gloss is used in no other book of the LXX.⁹⁹ This suggests

⁹⁸ These include from the 10th–11th centuries: a (707) f (489) n (119); from the 12th–13th centuries: g (158) o (82) s (130) v (245) w (314) x (247) e₂ (93); from the 14th–15th centuries: c (376) e (52) a₂ (501).

⁹⁹ Statistics on the translation of בליעל are as follows, with OG sections of 1–4 Reigns in bold font:

Translation Occurrences of בליעל in LXX ^B (with English Glosses from LSJ)			
παράνομος	11x	<i>lawless, violent</i>	Deut 13:14; Judg 19:22; 2 Sam 16:7; 20:1; 23:6 [23:5]; 1 Kgs 21:10, 13 [LXX 3 Reigns 20:10, 13] ; Ps 41:9; 101:3; Job 34:18; 2 Chron 13:7
λοιμὸς	6x	<i>plague, pestilent</i>	1 Sam 1:16; 2:12; 10:27; 25:17, 25; 30:22
ἀνόμημα/ ἀνομία	3x	<i>transgression of the law/lawlessness</i>	Deut 15:9; 2 Sam 22:5; Ps 18:5
ἄφρονέω/ ἄφρονη	3x	<i>to be silly, act foolishly/ folly, thoughtlessness</i>	Prov 6:12; 16:27; 19:28
ἄσεβής	1x	<i>ungodly, unholy, profane, sacrilegious</i>	Judg 20:13 – that this is a supplemental, explanatory translation of בליעל is likely, but it could alternately be a translation of some other reading (see Βελιαλ)
ἐναντία	1x	<i>of contrary nature</i>	Nah 1:11
εἰς παλαιώσιν	1x	<i>dilapidated condition</i>	Nah 2:1 – misunderstood etymology, as if בליעל derived from בלה, (<i>be used up, worn out</i>)
Βελιαλ	1x	n/a	Judg 20:13 – transliterated here only, but apparently supplemented by ἀσεβης

בליעל may have had a semi-technical status in the translator's eye,¹⁰⁰ and thus that the copyists of later minuscules and of LXX^A inserted the article to reflect this view. Deciding between the alternatives is difficult, though in my judgment the latter scenario is the more likely, given the late date and mixed nature of the Greek witnesses that vary from LXX^B.

To summarize this scene, exclusive agreements between LXX and 4Q do give credence to the existence of a V^{OG} similar to the latter, but still with significant differences. As well, exclusive agreements between MT and LXX are not as strong and could be secondary; though, even in that scenario, LXX would still differ slightly from 4Q. In these minor details there is no persuasive evidence as to which is generally the earlier text form, MT or 4Q.

Transition: The Story of Nahash

The transition to the next scene is the *crux interpretum*. It begins with a reading found only in MT 10:27, that appears to conclude scene one (ויהי כמחריש). It then proceeds to a reading found only in 4Q, a sort of backstory to Nahash's siege of Jabesh-Gilead. Then, it proceeds to a reading found only in LXX 11:1 and 4Q, which appears to date scene two relative to whatever preceded it (και εγενηθη ως μετα μηνα // ויהי כמו חדש). Finally, the witnesses converge again on the siege itself in scene two. Josephus' contribution in this transition is twofold: first, he corroborates data given exclusively in 4Q's backstory, and second, he corroborates the "time text" found in 4Q and LXX 11:1. Considering this time text first will shed light on the backstory.

The Time Text

Understanding the time text's role requires an accounting of its absence in MT. But on a comparison of the readings, it becomes clear that the somewhat awkward variant found in MT

¹⁰⁰ Further evidence of this could be found in the Hebrew term's meaning. Some uses of בליעל in the HB may suggest an etymology of יעל + בלי, together meaning "without profit, useless," or more pejoratively, "worthless" (e.g., Deut 15:19; 1 Sam 1:16). However, more often בליעל conveys something or someone overtly nefarious. For example, it is paralleled to the wicked and perverse man (און, תהפוכה, רשע) in Proverbs. This leads some to suggest that the term might have arisen from Semitic cognates for evil gods (Hb. *ba'al* + *ya'al*) or figuratively for Sheol (Hb. *beli* + *'alah*; Arab. *bala'* + *-l*, "to swallow up"); though both concepts may have had a role, converging by paronomasia. The latter may be conveyed in 2 Sam 22:5 // Ps 18:5. But it seems a secondary and at best only nascent development in the vernacular of the HB that בליעל would hint at evil spiritual personages. The term fully develops as such only in post-biblical Judaism—as seen, for example, in the material at Qumran (War Scroll; Thanksgiving Hymns) and the pseudepigrapha (Jubilees; Martyr. of Isa.; XII Patr.)—and in the New Testament (2 Cor 6:15). These use Belial (בליעל, Βελιαρ) as an epithet for Satan or demons. Michael Segal has suggested that Samuel may even be a witness to that development, since "plagues, pestilences" are curses or the results of evil forces in this book.

10:27, ויהי כמחריש, may in fact be genetically related to the time text in LXX 11:1 and 4Q. That is, it may be a corruption of the time text. Conversely, the absence of the MT reading in other text forms¹⁰¹ corroborates this genetic relationship. Visual juxtaposition makes this apparent:

MT ^L 10:27	וְיָהִי כְּמַחְרִישׁ	But he was as one that held his peace
4QSam ^a X, a, 9 <i>supra</i>	וְיָהִי כְּמוֹ חֵדֶשׁ	And it happened after about a month
LXX ^B 11:1	Καὶ ἐγένηθη ὡς μετὰ μῆνα	And it happened about a month later
<i>Ant.</i> 6.68	Μηνὶ δ' ὕστερον	After one month

Now, MT's reading could be held in suspicion on its own merits. English translations render it, "he kept silent" (NASB95, NIV) or "he held his peace" (ESV, NKJV, NRSV). Though, the strictly literal translation would be the cumbersome, "he was as one that held his peace" (JPS 1917). Admittedly, while the syntax in Hebrew is just as unusual as it sounds in English, it is yet not insensible. Plus, the *hiphil* participle (יִחַשׁ) appears also in Gen. 24:21; 2 Sam. 19:11; and Prov. 17:28; though, never as a substantive. This would be a paraphrastic construction to simply say that Saul kept silent. But the context, both textual and literary, seems to override this.

Textually, since LXX^B has no final clause in 10:27 that would correspond to MT, and since it has an initial phrase in 11:1 that MT lacks (καὶ ἐγένηθη ὡς μετὰ μῆνα), one naturally looks to retrovert the LXX for clues to interpret the former. That retroversion yields a Hebrew reading of either (a) ¹⁰²ויהי כמו חדש or (b) ¹⁰³ויהי כמחדש, which are both graphically quite similar to ויהי כמחריש in MT. In 1913, S. R. Driver concluded that the LXX reading was more original than MT, the latter simply evincing a graphic confusion of ד with רי. The difference in verse division—MT 10:27 against LXX 11:1—was passed over at that time as superficial.

Literary explanations to the counter, i.e., that MT preserves the more original reading, have been offered by Pisano, Rofé, and Driesbach.¹⁰⁴ But these are not as satisfying. For, although "to impose silence on oneself" would be a sensible thing to do, Saul is not characterized

¹⁰¹ Eight minuscules include a variant *preceding the time text*, being some form of καὶ ἐγένηθη (ὡς) κωφευ(γ)ων ("yet it [so] happened, he kept his peace"). This would support MT's reading, ויהי כמחריש, and glue this phrase to the scene preceding it, rather than to what followed it. But given that each of the eight instances is a conflation of MT and LXX^B they are not credible. This conflate text is witnessed by *boc2e2*, but in this detail these manuscripts differ from OL, suggesting that here they belong to the upper stratum of the Lucianic recension (influenced by Origen's hexapla) rather than the substratum of OG. The other manuscripts are late, and should be assumed to be corrections of the LXX toward MT.

¹⁰² This is the solution proposed by the BHS editor, suggesting a combined misreading of "ח" as "ר," erroneous word division, and כמו being the temporal particle (GKC §164.d); cf. Gen. 19:15.

¹⁰³ This is the solution of Driver, *Notes*, 85, and Tov, *TCHB*, 313 n. 46.; cf. Gen 38:24.

¹⁰⁴ Pisano, "Additions or Omissions," 96; Rofé, "Acts of Nahash," 133; Driesbach, *4QSamuel^a*, 186.

as sensible here, nor would this reading explain the reading in LXX, which is supported by *Ant.* (let alone 4Q, which is explained below).¹⁰⁵ The fact that Saul later exercised restraint after his heroics, by not putting these scoffers to death (11:12–13), does not, I think, sway the argument, and that is for two reasons. First, though he was clearly noble on the latter occasion, the image of him nearer in context to 10:27 is one of fear and reluctance, not confidence or self-control. Moments before this juncture, he was “hiding among the baggage” (10:21–22).

Second, the latter occasion also shows that Saul was not incensed at the scorn nor was he waiting to take revenge, but only that *his comrades* (the בני החיל) remembered it with keen offense. Thus, Hoffner’s comparing Saul to Jacob in Genesis 34:5 (waiting [החרש] to redress his daughter’s rape) or Abraham’s servant in Genesis 24:21 (waiting [מחריש] to see if God would make his journey successful)¹⁰⁶—these are out of character for Saul *as yet*. Saul was weak at this juncture, but not meek.¹⁰⁷ It seems, then, that the transition between the scene of his being scorned and the Story of Nahash is better understood as simply being “about a month later.” It was one month after Saul’s presentation as king—unwanted by Saul, openly rejected by others—that Saul took the role upon himself in heroic fashion.

