

FOREWORD

This Hebrew Bible represents a thoroughly revised, reset, and redesigned edition of the תורה נביאים וכתובים, originally published in 1973 by ADI (Tel Aviv) and the School of Jewish Studies of Tel Aviv University, with several corrected printings until 1986. It is gratifying to have the opportunity to prepare this new edition with enhanced features that make it suited for research, classroom, and liturgical use.

To justify the appearance of a new edition of the Hebrew Bible, it should have some novel features, otherwise one might question the reason for yet another edition. The information provided by editors on the title pages does not really help the reader to discover what might be the difference between one edition and another. Most of them proudly claim to be “accurate according to the Masora.” This is not the place to define the characteristic of the well-known editions, but it is only right that we should tell the reader what is new in the present edition, which too, in so many words, claims to be “accurate according to the Masora.”

This is a well-worn expression and invariably employed, and, as a result of such constant use, one no longer realizes its original significance. The Masora and the Talmud have in common the feature that in both of them scholars assembled opinions from many sources without always indicating the right one. However, the situation of the Masora is even worse since there is no authoritative, final, codified collection of the masoretic literature upon which matters of text and Masora can be decided.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, Jacob ben Ḥayyim Ibn Adonijah of Tunis, a proofreader at the famous printing house of Daniel Bomberg in Venice, did attempt to codify the Masora and provide a correct version of the myriads of masoretic notes scattered in manuscripts. He prepared the biblical text and the masoretic notes in the second edition of the Rabbinic Bible (Venice, 1524–1525). This text was largely accepted and, until recent generations, was considered the *textus receptus* of the Hebrew Bible and the recognized text of *the* Masora.

Jacob ben Ḥayyim immersed himself in the vast material at his disposal, which included multitudes of masoretic notes and lists. This material contained considerable differences in details, contradictions between readings and minor matters of the text, and also evident and hidden corruptions. Or as he stated it, “When I examined these Masoretic books, and mastered their contents, I found them in the utmost disorder and confusion, so much so that there was not a sentence to be found without a blunder.”¹ It was only after profound

¹ *Jacob Ben Chajjim Ibn Adonijah's Introduction to the Rabbinic Bible* (ed. C. D. Ginsburg; London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867; repr., New York: Ktav, 1968), 78.

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study and reflection and following painstaking and conscientious comparison of the different sources that he made his selection and decided what was correct, and this is what he printed in his masoretic version. In his own words: “Whenever I took exception to the statement of a certain Codex of the Massorah, because its remark did not harmonise with the majority of the copies of the Massorah, whilst the same difficulty was not found in the others, or whenever it contradicted itself or where there was a mistake, I made a careful search till I discovered the truth, according to my humble knowledge. . . . The Lord alone knows how much labour I bestowed thereon, as those will testify who saw me working at it.”²

The Masoretes who followed Jacob ben Ḥayyim, such as Menahem di Lonzano and Jedidiah Solomon Norzi, down to the scholars of recent generations, such as Wolf Heidenheim, Seligman Isaac Baer, Meir Letteris, and C. D. Ginsburg, aimed at improving and sifting his Masora, and according to it correct the biblical text which he had edited. In thus trying to improve the text of Jacob ben Ḥayyim, their avowed aim was to get as close as possible to the Ben Asher text.

Aaron ben Moses ben Asher (beginning of the tenth century) gained fame in his time from his work on the vocalization and accentuation of the Bible, and editing of the Masora and masoretic treatises. But he attained his leading position and status of supreme authority when Maimonides declared in *Hilkhot Sefer Torah* (VIII, 4) that he had relied on the manuscript “corrected and examined minutely by Ben Asher for a great many years and corrected numerous times.”

We find a number of grammarians and Masoretes who proclaimed the superiority of Ben Asher’s text. A contemporary of Maimonides, R. David Kimḥi (in his commentary to Ps 62:4, among other places) wrote: “And we rely on Ben Asher’s reading.” At the time of Jacob ben Ḥayyim, R. Elijah Levita wrote: “We rely on the reading of Ben Asher.”³ And after that, at the end of the sixteenth century, Jedidiah Solomon Norzi stated: “And we rely on the reading of Ben Asher. Also Maimonides of blessed memory relied on him . . . and this is a major principle in Bible study” (*Minḥat Shay* on Gen 1:3). Subsequent scholars throughout generations have held similar opinions.