Discovery of 4QSam^a (1952) both reinforced and complicated this solution. Just prior to the report of Nahash’s siege, the fragmented scroll dates this event with ויהי כמו חדש, aligning it with LXX and an emended MT, as understood above. Incidentally, the phrase is part of a supralinear correction half-way through line 9, possibly made *manu prima* (by the very scribe who made the error).¹⁰⁸ For, after copying the first occurrence of יבש in line 9, the scribe’s eye

¹⁰⁵ The graphic confusion could as easily work in the opposite direction as that which I have proposed, assuming MT to be the earlier reading, but then we are still left with the unnecessary and obtuse כ- prefix in MT.

¹⁰⁶ Hoffner, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 1 Sam 10:27.

¹⁰⁷ This characteristic is why Youngblood (“1 & 2 Samuel,” 633) takes the opposite view, maintaining that כמחריש is fitting. Saul, he says, was “reticent” to speak, as he had been before (10:16). This contextual interpretation is better, but the *paraphrasis* in MT’s reading still seems to detract from the sense rather than add to it, making it easier to interpret as a corruption of כמחדש (and leading into 11:1).

¹⁰⁸ This is Cross’s conclusion (“Missing Verses,” 108), and it seems correct; though, perhaps he overstated its certainty. He said there was an “otherwise inexplicable” blank space at the end of line 9, into which the supralinear correction curves downward. Yet, the final ן of this correction (Cross’s “curved” element?) is, in fact, upright, and it sinks not much deeper, if at all, into the text below it than do the other letters of the same correction (see Appendix A, esp. Plate 3). As well, the end of line 9 is not far from the edge of the column, so a blank space would perhaps not be as much a clue as Cross supposed. Anyways, Cross himself later detected the beginnings of another word, מְלִךְ, in that very space (shown above from *DJD XVII*, 66). It is best to conclude, then, that the *beginning* of the supralinear correction marks its place, not the end. (The first word, ויהי, is placed just above and before ויאמר in line 9.) Still, that the correction was *manu prima* is supported by another supralinear correction made in the same scroll at 2 Sam. 6:2 (Ulrich, *Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*, 169).

returned to his exemplar at the next instance of יבש instead (*parablepsis*), and he continued copying onward from there (*homoioateleuton*).¹⁰⁹ The text that was skipped and then written back in above the line is what bears the time text reading. This correction affirms that the scribe(s) was (were) copying the text faithfully from 4Q's archetype to include this phrase. But it comes after a portion of text that does *not* correspond to anything in MT or LXX. The latter belongs to the backstory of about three and a half lines (6–9). At this point it is essential to address this portion, the backstory, though further comments will necessarily be made on the time text also.

The Backstory

The main event of the Story of Nahash is Saul's deliverance of Jabesh-Gilead, which reaches its apex in 11:11. However, prior to this point, 4Q provides the backstory, i.e., the events that precipitated in that rescue. Some details are supported by *Ant.* 6.68–70. Yet, whereas this “plus” (*vis-à-vis* MT, LXX) is positioned in 4Q before the time text, it appears in *Ant.* after the time text. The two witnesses read as follows:

4QSam^a col. X, frg. a

- 6 [ו]נ[ח]ש מלך בני עֲמוֹן הוא לחץ את בני גד ואת בני ראובן בחזקה ונקר להם כָּל[ו]ל
7 [ע]זֵן ימין ונתן אין [מושי]ע ל[י]שראל ולוא נשאר איש בבני ישראל אשר בע[בר הירדן]
8 [אש]ר ל[ו]א נ[ק]ר לו נח[ש] מלך[ך] בני[ך] ע[ז]מון כול עין ימין ו[ה]ן שבעת אלפים
ויהי כמו חדש ועל נחש העמוני ויחן על יביש
9 איש[נצלו מיד] בְּנֵי עֲמוֹן ויבאו אל [י]בש גלעד ויאמרו כול אנשי יביש אל נחש מְ[לך]ך
10 [בני עמון כרת] ל[נו] ברית ונעבדך ויאמר א[ל]ל[יה]ה ׀ נחֹשׁ [העמוני בזאת אכרת לכם]

Ant. 6.68–70

(68) After one month, the war which Saul had with Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, obtained him respect from all the people; for this Nahash had done a great deal of mischief to the Jews that lived beyond Jordan by the expedition he had made against them with a great and warlike army. (69) He also reduced their cities into slavery, and that not only by subduing them for the present, which he did by force and violence, but by weakening them by subtilty and cunning that they might not be able afterward to get clear of the slavery they were under to him: for he put out the right eyes of those that either delivered themselves to him upon terms, or were taken by him in

On this note, it is of interest that a comparison of the photos from *DJD XVII* plate X, frag. a, and from the Leon Levy Library plate 1096, frag. 6, shows that the manuscript of this segment of 4Q deteriorated from the time of the first photograph (1982?, 2005?) to the second (2013). The bottom left corner of the fragment, from which Cross drew his conclusion above, is now gone; so, the earlier plate published in *DJD* must be consulted to track his argument. Yet, even with the earlier photo, the more original position for the text in question is not conclusive.

Still, one can conclude that the correction was *manu prima* by another supralinear correction in the same scroll at 2 Sam. 6:2 (Ulrich, *Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*, 169).

¹⁰⁹ Cross, “Missing Verses,” 108; *DJD XVII*, 66; Tov, *TCHB*, 312. Between the two mentions of the town (יביש גלעד), one cannot be certain that 4Q contained גלעד; it would be at the edge of the column within the lacuna.

war; (70) and this he did, that when their left eyes were covered by their shields, they might be wholly useless in war. (71) Now when the king of the Ammonites had served those beyond Jordan in this manner, he led his army against those that were called Gileadites; and having pitched his camp at the metropolis of his enemies, which was the city of Jabesh, he sent ambassadors to them, commanding them either to deliver themselves up, on condition to have their right eyes plucked out, or to undergo a siege, and to have their cities overthrown. He gave them their choice, whether they would cut off a small member of their body, or universally perish.¹¹⁰

This reading in 4Q is believed by Cross, Tov, Ulrich, and McCarter to be earlier than MT's reading.¹¹¹ In other words, MT is corrupted (or revised) by a loss of text. However, Youngblood, Rofé, Pisano, and Driesbach see more problems in this scenario than solutions.¹¹² The argument *for* the originality of the longer form revolves around four factors: (1) the time text discussed above, (2) Nahash's title, (3) the tactic of blinding the enemy, and (4) Josephus's knowledge of the data.

First, the fact that 4Q indicates a corrupted time text in MT, does not mean that its long introduction is also primary over against MT's minus. LXX witnesses 4Q's time text but lacks the backstory just as MT does, and this shows that the two issues are not bound up inseparably. They should be treated individually.

Second, as to Nahash's title, caution is needed. The argument goes that the royal title in 4Q, נַחַשׁ מֶלֶךְ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן, is a *casus pendens*—as indeed it is—and in light of this emphatic device, Cross asserts that MT's shorter נַחַשׁ הַעַמּוֹנִי breaks an “invariable pattern” in the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH). That is, reigning foreign kings are always introduced for the first time by a full, royal, gentilic title, and MT's abbreviated introduction of Nahash would be the sole exception.¹¹³ But this statistic is not foolproof. For one thing, it supposes that DtrH and its compiler (or

¹¹⁰ Μηνὶ δ' ὕστερον ἄρχει τῆς παρὰ πάντων αὐτῶ τιμῆς ὁ πρὸς Ναάσῃν πόλεμος τὸν τῶν Ἀμμαιτιῶν βασιλέα οὗτος· γὰρ πολλὰ κακὰ τοὺς πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου ποταμοῦ κατωκημένους τῶν Ἰουδαίων διατίθησι μετὰ πολλοῦ καὶ μαχίμου στρατεύματος διαβάς ἐπ' αὐτούς· τῶν γὰρ ἢ κατὰ πίστιν ὡς αὐτὸν ἀφικνουμένων ἢ λαμβανομένων πολέμου νόμῳ τοὺς δεξιούς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐξέκοπτεν· καὶ τὰς πόλεις αὐτῶν εἰς δουλείαν ὑπάγεται ἰσχύι μὲν καὶ βίᾳ πρὸς τὸ παρὸν αὐτοὺς χειρωσάμενος, σοφία δὲ καὶ ἐπινοία πρὸς τὸ μηδ' αὐθις ἀποστάντας δυνηθῆναι τὴν ὑπ' αὐτῶ δουλείαν διαφυγεῖν ἀσθενεῖς ποιῶν· ἐποίει δὲ τοῦθ', ὅπως τῆς ἀριστερᾶς αὐτοῖς ὄψεως ὑπὸ τῶν θυρεῶν καλυπτομένης ἄχρηστοι παντελῶς εἶεν· καὶ ὁ μὲν τῶν Ἀμμαιτιῶν βασιλεὺς ταῦτ' ἐργασάμενος τοὺς πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου ἐπὶ τοὺς Γαλαδινοὺς λεγομένους ἐπεστράτευσε καὶ στρατοπεδευσάμενος πρὸς τῇ μητροπόλει τῶν πολεμίων, Ἰαβὶς δ' ἐστὶν αὕτη, πέμπει πρὸς αὐτοὺς πρέσβεις κελεύων ἤδη παραδοῦναι σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τῶ τοὺς δεξιούς αὐτῶν ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐξορύξαι, ἢ πολιορκήσιν ἠπειλεῖ καὶ τὰς πόλεις αὐτῶν ἀναστήσειν· τὴν δ' αἴρεσιν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς εἶναι, πότερόν ποτε βραχὺ τι τοῦ σώματος ἀποτεμεῖν θέλουσιν ἢ παντάπασιν ἀπολωλέναι.

¹¹¹ Cross, “Missing Verses,” 105, 107; Tov, *TCHB*, 312–13; Ulrich, *Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*, 166–70; *DSS and the Origins of the Bible*, 190; McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 199–200, 202.

¹¹² Youngblood, “1 & 2 Samuel,” 633–37; Rofé, “Acts of Nahash,” 113; Pisano, “Additions or Omissions,” 98; and Driesbach, *4QSamuel^a*, 187.

¹¹³ Cross, “Missing Verses,” 111–12.

redactors) left behind no exceptions to this rule whatever—a supposition that involves text-critical and literary complexity in its own right, which is outside the scope of this paper.¹¹⁴

But it could as easily be true that the scribe behind 4Q (or an earlier editor) lengthened the title in this case to harmonize it with the mention of kings throughout the DtrH, or even just to harmonize it with the more immediate 1 Samuel 12:12. For, MT in the latter case does use the longer title of Nahash, specifically.¹¹⁵ Besides this, it is also important to notice that 4Q uses the long title *again* in line 8 (and line 10, if Cross's reconstruction is correct[!]). That is, it does *not* revert to the shorter title after introducing Nahash except in the supralinear correction of line 9.¹¹⁶ This is not, then, merely a matter of introductory formulae; it is a matter of formality *in the text of the whole paragraph*, which smacks of contrivance. This undermines the main thrust of Cross's argument.¹¹⁷ As an aside, *Ant.* cannot help or hinder on this point, since both of its references to Nahash simply call him Ἀμμανιτῶν βασιλεὺς/α (vv. §68, 71).

The third argument of proponents also falls short, which concerns the reason that Nahash threatened to blind the men of Jabesh. According to Cross, Ulrich, and Tov, the brutality of eye-gauging seems out of order, if it is read only in the context of MT, where it is given no backstory or explanation.¹¹⁸ Rather, they say, this treatment was a known practice in the Ancient Near East reserved for archenemies or long-standing rivals.¹¹⁹ 4Q assumes this when it reports that Nahash oppressed the Gileadite tribes of Gad and Reuben; for, it seems Nahash held them to be usurpers of his ancestral territory. The town of Jabesh, they say, would not have obtained such a status, since it lay “far outside” the traditional domain of Ammon. Then, being a “newly conquered city,” the eye-gauging was uncalled for without some justification. That justification Cross sees

¹¹⁴ For example, besides assuming that this naming convention had obtained complete consistency throughout the DtrH before its transmission process began, it also assumes more generally that the 4Q tradition diverged from M *after* the DtrH had reached its final form. In fact, this may not be the case, if 4Q is indeed an earlier text form than MT as Cross proposes.

¹¹⁵ My professor Michael Segal is responsible for the latter observation.

¹¹⁶ The end of line 10 is not preserved, so it cannot be known whether the long or short title was used there. It corresponds to the last occurrence of the name Nahash in MT (11:2) until 12:12, and it does not appear again at all in 4Q.

¹¹⁷ Driesbach, *4QSamuel^a*, 186.

¹¹⁸ Cross, “Missing Verses,” 114; Ulrich, “The Samuel Scrolls,” 100; Tov, *TCHB*, 312.

¹¹⁹ As a practice known in the Bible, the references that Cross culls are not overwhelming; they either (a) refer only to individuals (Jdgs 16:21; 2 Kgs 25:7 // Jer 39:7 // 52:11) or (b) are not clearly related to enemy states at war (Num 16:14; Zech 11:17). The mutilation of foes for any reason and in any way—this was in fact practiced by the Assyrian kings, whom Cross cites. But his comparison of Gad and Reuben to violators of a treaty (from an Ammonite perspective), which is the most common impetus, is not fitting (“Missing Verses,” 114–15, 118 n. 23).

as their giving refuge to some seven thousand escapees from Gad and Reuben. It is precisely here that 4Q places the time text. It was “about one month later,” that is, after the Gileadites’ escape, that Nahash laid siege to Jabesh. Thus, he held its men accountable to the same fate as his bitter enemies whom they had been harboring.

Though appealing, this theory has several problems. One is that while Cross asks of MT, “Why the harsh, even vengeful punishment?”, the more glaring question is this: *Why would Nahash wait a month before pursuing these escapees?* In addition to that, Nahash even granted them another week’s respite to call other tribes to their aid! Though one might possibly assume Nahash did not know of the refugees (or their location) for one whole month, nothing in that scenario explains the one-week respite or the messenger allowance that he added onto it.

Another problem pointed out by Rofé and Pisano is that the seven thousand vignette ultimately does not explain the harsh treatment of Gad and Reuben as distinct from Jabesh any better than MT explains the harsh treatment of Jabesh alone.¹²⁰ According to DtrH, Ammonites had laid claims to the east bank of the Jordan in the past, even crossing over to the west bank (Jdgs 3:13; 10:6–9; 11:4). “Their belligerence against Jabesh,” writes Youngblood, “was thus not unexpected.”¹²¹ Moreover, Josephus shows the refugees to be superfluous to the story. For, although *Ant.* includes much detail about the eye-gouging tactic, it does *not* tie Nahash’s motives for this against Jabesh to any refugees that were hiding there. It does not even mention the seven thousand at all.¹²² In fact, even in 4Q they “have no role in the continuation of the story.”¹²³

The fourth argument for 4Q’s primacy over MT is a plausibility case, which proponents make in conjunction with the preceding arguments. Josephus’s knowledge of 4Q’s exclusive details proves that such a Hebrew text form was in circulation between the first century BCE and the second century CE. Thus, it is plausible that 4Q was an earlier tradition than MT or LXX. This is true in part, but *Ant.* is a complicated witness. For, though it shares key information with 4Q, one key difference is defeating to this argument: *it places the time text before 4Q’s backstory rather than after it, a shift of some two hundred words.* The order of material is as follows:

¹²⁰ Rofé, “Acts of Nahash,” 131; “4QMidrash Samuel?,” 66; Pisano, “Additions or Omissions,” 95.

¹²¹ Youngblood, “1 & 2 Samuel,” 636. This is also acknowledged by McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 202.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 97.

¹²³ Christopher Begg, *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, vol. 2, *Judean Antiquities Books 5–7*, ed. Steve Mason (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 117.

	<i>Ant.</i>	4QSam ^a	LXX ^B	MT ^L
1	Scene one	Scene one	Scene one	Scene one
2	Time text	Backstory		
3	Backstory	Time text	Time text	Time text (corrupted)
4	Scene two	Scene two	Scene two	Scene two

In *Ant.*, this means, it was about one month after Saul was scorned that Nahash began oppressing the region of Gilead. And Josephus adds this insight, “the war which Saul had with Nahash... obtained him respect from all the people” (6.68).¹²⁴ That is, precisely one month after Saul was scorned, he gained respect. The difference in position between 4Q and *Ant.* makes for a difference of antecedent referent and thus also a difference in interpretation.

This variance also sheds light on transmission history. Cross tried to explain the different placement of the time texts between 4Q and *Ant.* as owing to a combination of (1) *dittography* and (2) either *homoioteleuton* or *parablepsis*. That is to say, the tradition behind Josephus’s *Vorlage* had erroneously duplicated the time text by adding it before the backstory paragraph, and then sometime later it altogether lost the original position after the paragraph by sheer mistake. With MT, he says, this loss also included the whole paragraph between them. Upon close examination, this proposed series of errors—which in terms of scribal practice would be abnormally blatant—gets so complicated as to stretch credulity.¹²⁵ Ulrich’s simpler explanation would be more sensible: “J[osephus] has simply drawn this datum [the time text] from its original situation and used it as part of his topic sentence, keeping the reader’s mind on the main thread of his story (Saul’s rise to kingship).”¹²⁶ This could redeem what I have dubbed the “plausibility case” argument, but one is still left with the three preceding failed arguments. In

¹²⁴ “This notice marks the transition from and contrast between the time of Saul’s being despised by many (6.67) and the “universal honor” that he subsequently acquired through his victory over the Ammonites”; *ibid.*

¹²⁵ In detail, Cross supposed that at one time the whole phrase—ידיה כמו חדש ויעל נחש העמוני ויהן על יביש—existed above what would be “line 6” (by 4Q numbering) in Josephus’s *Vorlage*; but only by an error of “vertical dittography” (Cross, 110). The original lower placement then fell out, he says, *along with the entire paragraph in between*, by the second error, *homoioteleuton* or *parablepsis*. An error by *homoioteleuton* would be triggered by the identical wording of the two lines. But an error of *parablepsis*, he proposes, would be triggered by the two paragraphs on either side of the text being lost focusing on Nahash as their subject—a rather vague trigger, at best. In either case, his proposed lineage of the extant readings was 4Q→*Ant.*→LXX→MT.

Supposing an uncorrected *dittography* of this magnitude is shaky ground on which to suppose other errors. As for *homoioteleuton*, if it had occurred, Pisano (“Additions or Omissions,” 98) rightly points out that *Ant.* would resemble LXX. That is, it would contain the “lower” time text, not the “upper” one, and it would have skipped the intervening paragraph, not retained it. *Ant.* simply does not fit this paradigm. Then as for *parablepsis*, McCarter (*I Samuel*, 199), somewhat counter to his mentor, is right to argue that merely the general subject matter of Nahash would not have been enough to trigger a loss of this magnitude. Thus, MT and LXX do not fit the paradigm either.