Their desire to rely on Ben Asher’s text was never more than a pious wish, for the text was only known by hearsay. All the evidence about Ben Asher’s readings was second- or thirdhand. It derived from masoretic remarks in biblical manuscripts, from the writings of grammarians and Masoretes, and from the

² *Ibid.*, 80.

³ *The Massoreth ha-Massoreth of Elias Levita* (ed. C. D. Ginsburg; London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867; repr., New York: Ktav, 1968), 261 and also 114.

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lists of differences between Ben Asher and his opponent Moses ben David ben Naphtali. With many of their attempts at improving the printed Bible editions, their guiding light was the Ben Asher text—this was their choice and the one they sought to restore. But no manuscript of Aaron ben Asher’s Bible was known. The aspirations toward it never got beyond gleaning crumbs of information about readings from other secondhand sources, and the choice among the variants was arrived at by reasoning. However, masoretic tradition and logical reasoning are hardly congenial bedfellows. Numerous Bible editions in the last few generations, and also in our own, were prepared in this manner—collections of readings and a reasoned decision. It is as if we were to examine the biblical vocalization according to our rules of grammar and the biblical accents according to our accent rules. This is putting the cart before the horse since the rules of grammar and accents derive from the accurate Bible text. Truth to tell, so long as Ben Asher’s text was unknown there was no other way.

However, since the middle of the last century, two originally complete Bible manuscripts connected with Aaron ben Asher have become widely known. One of these is the manuscript in (what was formerly) Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), known as B19a (= the Leningrad Codex), written in Old Cairo (Fustat) by the scribe Samuel ben Jacob in 1009.⁴ This scribe also pointed the manuscript and provided it with accents and with Masora, all “from the corrected and clear books which were made by the master Aaron ben Moses ben Asher, may he rest in the Garden of Eden. And it is corrected very accurately.” The other manuscript is known as the Aleppo Codex and is now in Jerusalem.⁵ The colophon, added to the manuscript after his death, attributes its pointing to Aaron ben Asher. After having been kept by the Aleppo Jewish community for hundreds of years, the manuscript was damaged during the anti-Jewish riots there in 1948, and more than a third of it was destroyed (this includes also the whole of the Pentateuch except for a few pages).⁶

⁴ An excellent photographic edition of this manuscript is now available: *The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition* (ed. D. N. Freedman, A. B. Beck, B. E. Zuckerman, M. J. Lundberg, and J. A. Sanders; photographers: B. E. Zuckerman, K. A. Zuckerman, M. J. Lundberg, and G. I. Moller; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, and Leiden: Brill, 1998).

⁵ For the facsimile edition, see *The Aleppo Codex* (ed. M. H. Goshen-Gottstein; Jerusalem: Magnes Press and the Hebrew University Bible Project, 1976).

⁶ The Hebrew University Bible Project has undertaken the publication of this Codex many years ago. Since 1965 the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah have appeared. The *Mikra’ot Gedolot ‘Haketer’* edition by Bar-Ilan University (ed. M. Cohen) is also based on the text and Masora of the Aleppo Codex. Volumes of Genesis, Joshua–Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, and Ezekiel have appeared recently.

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These two manuscripts bear each other out to quite a considerable extent and in fact constitute the main representatives of the Ben Asher text, which for generations never ceased being the cynosure of the Masoretes and Bible editors. In spite of the differences between them, which are inconsequential, the two manuscripts clearly belong to one school, which in matters of vocalization, accents, and Masora differ substantially from other texts. Anyone wishing to publish a Ben Asher text of the Bible, must necessarily select one of these two manuscripts.

We are not here concerned with the question which of the two is preferable as far as the text is concerned, that is to say, which one is closer to the original Ben Asher text in minutest detail. There is no need here to become involved in clarifying this important question since the Aleppo Codex is incomplete; basing oneself on it, one would anyway have to complete about thirty-five percent of it according to some other manuscript, and such an edition would once again be an eclectic text and not all of one piece. To the question which manuscript is likely to serve as the basis for a Bible edition reflecting the Ben Asher text, the answer is therefore unequivocal, and indeed, the Leningrad Codex was chosen to serve that purpose. Its closeness to the Aaron ben Asher text is not its only advantage; it is also the oldest *complete* Bible manuscript in our possession.