¹²⁶ He adds also: “He has done this often: cf. V. 338, 341; VI.18; VII. 162; etc.” Ulrich, *Qumran Text*, 168.

sum, then, the primacy of 4Q over MT's reading is the slightest bit plausible but far more problematic.¹²⁷

Some Conclusions. The facts point to a dual conclusion thus far. First, the placement of the time text in 4Q (after the seven thousand fled) is secondary to MT's placement of the same text though corrupted (after Saul was presented as king). In 4Q, placement was modified so that the vignette of the seven thousand might be incorporated. Then, second, the logic behind Nahash granting a week's respite and messengers to the people of Jabesh is more coherent in the contexts of MT and LXX than it is in 4Q. That reason, as stated, was simply "[to] make this a humiliation for all Israel" (11:2d). Nahash, it seems, planned something against all Israel, and thus, was using this harsh threat to incite the other tribes to war.¹²⁸ 4Q actually obscures rather than clarifies.

How then did the backstory in 4Q arise? As has been shown, proposals for how it became present in 4Q but absent in MT are, from a purely text-critical perspective, not satisfying. McCarter, who believes 4Q to be more original, acknowledges this, saying, "[T]here seems to be nothing in the text to have triggered [the loss in MT]. A scribe simply skipped an entire paragraph of his text."¹²⁹ Better, I think, to surmise that the paragraph is a secondary, literary expansion.

In this vein, Herbert believes the paragraph was added to amplify the offensiveness of the Ammonite enemy and thus also the glory of Saul.¹³⁰ That was, in fact, the result it had in *Ant.* Similarly, Rofé says that by this inserted repetition of the offense, "Nahash is converted into an inveterate eye-gouger."¹³¹ He sees it as a prime example of 4Q's *midrashic* character. To him, it is an embellishment sifted by the scribe from details and literary tactics, which can be found

¹²⁷ Other cases against the primacy of the long prologue are these. Pisano ("Additions or Omissions," 97) argues that the formal style of referring to the two tribes is "curiously anachronistic." The formula "בני x" only occurs in 1–2 Samuel with the tribes of Benjamin (x4) and Judah (x1), besides Israel (x13). Driesbauch (*4QSamuel^a*, 186 n. 27), citing Auld, adds that "Gad and Reuben feature nowhere else in the book of Samuel." These are not, however, overwhelming observations. I don't find them persuasive; though, I do conclude the prologue is secondary for other reasons. *Ant.*, which shares much of 4Q's information, simply passes over the specific tribes in view, simply referring to them as "Jews... beyond the Jordan."

¹²⁸ 4Q is not preserved beyond לַכַּח in line 10 (MT 11:2), so it cannot be known whether it agreed on this latter point. Still, if it did it would not redeem Cross's proposal on account of the questionable month and his proposal's inability to explain the other variants (on which see below).

¹²⁹ McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 199.

¹³⁰ Herbert, "4QSam^a and Its Relationship to the LXX," 51.

¹³¹ Rofé, "Midrashic Traits in 4Q51," 81.

elsewhere in HB. In other words, it contributes nothing original.¹³² In doing this, it categorically moves 4Q from being a biblical *copy* to being a biblical *commentary*. Goldstein argues, also, that 4Q's explanation is suspiciously harmonistic *vis-à-vis* Judges 21:8 ff. That is to say, its long introduction is an exegetical attempt to solve the problem of how Jabesh was re-populated after its earlier destruction. He presumes the Judges pericope to be later in origin than Samuel, so that the redactor of 4Q felt the need to problem-solve in light of its newly arising (supposed) contradiction.¹³³ In fact, the truth likely entails all of these propositions in the main, regardless of whether their presuppositions are accurate in every detail. 4Q contains an embellishment on, a proper backstory to, the shorter versions found in MT and LXX.

Scene Two: Saul Proves Himself to Be King

What remains for this commentary is little by comparison, but important. Fragment “a” of 4Q is preserved only to the middle of 11:2, and at 11:1 the three biblical witnesses reconverge.

MT ^L 11:1–3	4QSam ^a col. X, frg. a	LXX ^B 11:1–3
<p>וַיַּעַל נָחָשׁ הָעֵמֹנִי בַיּוֹם עַל־יָבֶשׁ גִּלְעָד וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־אֲנָשֵׁי יְבִישׁ אֶל־נָחָשׁ כְּרַת־לָנוּ בְרִית וְנַעֲבֹדָךְ: ² וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם נָחָשׁ הָעֵמֹנִי בְּזֹאת אֶכְרַת לָכֶם בְּנִקְוֹר לָכֶם כָּל־עֵצֵי יַמְיִן וְשִׁמְתִּיהָ חֲרָפָה עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו זָקֵנִי יְבִישׁ הֲרָף לָנוּ שְׁבַעֶת יָמִים וְנִשְׁלַחְהָ מִלְּאֲכִים בְּכֹל גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִם־אֵין מוֹשִׁיעַ אֲתָנוּ וַיִּצְאֵנוּ אֵלָיֶךָ:</p>	<p>וַיְהִי כִּמוֹ חֹדֶשׁ וַיַּעַל נָחָשׁ הָעֵמֹנִי וַיַּחֲזֵק עַל יְבִישׁ וַיֹּאמְרוּ כוֹל אֲנָשֵׁי יְבִישׁ אֵל נָחָשׁ מִ[לְדָ] [בְּנֵי עֵמוֹן כְּרַת] לְ[נוּ בְרִית וְנַעֲבֹדְךָ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל[יָה] הֵן נָחָשׁ הָעֵמֹנִי בְּזֹאת אֶכְרַת לָכֶם \lacuna\</p>	<p>¹ Καὶ ἐγενήθη ὡς μετὰ μῆνα καὶ ἀνέβη Ναας ὁ Ἀμμανίτης καὶ παρεμβάλλει ἐπὶ Ἰαβὶς Γαλααδ. καὶ εἶπον πάντες οἱ ἄνδρες Ἰαβὶς πρὸς Ναας τὸν Ἀμμανίτην Διάθου ἡμῶν διαθήκην, καὶ δουλεύσομέν σοι. ² καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοῦς Ναας ὁ Ἀμμανίτης Ἐν ταύτῃ διαθήσομαι ὕμῖν διαθήκην, ἐν τῷ ἐξορύξαι</p>

¹³² Idem., “Acts of Nahash,” 131; so also Driesbach, *4QSamuel^a*, 187.

¹³³ Goldstein's argument has two elements: first, that Judges 19–21 was written later than 1 Samuel 11, so that, whereas the author of MT Samuel had no contradiction to deal with, the scribe of 4Q did and was forced to harmonize *postfactum*. Second, while Jabesh-Gilead and Benjamin (Saul's tribe) are connected with loyalty throughout HB (cf. Judge 20:48 w. 21:8ff.; 1 Sam 31:8–12; 2 Sam 2:4–7; etc.), in this episode 4Q also ties Jabesh-Gilead to other, Transjordanian tribes—a connection which Goldstein sees as borrowing from a separate, competing (?) tradition history. To summarize, 4Q tried to solve one problem, but unwittingly created another.

In response, it is clear that there are paronomastic and thematic connections woven throughout Judges and Samuel, and especially with these two stories in particular—even without 4Q's prologue. (See discussion in Youngblood, “1 & 2 Samuel,” 635–36.) It is, however, not necessary to accept Goldstein's two presuppositions that lead him to conclude 4Q's secondary nature. The repopulation of a city like Jabesh-Gilead after destruction would not be unexpected. In fact, Judges 21:23 allows for Jabesh to be among the cities and inheritances that the men of Benjamin—some of whom married the surviving virgins from Jabesh, thus possibly inheriting their lands—“returned to ... and rebuilt ... and lived in.” This could also explain the loyalty of Saul to Jabesh-Gilead from the start, for he was a Benjamite. Though, the story's coherence does not rest upon this possible explanation.

ὕμων πάντα ὀφθαλμὸν δεξιόν, καὶ
θήσομαι ὄνειδος ἐπὶ Ἰσραηλ.³ καὶ
λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄνδρες Ἰαβις
Ἴνες ἡμῖν ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας, καὶ
ἀποστελοῦμεν ἀγγέλους εἰς πᾶν
ὄριον Ἰσραηλ, ἐὰν μὴ ἦ ὁ σῶζων
ἡμᾶς, ἐξελευσόμεθα πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

In 4Q's gap that follows, according to MT and LXX, Saul is at home in Gibeah, farming when he gets word of the peril in Jabesh-Gilead (11:4–5). The רוח־אלהים comes upon him, enraging him into a gruesome act of dismembering oxen (reminiscent of Judges 19:29) to serve as a call to arms (reminiscent of Judges 21:5, 8). But in this call, he cites both himself *and* Samuel as the leaders to be followed in battle (11:6–7). 4Q then is recovered again at 11:7–12 over two columns (X, frgs. b–c; and XI, frg. a).

MT^L 11:7–12

7 וַיִּקַּח לְצִמָּד בָּקָר וַיִּנְתְּחֵהוּ וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּכָל־גְּבוּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיַד הַמְּלָאכִים לֵאמֹר אֲשֶׁר אֵינְנוּ יָצֵא
אֲחֵרֵי שְׂאוּל וְאֲחֵרֵי שְׂמוּאֵל כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה לְבַקְרוֹ
וַיִּפּוֹל פָּחַד יְהוָה עַל־הָעָם וַיִּצְאָאוּ כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד:
8 וַיִּפְקְדֵם בְּבִנְיָמִן וַיְהִי בְּגִי־יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁלֹּשׁ מֵאוֹת
אַלְפֵי וְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה שְׁלֹשִׁים אֶלְפֵי: 9 וַיֹּאמְרוּ
לְמַלְאכֵי הַבָּאִים כֹּה תֹאמְרוּן לְאִישׁ יָבִישׁ
גִּלְעָד מִתֵּר תְּהַיְהִי־לְכֶם תְּשׁוּעָה בְּחַם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
וַיִּבְאוּ הַמְּלָאכִים וַיִּגִּידוּ לְאַנְשֵׁי יָבִישׁ וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ:
10 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אַנְשֵׁי יָבִישׁ מִתֵּר תִּבְרַח וַיִּבְרַחוּ
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם לָנוּ כְּכָל־הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם: 11 וַיְהִי
מִמִּתְחַרֵּת וַיִּשֶׁם שְׂאוּל אֶת־הָעֵם שְׁלֹשָׁה רְאִשִׁים
וַיָּבֵאוּ בְּתוֹךְ־הַמִּתְחַנֶּה בָּאֶשְׁמֶרֶת הַבָּקָר וַיִּכּוּ
אֶת־עֲמֻוֹן עַד־תָּחַם הַיּוֹם וַיְהִי הַנֶּשְׂאָרִים וַיִּפְצְצוּ
וְלֹא נִשְׁאָרוּ־בָּם שְׁגִים יָחַד: 12 וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָעָם
אֶל־שְׂמוּאֵל מִי הָאֲמֹר שְׂאוּל יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ תָּנוּ
הָאֲנָשִׁים וְנִמְיָחָם:

4QSam^a col. X, frgs. b–c

1 בְּקָר וַיִּנְתְּחֵהוּ וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּכָל גְבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל
בִּיד מְלָאכִים לֵאמֹר אֲשֶׁר אֵינְנוּ יָצֵא אַחֲרַי
2 שְׂאוּל וְאַחֲרַי שְׂמוּאֵל כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה לְבַקְרוֹ
וַיִּפּוֹל פָּחַד יְהוָה עַל עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּצְעֲקוּ
3 כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד וַיִּפְקְדֵם בְּבוֹק בְּבוֹק כֹּל אִישׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁשׁ מֵאוֹת אֶלְפֵי וְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה
4 שֶׁבַע־עִים אֶלְפֵי וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׂאוּל לְמַלְאכִים
הַבָּאִים כֹּה תֹאמְרוּן לְאִישׁ יָבִישׁ מִתֵּר תִּבְרַח
5 מִיְהוָה הַתְּשׁוּעָה בְּחַם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּבְאוּ
הַמְּלָאכִים וַיִּגִּידוּ לְאַנְשֵׁי יָבִישׁ וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ
6 לְכֶם פָּתַח הַשָּׁמַיִם
7 וַיֹּאמְרוּ וַיִּבְרַחוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם לָנוּ כְּכָל הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם
8 [vacat וַיְהִי מִמִּתְחַרֵּת וַיִּשֶׁם שְׂאוּל אֶת־הָעֵם שְׁלֹשָׁה רְאִשִׁים
וַיָּבֵאוּ בְּתוֹךְ־הַמִּתְחַנֶּה בָּאֶשְׁמֶרֶת וַיִּכּוּ
9 בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּחֲנֶה בְּאֶשְׁמֶרֶת הַבָּקָר וַיִּכּוּ אֶת
בְּנֵי עֲמֻוֹן עַד חַם הַיּוֹם וַיְהִי הַנֶּשְׂאָרִים
column break

col. XI, frg. a

1 וַיִּפּוֹצְצוּ לוֹא נִשְׂאָרוּ בָּם שְׁנִים יָחַד

LXX^B 11:7–12

7 καὶ ἔλαβεν δύο βόας καὶ ἐμέλισεν
αὐτάς καὶ ἀπέστειλεν εἰς πᾶν ὄριον
Ἰσραηλ ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλων λέγων Ὅς
οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκπορευόμενος ὀπίσω
Σαουλ καὶ ὀπίσω Σαμουηλ, κατὰ
τάδε ποιήσουσιν τοῖς βουσίην αὐτοῦ.
καὶ ἐπῆλθεν ἕκστασις κυρίου ἐπὶ
τὸν λαὸν Ἰσραηλ, καὶ ἐβόησαν ὡς
ἀνὴρ εἷς. 8 καὶ ἐπισκέπτεται αὐτοὺς
Ἀβιεζεκ ἐν Βαμα, πᾶν ἄνδρα
Ἰσραηλ ἑξακοσίας χιλιάδας καὶ
ἄνδρας Ἰουδα ἑβδομήκοντα
χιλιάδας. 9 καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς ἀγγέλοις
τοῖς ἐρχομένοις Τάδε ἐρεῖτε τοῖς
ἀνδράσιν Ἰαβις Αὐρίον ὑμῖν ἡ
σωτηρία διαθερμάναντος τοῦ ἡλίου.
καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ἄγγελοι εἰς τὴν πόλιν
καὶ ἀπαγγέλλουσιν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν
Ἰαβις, καὶ εὐφράνθησαν. 10 καὶ εἶπαν
οἱ ἄνδρες Ἰαβις πρὸς Ναας τὸν
Ἀμμανίτην Αὐρίον ἐξελευσόμεθα

[ויאמר העם אל שמואל מי	πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ ποιήσετε ἡμῖν τὸ
[[ה]אומ[ש]לוא]	ἀγαθὸν ἐνώπιον ὑμῶν. ¹¹ καὶ
\	lacuna \	ἐγενήθη μετὰ τὴν αὐριον καὶ ἔθετο
		Σαουλ τὸν λαὸν εἰς τρεῖς ἀρχάς, καὶ
		εἰσπορεύονται μέσον τῆς παρεμ-
		βολῆς ἐν φυλακῇ τῇ πρωινῇ καὶ
		ἔτυπτον τοὺς υἱοὺς Αμμων, ἕως
		διεθερμάνθη ἡ ἡμέρα, καὶ ἐγενή-
		θησαν οἱ ὑπολελειμμένοι διεσπά-
		ρησαν, καὶ οὐχ ὑπελείφθησαν ἐν
		αὐτοῖς δύο κατὰ τὸ αὐτό. ¹² καὶ
		εἶπεν ὁ λαὸς πρὸς Σαμουηλ Τίς ὁ
		εἶπας ὅτι Σαουλ οὐ βασιλεύσει
		ἡμῶν; παράδος τοὺς ἄνδρας, καὶ
		θανατώσομεν αὐτούς.

The scene ends with Saul nobly assuaging the people, sparing the former rebels from death, and giving credit for his victory to God (כי היום עשה יהוה תשועה בישראל; 11:13). Seizing the moment, Samuel calls a convocation to “renew the kingdom” (וּנְחַדְשׁוּ...הַמְּלוּכָה), in which the people make Saul king again, this time offering sacrifices and rejoicing. Notably, Saul himself rejoices with them (11:14–15).

According to this reconstruction of 4Q,¹³⁴ the Hebrew texts differ from one another in eleven details (other than in orthography and the occasional plus/minus of the article). In two of them, MT has the longer reading by a single word: יביש (גלעד) and לכם תשועה (תהיה), both in MT 11:9. In the other nine instances, however, 4Q is longer. Now, though one cannot be certain of these readings, due to the *paltry* remains of the fragments and the degree to which their text must be estimated, yet, based on a reasonable deduction from the preserved column and line spacing, *it is assured that 4Q exhibits a consistently fuller text than MT in this scene.*¹³⁵ Besides this, in seven of these nine cases, the LXX also differs from MT, and if retroverted into Hebrew, it would approximate the readings of 4Q given here. Finally, in another two cases, LXX includes a phrase not found in either MT or reconstructed 4Q: εἰς τὴν πόλιν (11:9) and πρὸς Ναας τὸν

¹³⁴ Again, Cross, *DJD XVII*, 67–70; frg. a = Leon Levy Library 1096, frg. 8; and frg. b = LLL 1106, frg. 35. See Appendix B plates 4–5.

¹³⁵ See also the reconstructions of Fincke, *The Samuel Scroll*, 292–93; and Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls*, 272; which agree on this conclusion.

Αμμανίτην (11:10). Since so little of the details are certain, I have bypassed the overall grid-style analysis employed in scene one. Only a few further comments are offered here.

4Q = LXX ≠ MT

The details of one agreement between 4Q and LXX is certain—but only one. It is the number of Judahite soldiers that gathered at Bezek: ἑβδομήκοντα χιλιάδας // שבעים אלף (11:8), which is also attested in *Ant.* 6.78.¹³⁶ Following this, it is reasonable to expect that, though it is not preserved, the other figure given in the same verse for the soldiers of Israel would agree as well with LXX, ἑξακοσίας χιλιάδας // שש מאות אלף rather than MT, שלש מאות אלף.¹³⁷ Josephus calls this into question by his numbering of them to be *seven* hundred thousand. But being that there are no LXX manuscripts known today to back him up, it seems likely that he modified the number accidentally or perhaps stylistically (for the symmetry of “sevens”).

4Q ≠ LXX ≠ MT

Two other variants are visibly preserved in 4Q’s fragments, which do not agree to LXX^B or MT. The first deals with Saul’s message to the people of Jabesh about “tomorrow” (11:9).

MT ^L	תְּהִי־לְכֶם תְּשׁוּעָה	deliverance will be yours
4QSam ^a	לְכֶם מִיְהוָה הַתֵּשׁ[וּעָה	the deliverance for you from the LORD
LXX ^B	ὕμῖν ἡ σωτηρία	deliverance for you
LXX ^L (cf. OL)	ὕμῖν ἔσται ἡ σωτηρία	deliverance will be yours

Cross, rightly I think, supposes that מִיְהוָה and תְּהִי may have been graphically confused, and concludes that 4Q’s reading was either a mistake or a presumptuous correction, in either case anticipating Saul’s coming ascription of salvation to God (11:13).¹³⁸ That MT’s reading makes the most sense is further supported by the manuscripts boc₂e₂ (G^L) and by OL. Though the word

¹³⁶ “So they came together, out of fear of the losses they were threatened with, at the appointed time; and the multitude were numbered at the city Bezek; and he found the number of those that were gathered together, besides that of the tribe of Judah, to be seven hundred thousand, while those of that tribe were seventy thousand.” (*Ant.* 6.78)

¹³⁷ Cross (*DJD XVII*, 68–69) notes that the difference here is a single letter, ל, which was either added or lost by a scribe along the way. However, while this could explain the variant numbers for Israel, it would *not* explain the same for Judah (שבעים vs. שלשים). Rather than a scribal error, then, it seems to be a literary factor.