This is not the first edition to be based on the Leningrad Codex. It was preceded by the scientific edition, the third edition of the *Biblia Hebraica (BH)* from Stuttgart, published by a group of scholars lead by Paul Kahle and Rudolf Kittel (1929–1937). It includes an apparatus of critical variants and many notes. But since it lacks a division into the weekly portions and their subdivision for synagogue reading from the Torah, it is unsuitable for Jewish usage. As a scientific edition too, it has its faults, such as numerous errors and corruptions, particularly in vocalization and accents, but also in *plene* and defective spelling, some of them printing errors and others faulty reading of the manuscript. A revised edition, the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS)*, edited by Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph (1967–1977), has appeared, but it also has some serious mistakes. The number of printing errors may be less, but the corruptions from mistaken readings of the manuscript are even more numerous than in its predecessor. Another edition, the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ)*, is in the process of preparation by a wide group of biblical scholars.

FEATURES OF THIS EDITION

We have produced here an edition of one of the oldest masoretic witnesses of the complete Hebrew Bible, in a format ideal for the scholar, teacher, and student. It is our special aim, however, to produce an accurate Bible suitable for Jewish ritual use as well. Therefore, though keeping exactly to the text of the Leningrad manuscript, we were occasionally obliged to deviate from it for

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the sake of customs and conventions that have become rooted since the time the manuscript was written. In addition, modern typography and book production require a number of changes, most of them for the reader's convenience, and they will be pointed out in what follows.

THE TEXT

The most arduous task is, of course, reading the manuscript. Reliance on one single manuscript, making it unnecessary for the editor to decide between variant readings, seemingly facilitates his task. In actual fact, this is not the case since the decision between the different readings is his alone, irrespective of whether others agree with him or not. However, in order to produce the exact text of one manuscript, the editor undertakes to present the scribe's intention even in those instances where the manuscript is insufficiently clear on account of defacement, spots, lacunae, and fading that have affected it over the course of time, as the result of much handling, or on account of mistakes of the scribe and slips of the pen.

Sometimes it is difficult to decide whether the manuscript offers the commonly accepted reading or a different reading which, though possible in itself, was perhaps not intended by the scribe but may be read only because of the state of the manuscript. The most problematic decision is in those cases where a blurred reading in the manuscript gives an intrinsically possible text, even though it is unusual, and one does not know whether it is a fault in the manuscript and the intended reading is the usual one or if perhaps the scribe intended an unusual reading. And while not every spot is a point, particularly in a photograph, it is not always easy to distinguish between the two. Sometimes it is difficult to differentiate between two equally possible readings, which makes a decision even harder. Some of our hesitations and difficulties will be recognized in the list of "Manuscript Variants" in Appendix A, pp. 1229–37 (N.B.: a verse number with the siglum A set on the inside margin of the text, such as 23A in Gen 7:23, alerts the reader to a variant reading that appears in Appendix A). Despite the importance and authority of the Leningrad Codex on which we base ourselves, we must not follow it slavishly and blindly nor copy obvious mistakes even if they were clearly produced by the scribe himself. The thin dividing line between errors that the editor must correct and the variant readings that he must reproduce exactly as they stand constitutes the burden whose weight can be fully appreciated only by those who have themselves experienced it.

Matters become even more complicated in what concerns the corrections made in the manuscript. As is well known, the Leningrad Codex is a corrected document, which has been adapted to Ben Asher's readings by a large number of emendations. These are not always absolutely clear, especially when observed through a photographic reproduction of the manuscript. The worst problem is the erasures of marks in the original that have not always been carried out with