¹³⁸ Cross, *DJD XVII*, 68.

orderings in the latter are not identical with each other nor with MT, this does not preclude the scenario that in every other factor seems to emerge.¹³⁹

The second visible variant corresponds to MT 11:9 as well, but comes in 4Q line 6 (X, b). Scholars leave a blank space at this point in publication, because whatever comes next cannot be reconstructed based on any biblical text. But enough lettering has survived in the following line to make suspicious the case of this being a mere scribal corruption. Cross cautiously proposed that the discrepancy arose as a loss in MT from *homoioteleuton*. For, what (presumably) preceded לַכֶּם at the end of line 5 was וַיֹּאמְרוּ, and 4Q resumes harmony with MT at וַיֹּאמְרוּ in line 7.¹⁴⁰ McCarter, again following Cross, suggests that this loss was the speech Nahash gave at the end of his appointed week of respite.¹⁴¹ Indeed, it appears to be a command to “open the gates,”¹⁴² and this would make sense of the people’s somewhat abrupt declaration in 11:10, that on the morrow they would “come out.”¹⁴³ But Herbert is certainly right that in this scenario 4Q would have to be reconstructed quite differently in line 5 (against MT) so as to make room for an introduction to Nahash’s speech. The speaker is better presumed to be from Saul’s men, wishing to enter Jabesh, which otherwise was on lockdown.¹⁴⁴

Whatever was truly the content of line 6, it seems doubtful that it preceded the MT text form at 11:9. For one thing, Josephus appears to be silent on the material. For another, the elaborate, even superfluous details of 4Q are mounting in this section of Samuel. Herbert surveys the facts well:

Comparisons between the amount of space available in columns 9 and 10 and the amount of material from MT to fill that space reveals that there are ten or more lines of further material in 4QSam^a that is not present in MT (or LXX or L[ucian]), which in all probability is made up of several pluses. Since the extant 1 Sam 10:3–18 must lie wholly within one column, which must be column 9, it

¹³⁹ On account of this McCarter (*1 Samuel*, 200–201) postulates that LXX^L/OL was the earliest of these readings, corrupted first in 4Q (by the means Cross described), and then secondarily (as a correction?) in MT. Since תהיה does not align with LXX^L, he suggests, it must have changed since departing from their common ancestor. However, I do not find the word order convincing, given that the translator of OG (thus streaming down to LXX^L/OL) might have modified the order.

¹⁴⁰ Cross, *DJD XVII*, 68.

¹⁴¹ McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 201.

¹⁴² *DSSB* breaks company with most by translating this as an indicative (“they will open”), presumably a *qal* perfect, since there is no prefix. But the perfect form being used in a future (prophetic?) sense here is more difficult to see than the alternative, i.e., imperative.

¹⁴³ In fact, LXX clarifies that they were saying this “to Nahash the Ammonite,” but even McCarter suspects this of being a scribal edit for clarity.

¹⁴⁴ Herbert, “4QSam^a and Its Relationship to the LXX,” 53.

becomes clear that the full expansion has occurred within column 10, i.e. between 1 Sam 10:18 and 11:11. ... [I]f these were original, then *at least three* separate major (presumably beneficial) pluses would *each* have had to have been omitted from the traditions of *both* MT and LXX, the latter presumably through its passing contacts with MT, which has been seen to have made only limited impact on the rest of the LXX tradition [of 1–2 Reigns]. Such a sequence of events is improbable in the extreme.¹⁴⁵

Other disparate readings and reconstructions could be analyzed, but with diminishing returns for the goal of this paper. The commentary must simply close here, and lead into the overall, final analysis of the text-critical questions.

Concluding Analysis

Let it be recalled that the Story of Nahash, through these two scenes and transition, is a narrative exposition for the life and reign of Saul. This act in the drama of Samuel is fittingly typified as a “story of the deliverer,” like those of the major judges (Jdgs 3:7–16:31).¹⁴⁶ Though, besides Israel’s deliverance, it serves literarily to develop Saul. His abilities and his attitude toward kingship are divinely altered. Whereas at the beginning he is timid, he becomes strong. After being made king, he still enlists Samuel for his authority. But gradually Saul takes full command. Though at first, some openly scorn him and reject his kingship, in time all Israel fears and follows him. The prophet Samuel is presented as having known of the precarious state the nation and the newborn monarchy were in. For, he later capitalizes on Saul’s heroics to confirm his throne indisputably. In the end, Saul as well as the people rejoice in his kingship. This content sheds light on the text.

In this understanding, 1 Samuel 10:17–11:15 are a coherent unit.¹⁴⁷ The time text “after one month,” that appears between the two chapters, proves to be an organic seam that ties together problem and solution directly.¹⁴⁸ It does not require the vignette of the oppression of Gilead or of the seven thousand refugees to make sense of the events either side of them. Rather,

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.; emphasis original.

¹⁴⁶ McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 205–206.

¹⁴⁷ Pisano, “Additions or Omissions,” 97.

¹⁴⁸ In scene one, the “sons of Belial” scorned Saul at his installation, saying that he was unable to deliver Israel (10:27). Indeed, Saul had not behaved like a deliverer up to then. The problem of Israel’s vulnerability is alluded to in the scoundrels’ complaint that they needed deliverance. Perhaps this appointment of weak leadership is what prompted Nahash to act upon Jabesh-Gilead in the month that ensued. But scene two is the literary answer to the problem.

the vignette buffers an otherwise tight and smooth transition. It diminishes the poignancy of the turn from one scene to the next as links in the chain of narrative context. To assert this is not merely a matter of preference for one text tradition over another, for the context described above is in fact shared by 4Q, MT, and LXX all. It is reasonable to expect that, all else being equal, the longer text which makes less sense of its context is the later one. Yet, besides this, the longer text of 4Q shares similarities with midrashic practices, as has been shown. Given that several segments of text in close proximity are missing from other witnesses, and each of them having no satisfactory explanation for their loss, the pattern of editorial expansion emerges in Q4. Its phenomena can be sensibly explained as a commentary interwoven with a copy of Samuel.

One must, then, judge how the four witnesses relate to one another genealogically. The conclusion that best fits the facts is that 4Q represents a unique literary development of the text in 1 Samuel 10–11. Whether that title should be extended to the rest of the scroll must be left to another study. Though, the observations made by Rofé, Goldstein, Herbert, and Pisano are poignant here and approach the reality from different angles. Though helped by Tov’s method and analysis, as well as the insights of Cross, McCarter, and Ulrich, I must part ways with their conclusion. The form of 4Q appears to be later than MT and LXX, though it is possible that it may have subsequently affected the transmission of LXX in some cases. It certainly stood in a tradition known to Josephus and which influenced his *Ant.* in the first century CE; so too it may have affected transmission of the Greek Bible concurrent with Josephus. More often, however, 4Q and LXX bear resemblance to each other because of a common ancestor (or “stemma”).

The best explanation for 4Q’s differences with LXX is that the Hebrew *Vorlage(n)* of OG (or that *Vorlage’s* earlier ancestor) must have parted ways from a common tradition with 4Q before the latter reached its present form. Obviously, this does not mean that all 4Q readings divergent from MT or from LXX are secondary. What I have called the “time text” (ויהי כמחדש or ויהי כמו חדש) is a prime example of MT being secondary to both 4Q and LXX. That reading is a hinge on which portions of my argument turn. But as an edition, 4Q is almost certainly later than its counterparts here examined. To put this in light of my assumptions, then, 4Q’s archetype must have had a common ancestor with proto-MT as well. A possible scenario is that it underwent literary development sometime prior to ca. 50 BCE (the date of 4QSam^a) but later than ca. 200 BCE (the date of OG Samuel). Another is that 4Q developed in two stages, one before the point

of contact with Josephus, and one after.¹⁴⁹ But this cannot now be traced with much precision given the data available.

Though an avalanche of discussion over the distinction between MT and LXX was created by the discovery of 4QSam^a, the latter's secondary nature should be accepted, and its implications integrated in that discussion. It is true, 4Q bears witness to a form of text in Hebrew that is close to OG's *Vorlage*. This bolsters confidence in the text-critic's ability to recover OG with increasing precision. For example, in the Book of Samuel (1–2 Reigns), where the text of LXX^B is believed *not* to be the *Kaige* revision but rather the OG, the faithfulness of the original translator is coming more and more to light because of 4Q. Texts that in the past had been presumed to be “free translations” should be re-examined, and they are. But in the Story of Nahash, LXX does not differ greatly from MT, and certainly not in a literary manner like 4Q. There are many literary differences between LXX and MT in Samuel, as elsewhere. But occasionally their commonality is the more telling, and it should not be lost in text-critical excitement.

Finally, as already mentioned, Josephus's *Ant.* confirms that the text form witnessed in 4Q enjoyed some measure of influence on biblical traditions one hundred years or more after its appearance. I am not convinced that Josephus used exclusively one text form, language, or pedigree over any other for his *Vorlage(n)*.¹⁵⁰ Even the term “*Vorlage*” must be used loosely with his sources. His data is rather a mix of traditions and likely rabbinic midrash. It is all the more expected, then, that he would adopt and adapt the additional material found in the tradition behind 4Q. His idea of history is often hero-centric and militarily organized. Saul in particular is a character of his interest (cf. *Ant.* 6.343–50). Thus, the Story of Nahash in 4Q is practically Josephan, even if it was not canonical in his day.

This study has been introductory to a topic of great interest to the scholarly publishing community. It has not broken new ground, but surveyed the field of current opinion by means of a background, commentary, and analysis. It shows that questions for text-critical scholars remain, such as whether 4QSam^a can be called a biblical scroll; when the text forms of MT, LXX, and 4QSam^a diverged specifically; or whether Greek Samuel can clarify the number of

¹⁴⁹ Herbert, “4QSam^a and Its Relationship to the LXX,” 54.

¹⁵⁰ This, not even for 1–2 Samuel; *pace* Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans: 1999, 184–201.

layers in the Lucianic revision. I have set forth some of my own opinions on these above, and in the appendix, I have provided an illustration of my understanding of Samuel's textual genealogy in its context. As the footnotes indicate, this paper also anticipates the publication of several tools that will be important to investigating those questions further, such as the forthcoming critical edition of the *Vetus Latina* on Samuel or the commentaries on the Septuagint of Samuel. Still, it has helped to clarify the relationship between the witnesses of the Story of Nahash, and to characterize them further even if not finally.

APPENDIX A

PLATES

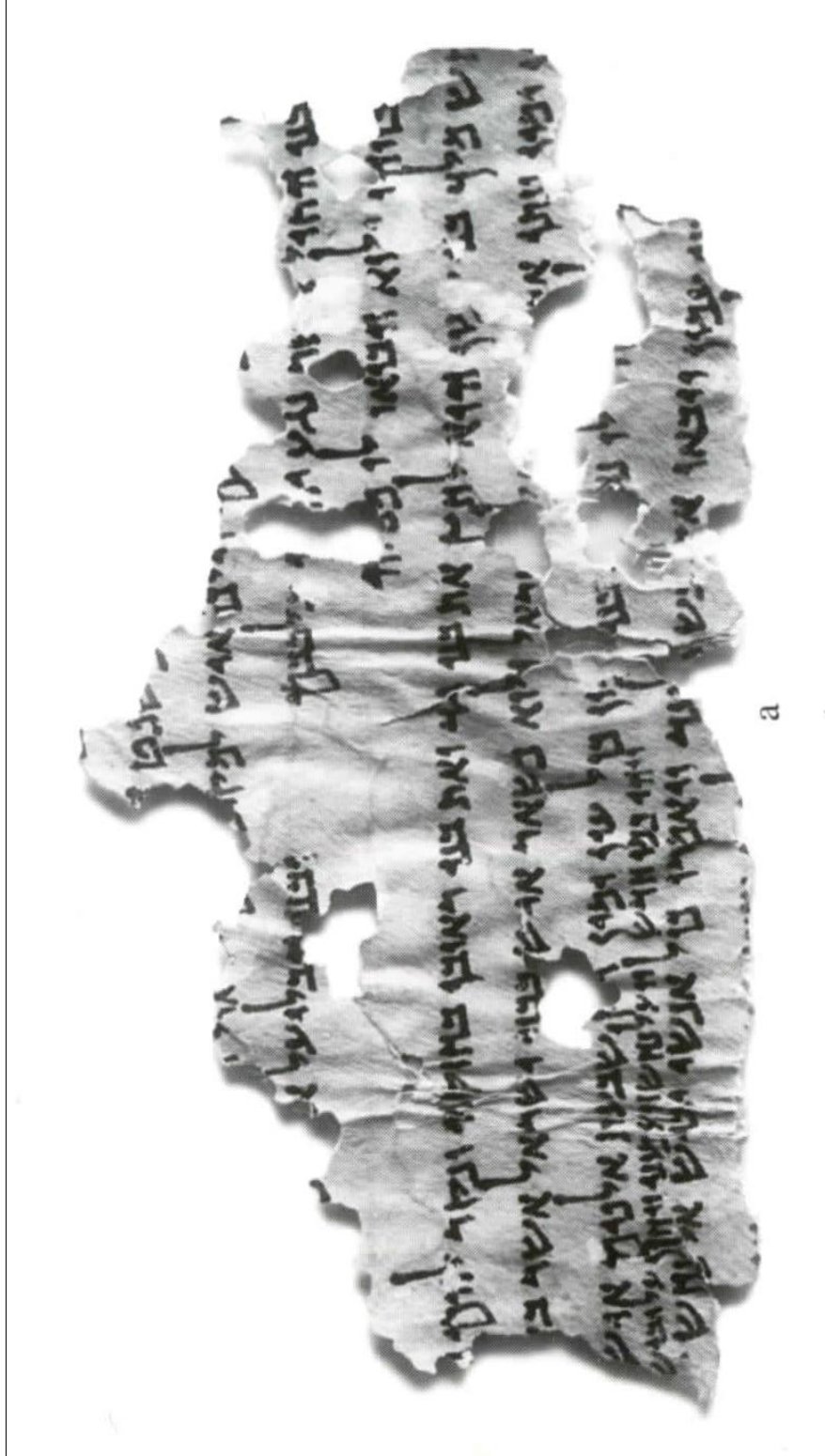


Plate 1: DJD XVII (2005), plate X, frg. a.