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a firm hand. In such cases, the photographs may increase the illusion. Sometimes, the better the photographic technique, the more our eye may be led astray. To give one example, in וְהֵעֵמְנִים (Deut 2:20) originally there was a *ga^cya* under the *he*. The scribe who adapted the manuscript erased the *ga^cya*, and in a regular good photograph⁷ almost nothing is left of the *ga^cya*, only the erasure blot is visible. However, in extremely sophisticated photography, as in Zuckerman's recently published excellent reproduction,⁸ the *ga^cya* is clearly visible, although with an aura of a darkish spot around it. Since darkish spots are not rare in the manuscript and since the *ga^cya* is very clear in that photograph, one could have considerable doubt whether there was an erasure at all. Another example would be הָאֲחֵרֶת (Num 7:85) where originally the *he* had a *ga^cya* that was erased. In a regular photograph the erasure is quite clear and raises no question; however in Zuckerman's reproduction the *ga^cya* appears very clearly. This is a result of the better photographic technique that penetrates deep under the surface of the parchment and catches the imbedded ink, untouched by the scratches of the erasure. Consequently, a better photograph, which in most cases is of much help, may in some other cases interfere with a clear decision.

There are numerous fundamental decisions for adding or omitting symbols on which we had to decide for the sake of the uniformity and legibility of the text. Very occasionally we gave readings different from those familiar to most people in the list of Manuscript Variants and not in the text (e.g., מְהַרְרֵהוּ—Exod 28:27 and 39:20).

After the publication of the first edition we have indulged in clarifying systematically a series of linguistic and masoretic problems in the vocalization and accentuation of the Codex, mainly in matters of the placing of some accent signs, the use of *ḥataf pataḥ*, and in the use of *dagesh forte*.

Examination of the occasional omission or misplacement of some major disjunctive accents generated a new insight into the ancient, pre-Tiberian, stress position. This was summed up in "Residues of an Ancient Penult Stress in the Tiberian Tradition."⁹

⁷ Such as the one that served us for editing the text in 1973 (not the completely unsatisfactory Makor reproduction, Jerusalem 1971).

⁸ See above, note 4.

⁹ Read at the second International Congress of IOMS (=International Organization for Masoretic Studies) in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 18 August 1974, and published in an elaborate form in Hebrew: "Shəqi'e ḥaṭ'amat millə'el 'attiqa ba-masoret ha-tavranit," *Hebrew Language Studies Presented to Professor Zeev Ben-Hayyim* (ed. M. Bar-Asher, A. Dotan, G. B. Sarfatti, and D. Téné; Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1983), 143–60.

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The exceptional marking of *ḥaṭaf pataḥ* was also examined and found to be following a clear phonetic pattern of which much can be learned on the ancient pronunciation. This was summed up in “*Ḥaṭaf Pataḥs—A Study of the Ancient Stages of the Vocalization.*”¹⁰

The inconsistent use of *dagesh forte* occasionally proved to be following some rules showing certain ancient traits of vocalization reflecting pronunciation. This was summed up in “*Deviation in Gemination in the Tiberian Vocalization,*”¹¹ where it could be shown that the *dagesh* was sometimes omitted in certain consonants (mostly sonorants and sibilants) before another gemination.

Peculiarities in the Masora of the Codex were summed up in “*Studies in the Masora of the Leningrad Codex.*”¹²

All this can be regarded as constituting a partial attempt at the phonology underlying the Leningrad Codex.

The major question that arises in this connection is whether we have here residues of an early situation—remnants of a pronunciation habit that preceded the Tiberian vocalization known to us and abandoned by the *Naqdanim*, who preferred to disregard it for the sake of uniformity—or whether we have here one step forward, and additional improvement of the Tiberian vocalization, namely, the adaptation of the written notation to a new pronunciation habit that grew and developed out of the vocalization. Our knowledge is too sparse in this respect, and we are not in a position to give a definite answer to this question. To all appearances there is truth in each of the two possibilities, although we may perhaps be justified in tipping the scales to one side. The notation of irregular penultimate stress and of the irregular *ḥaṭef* signs, perhaps more than the omission of *dagesh forte*, point to the conservation of an ancient situation and to the penetration of an earlier pronunciation habit through the signs of the Tiberian pronunciation. It is not obligatory to assume that the *first*

¹⁰ Read at the seventh World Congress of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem on 10 August 1977, and published in Hebrew: “*Patḥe ḥaṭfin—‘iyyun ba-rəvadim ha-qədumim shel ha-niqqud,*” *Sefer Avraham ḥeyn-Shoshan* (ed. B. Lurie; Jerusalem: Kiryat-Sefer Ltd., 1985), 157–65.

¹¹ Read at the fifth International Congress of IOMS in Salamanca, Spain, on 28 August 1983, and published in the Proceedings of that Congress: *Estudios Masoreticos (V Congreso de la IOMS) Dedicados a Harry M. Orlinsky* (ed. E. Fernández Tejero; Madrid: Textos y Estudios «Cardenal Cisneros», Instituto «Arias Montano» C.S.I.C., 1983), 63–77.

¹² Read at the fourth International Congress of IOMS in Jerusalem on 16 August 1981, and published in Hebrew: “*‘iyyunim ba-masora shel kətav-yad Leningrad,*” *Studies in the Hebrew Language and the Talmudic Literature, Dedicated to the Memory of Dr. Menaḥem Moreshet* (ed. M. Z. Kaddari, S. Sharvit; Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1989), 75–82.

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Elohim, is always printed with its usual vocalization, without a *holem*, even though in the manuscript it occasionally appears with a *holem*, especially when read as *Elohim* and above all in the book of Ezekiel; (2) in print the name *יששכר* is always given thus, with a *dagesh*, although in the manuscript it frequently has no *dagesh*; (3) *זיין* appears in print always with a *dagesh* also in the letter *zayin*, even though in the manuscript it appears nine times (out of twenty-six occurrences) without a *dagesh* in the *zayin*. Only the last type is indicated in the list of Manuscript Variants.

The *maqfef* tends to be omitted at times in the manuscript, which makes for ambiguity, particularly in composite words that can be written as one word or as two hyphenated words. We have retained this as it appears in the manuscript, so that the same word may on some occasions appear as one word and on others as two. When it was clear that the hyphen had been inadvertently omitted, we restored it where this was essential and indicated this in the list of Manuscript Variants (e.g., *רַב שְׂקֵה*—Isa 36:22). At times the hyphen is omitted between two words that cannot be written as one word, like the combination *אֶתְרִיבֵן*. In such instances we proceeded as follows: in places where a tiny space without a hyphen was left between two words (and no accent on the first word), we considered a *maqfef* to be missing and added it, indicating this in the list of Manuscript Variants. In places without a space between two words, where the letters actually join each other, there is no proof that they are not hyphenated since the hyphen cannot be noticeable; we therefore considered them to be hyphenated and gave them as such without any indication.

Occasionally the manuscript lacks at the end of a verse the two dots (or the one dot), which we invariably supplied, considering it unnecessary to indicate this.

The *ga^cya* (= *meteg*) is always printed to the left of the vowel sign, even though in the manuscript it is at times given—apparently quite arbitrarily—to the right of the vowel or below it. A *ga^cya* with *ḥataf pataḥ* or with *ḥataf segol* is always printed in the center of the sign (ֿ, ֿֿ) as in the majority of cases in the manuscript.

Since there is usually no unequivocal distinction in the manuscript between a *merkha* and a *ga^cya*, both being a perpendicular, straight line underneath the word, we treated this straight line as a *merkha* not only in the accented syllable, but also in a word with *tevir* with no preceding conjunctive accent, when only a mobile *shewa* separates the line from the accent.¹³

¹³ A. Dotan, *The Diqduqé Haṭṭē'amim of Ahāron ben Moše ben Ašēr, with a Critical Edition of the Original Text from New Manuscripts* (Jerusalem: The Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1967), chapter 4 [Hebrew].

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As is well known, the transmission of the accents is less uniform and reliable in the Poetical Books than in the other books of the Bible.¹⁴ This is particularly so as concerns accents and to some extent vocalization, but also as regards the division into sections and the arrangements of the lines (cf. below). In addition, the ancient rules for the Poetical (ת"א) accents are not yet satisfactorily formulated in all details,¹⁵ nor do we have a unified Bible text on which everyone is in agreement and which can at the present time be considered the “accepted,” authoritative text. For these reasons, in these three books we adhered closely to the manuscript.