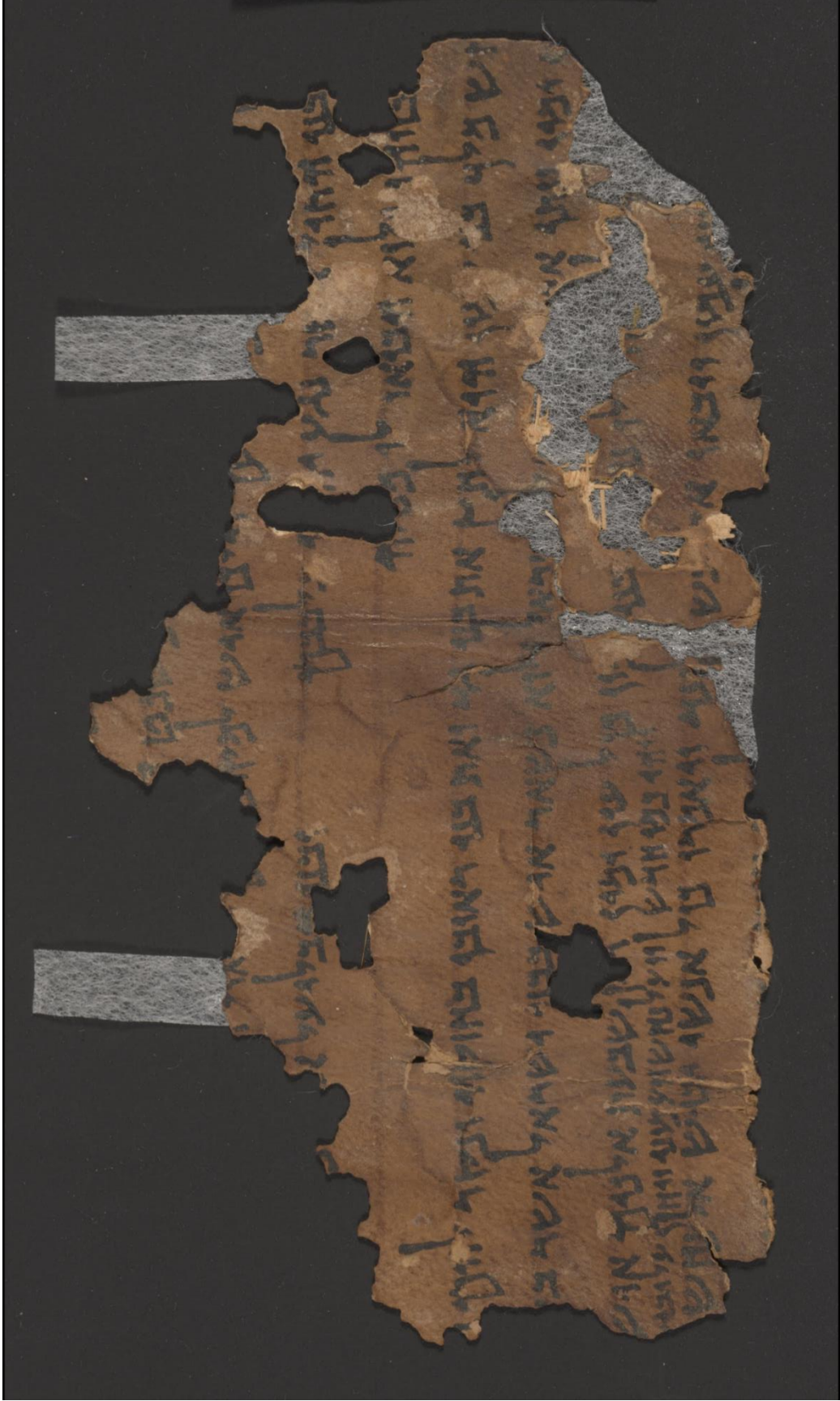


Plate 2: Leon Levy DSS Library (2013), plate 1096, fig. 6 full spectrum color

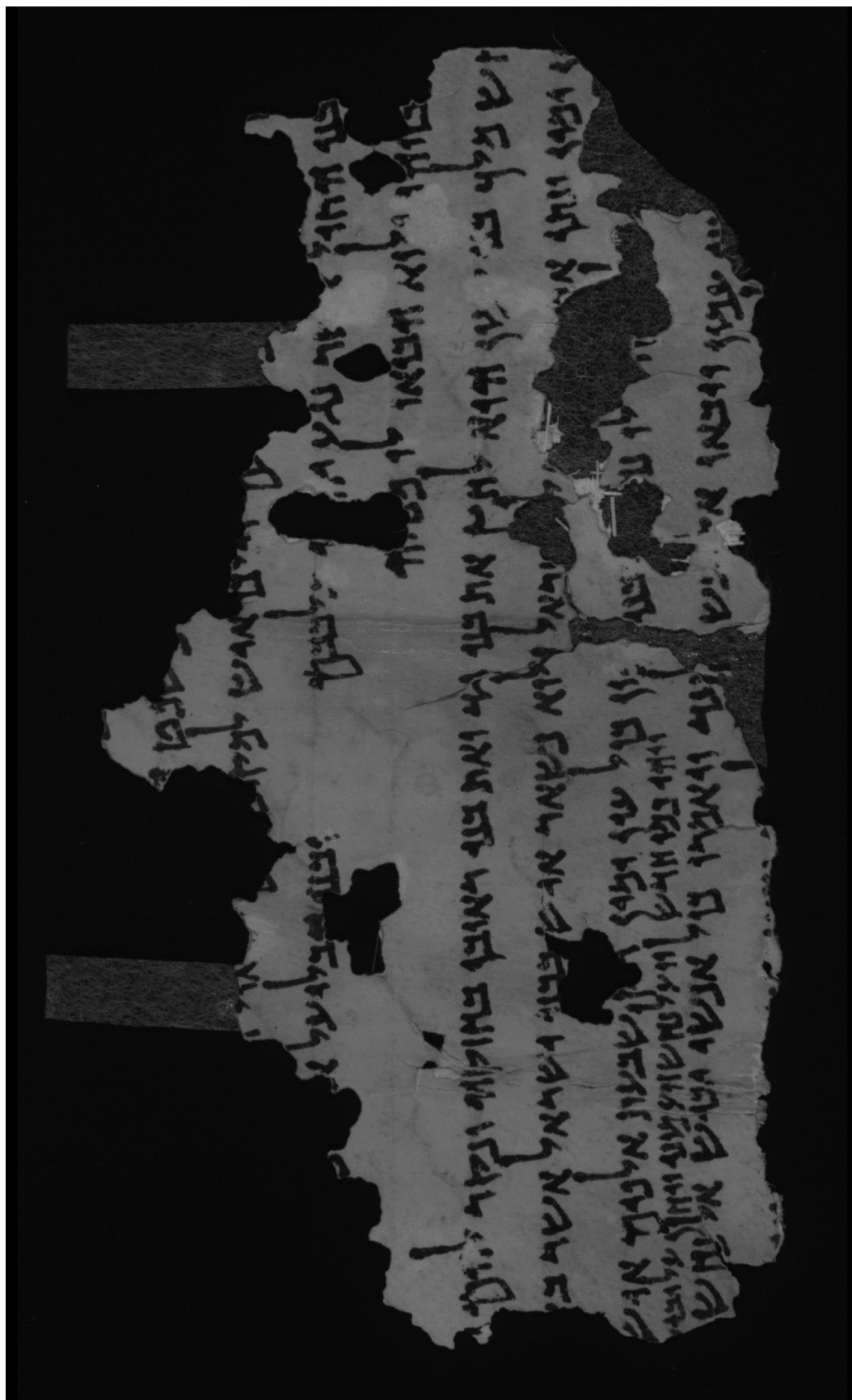


Plate 3: Leon Levy DSS Library (2013), plate 1096, fig. 6 infrared

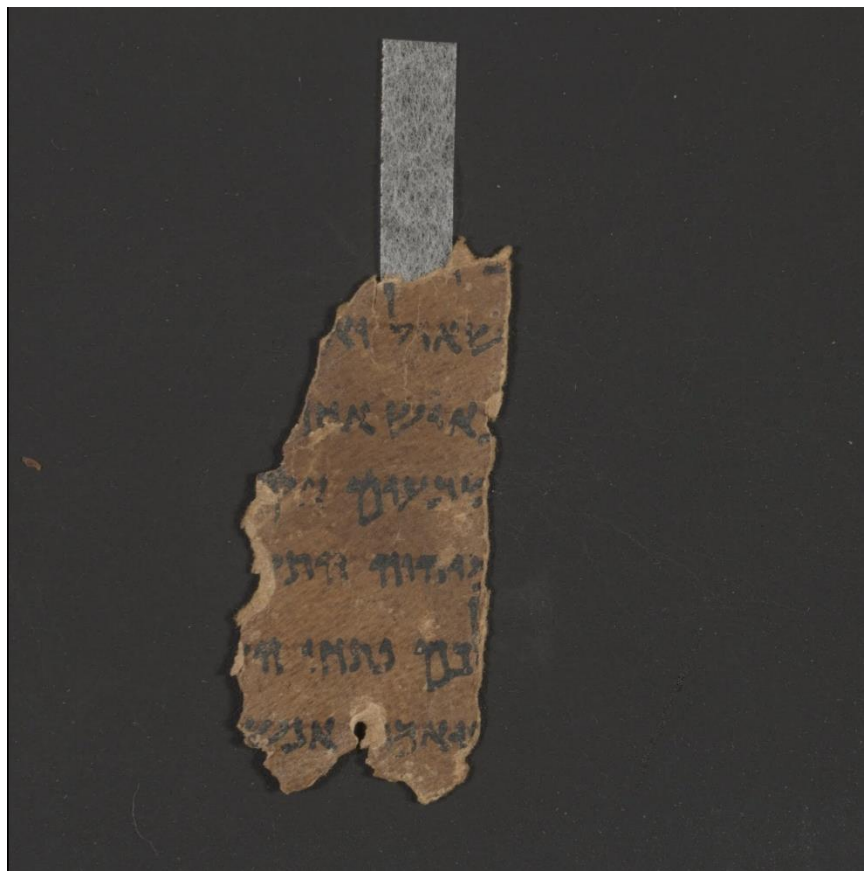


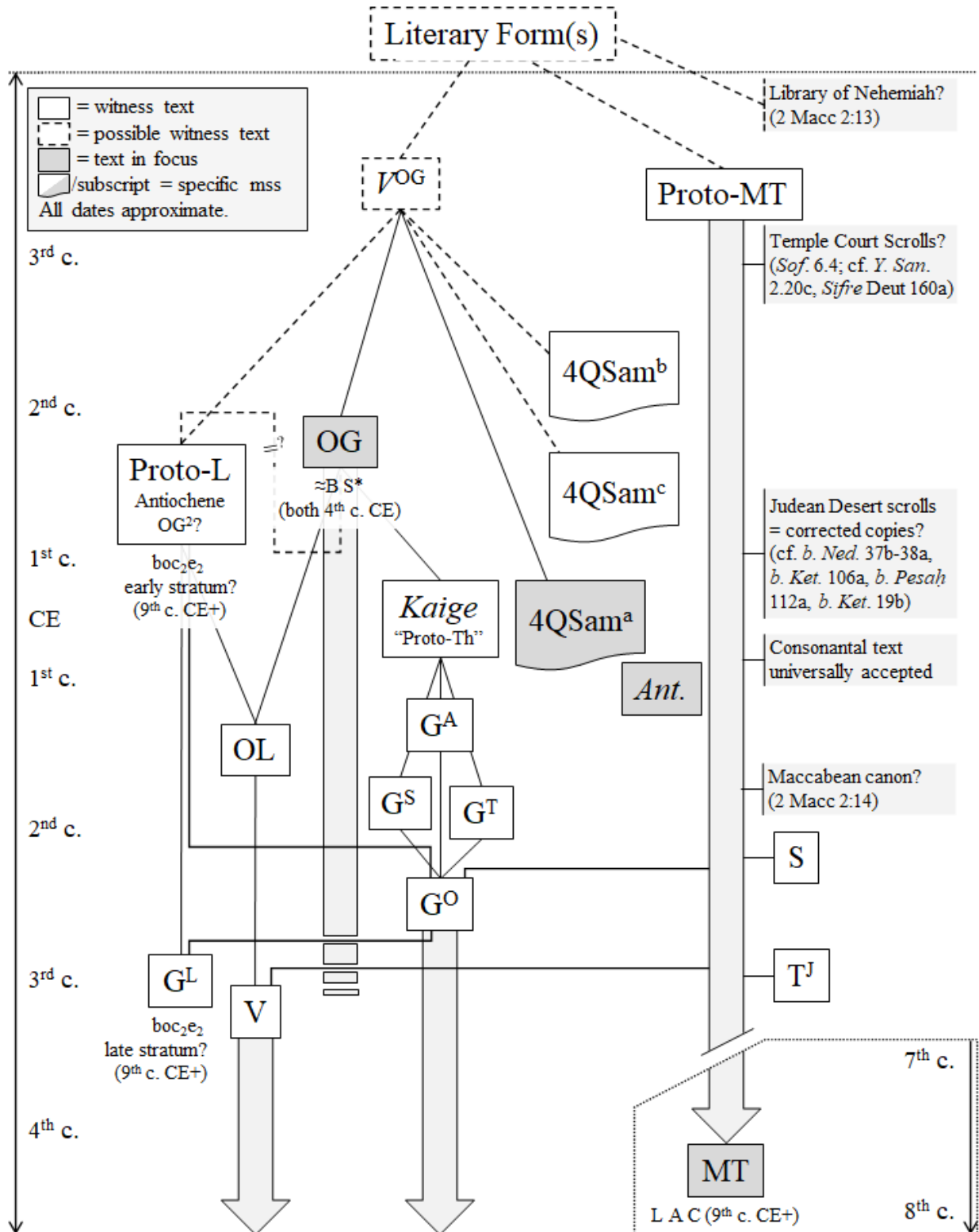
Plate 4: Leon Levy DSS Library (2013), plate 1096, frg. 8 infrared

Plate 5: Leon Levy DSS Library (2013), plate 1106, frg. 35 infrared



APPENDIX B

TEXTUAL GENEALOGY OF I-II SAMUEL



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