In the Poetical Books the *silluq* is treated in the manuscript in a peculiar, unacceptable way. Sometimes the accent is omitted altogether and at others it occurs in the wrong place in the word. This has been corrected and so indicated in all instances. A detailed discussion of this phenomenon was subsequently published.¹⁶

We accepted the precise, justified, and ancient distinction made by the manuscript (and not made in the usual printed editions) between the *revia^c mugrash* (מִגְרָשׁ—Ps 86:3) preceding a *silluq* and the usual *revia^c* without a *geresh* (גֶּרֶשׁ—Ps 27:7) in the domain of *silluq*, a *revia^c* functioning in place of an *athnah* (to be distinguished from the *major revia^c* that occurs in the domain of *athnah* and from the *minor revia^c* that comes in the domain of *ole we-yored*). These two disjunctive accents merged in the printed editions, while in the Leningrad Codex they differ as do their respective conjunctive accents.

The manuscript sometimes tends to omit the *revia^c* symbol of the *revia^c mugrash*. This custom also exists in other manuscripts, particularly in words stressed in the first syllable. In our manuscript the *revia^c* sign is omitted more than seventy times also in other types of words, while at other times it was not omitted in words of this type. Even though this is not regular, we made no change from the manuscript; this will not inconvenience the reader, since the *geresh* at the head of the word is unequivocal and leaves no room for doubt.

¹⁴ The Hebrew Bible contains two accent systems. One is for the three Poetical Books—Psalms, Proverbs, and Job—abbreviated as ת"א (also called the “Three Books”). The other is for the remaining Twenty-One Books (the traditional number of books in the Jewish canon being twenty-four [the twelve minor prophets are considered one, as are Ezra and Nehemiah]).

¹⁵ The first one who merits the credit for making a praiseworthy attempt at establishing a revised outline of the Poetical accentuation based on the most prestigious codices is I. Yeivin (*The Aleppo Codex of the Bible: A Study of Its Vocalization and Accentuation* [Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1968], 279–356 [Hebrew]).

¹⁶ A. Dotan, “Residues of an Ancient Penult Stress in the Tiberian Tradition” (see above, note 9).

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A special problem is presented by the *merkha* and *ga^cya* in the Poetical Books. Here, we adopted the following rule: wherever *merkha* should appear in the syllable of the main stress even where the sign does not resemble a *merkha* (indeed, we saw that it also does not resemble a *merkha* in the Twenty-One Books—cf. above), we treated it as a *merkha*, as is customary. Where the sign appears in a syllable without main stress, we only treated it as a *merkha* when the sign actually looked like a *merkha*, since there are not a few signs in the Poetical Books in this position that are actually *merkha* shaped, either originally or as the result of correction. If the sign lacked a clear inclination toward the left, we treated it as a *ga^cya* in this position.

The existence of a *maqṣef* plays a decisive role here, since, when the word is hyphenated, the perpendicular line under it is a *ga^cya*, as in אָרָם יִבְהֶמָה (Ps 36:7), and when it is not hyphenated the perpendicular line is perforce a *merkha*, as in תִּכֵּן בְּמוֹבְתָךְ (Ps 68:11) and אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה אִישׁ (Ps 1:1) as against אָדָם (Ps 32:2). We therefore accepted a *merkha* when the sign looked like a *merkha* in all cases, such as within a word accented with ³*azla le-garmeh* (e.g., וְלִצִּיּוֹן—Ps 87:5), or within a word with a *munaḥ* serving as a conjunctive before *šinnor* (e.g., יַעֲצֹו—Ps 62:5), and within a word with *merkha* that serves as a conjunctive before a *minor revia^c* (e.g., תִּמְקַרְהָ—Ps 104:3) — as long as it looks like an actual *merkha*. We did not deviate from the visible shape according to the rules in ancient works of grammar,¹⁷ either toward *merkha* or toward *ga^cya*, as there would just be no end to it.

One should notice the *merkha* in a word with *revia^c mugrash*, the *merkha* appearing in an open syllable third place from the stress, when the two syllables next to the stress are both open or one is open and the other has a mobile *shewa*, in this order (e.g., אֲמוֹנֶתְךָ—Ps 36:6). This rule we owe to Israel Yeivin who was the first to remark on it.¹⁸

The two occurrences of the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:2–13 and Deut 5:6–17) carry in the manuscript a twofold set of accentuation (and some vocalization) marks to fit the two ritual readings of the Commandments: the *טעם תחתון* (= the lower cantillation), split up by the verses, and the *טעם עליון* (= the upper cantillation), split up by the Commandments. We have separated them and established the “lower cantillation” within the text and the “upper cantillation” at the end of the entire Bible (pp. 1227–28).

¹⁷ *Diquḡé Haṭṭē‘amim*, 223–27; Saadia Gaon in A. Dotan’s *Dawn of Hebrew Linguistics—The Book of Elegance of the Language of the Hebrews* by Saadia Gaon (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1997), 464–65 [Hebrew].

¹⁸ *The Aleppo Codex of the Bible*, 312.

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DIVISIONS OF THE TEXT

The books of Hagiographa are not in the same order in all Bibles. In our manuscript the order is as follows: Chronicles, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. This is the order adopted by the majority of Oriental Masoretes and by the old Spanish manuscripts. This order was, however, abandoned by most printed editions and is no longer familiar to the Hebrew reader, and for this reason we have changed it.

We remained faithful to the original Jewish custom of the division into books, retaining the conception of the manuscript, and thus did not break up the textual continuity of the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles into two books each; the same applies to Ezra and Nehemiah. We also treated the Twelve Minor Prophets as one book, three blank lines separating one prophet from the next as in the manuscript and according to the Halakhah; the same applies to three blank lines that separate the five books of Psalms.

The manuscript does not give the names of the books of the Bible and the names of the Weekly Portions of the Pentateuch. Although the actual division into these units is marked, we still added their usual names. The masoretic note on the number of verses at the end of each book is given exactly as in the manuscript.

We also added in the margin the marking of the division into Orders or *Sedarim* (סדרים) in the manuscript. This division represents the Palestinian triennial cycle of reading the Pentateuch and is no longer of practical use. It is marked here for scholarly purposes.

In some books the ׀ signs in the manuscript are accompanied also with Hebrew-letter numeration of the *Sedarim*, but since this is not consistent, the numeration was omitted in our edition. In the Leningrad Codex there are also three lists of *Sedarim* at the end of the three divisions of the Bible—after the Pentateuch (folio 120 recto and verso), after the Prophets (folio 326 recto and verso), and after the Hagiographa (folio 463 recto and verso)—not always compatible with the division in the margins of the text. However, this list, together with the occasional numeration in the margins, enabled us to restore missing division signs. The restored signs are enclosed in square brackets [׀].

When the two divisions vary from each other, differing in place by one verse either way, the variant division of the final list is marked between slant lines /׀/. Two questionable divisions, with contradictory testimony, are enclosed in curly brackets {׀} (Deut 20:1; 2 Kgs 20:8).

We did not indicate Open and Closed Sections by letters (פ, ס) in the body of the text, but by the arrangement of the lines, and according to the Halakhah left an empty space of about nine letters even where the manuscript did not leave one of that size.

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The Leningrad manuscript is extremely old, and consequently its division into Open and Closed Sections is archaic and does not agree with the division that subsequently became established in the Halakhah, as, for example, in Maimonides' *Hilkhot Sefer Torah* (VIII, 4). For practical reasons we therefore deviated from the division in the manuscript and followed the halakhic custom (the differences are not great). We do, however, note the division given in the manuscript in Appendix B (p. 1239), "Petuhot and Setumot in the Manuscript," and similar to the siglum alerting the reader to Appendix A, we set a verse number with the siglum ב on the inside margin of the text (see, e.g., 1ב in Gen 5:1). We obviously followed this practice only in the Pentateuch and the book of Esther. In the rest of the biblical books the division is according to the manuscript.

Correction was also made in the form and structure of the lines of the Song of Moses (*Ha'azinu*, Deut 32), but not in the Song of the Sea (Exod 15), whose form in the manuscript coincides with that customary according to Halakhah (with one exception—see Appendix C, pp. 1241–42). The structure of the lines preceding both Songs was retained—in the manuscript, too, it is according to the Halakhah. The lines after the Song of the Sea have been set according to Halakhah (see Appendix C). The lines after the Song of Moses, however, could not be set according to Halakhah, because it is typographically impossible to set in print the long lines Halakhah requires (see Appendix C). The layout of the pages technically did not permit us also to follow the customary fixed beginnings of the pages (בידשנ"ו).

The other biblical Songs we treated exactly according to the manuscript, not only the well-known ones (the Song of Deborah, Judg 5:1–31; the Song of David, 2 Sam 22:1–51; etc.) but also where the manuscript followed its own particular arrangement of lines and spaces. We did not copy the special arrangement (irregular and random spaces in every line) of most of the text in the Poetical Books, since its only purpose is ornamental, but even there we left an Open or Closed Section whenever we thought that this was the scribe's intention, this by comparison with manuscripts dealing with this subject.¹⁹

In the division into the seven small portions (קריאים) of the Weekly Portion there are, as is well known, a few differences of custom in a number of details. We followed the division indicated in most Pentateuch editions—the manuscript lacks any indication of such a division—providing it does not contradict usage and Halakhah. Where several divisions are possible we consulted with the military Chief Rabbinate of the Israel Defense Force (for whom the entire first edition of the Bible was intended). We decided according to the opinion of the Chief Military Rabbi, later Israel's Chief Rabbi, the late Rabbi Shelomo Goren, and

¹⁹ For Psalms, see I. Yeivin, "The Division into Sections in the Book of Psalms," *Textus* 7 (1969): 76–102.

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according to that of his deputy Rabbi Mordechai Piron, later himself Chief Military Rabbi.

In places where the public reading has to be interrupted for one of the seven small portions (קְרוּאִים) and there being neither an Open or Closed Section, or the reading did not begin with the first verse on that line, a tiny space was left in the line, larger than the regular space between words. Incidentally, we did this for similar cases of Sedarim divisions.

QERE AND KETIV

The manuscript gives the *qere* in the margin, unpointed, while the *ketiv* in the body of the text carries the vocalization and accent. We followed the system of the manuscript in putting the *qere* in the margin next to the relevant line; however, for the reader's convenience we pointed all the *qere* forms and left the *ketiv* in the text without vocalization but with accents (as is customary also in other editions). This required a slight deviation from the vowel points in the manuscript where the letters of the *ketiv* were not suitable for taking the vowel points of the *qere*. For example, the scribe sometimes pointed a *qibbuṣ* in a *ketiv* word lacking a *waw*, though its *qere* has a *waw*, as in the manuscript in Gen 24:33 in the text וַיֵּשֶׁם and in the margin וַיֵּשֶׁם קָ (= *qere*), or similarly 2 Kgs 24:10 in the text עָלָה and in the margin עָלוּ קָ; we perforce printed in the margin וַיֵּשֶׁם and עָלוּ as the scribe intended, except that he was unable to point a word lacking a *waw* with *shuruq*. Another example is an *ayin* of the *ketiv* that cannot carry a *dagesh* that is due in the *qere*, as in the manuscript in Deut 28:27 in the text וַיִּבְעַפְלִים and in the margin וַיִּבְטְחִים קָ; in the printed edition a *dagesh* was added וַיִּבְטְחִים. We did not remark on such changes in the list of Manuscript Variants.

A *qere* was supplied in the margin in the following cases:

(1) Wherever a *qere* was indicated in the manuscript, even a seemingly strange *qere* as in בְּשֵׁי (Job 15:31) and וַיִּתְאַוּ (1 Chr 11:17).

(2) Wherever the reader's convenience requires a *qere* and the manuscript has a *yattir* (= superfluous) indication instead of *qere*, as in 1 Sam 24:4 (יִתִּיר י'), Prov 22:8 (יִתִּיר ו'), and Neh 5:7 (יִתִּיר א'); but this is not the case everywhere the manuscript has *yattir*, since it indicates *plene* spelling and peculiar spellings in general and not necessarily a *qere*. This is also the case in Job 39:30, where the ׀ sign indicating *qere* appears, but no *qere* reading is brought in the margin next to it. We added as *qere* וַאֲפִרְחִי.

(3) In eight places we were obliged to add a *qere*, invariably basing ourselves on a masoretic note regarding *plene* or defective spelling: Judg 19:21 (הָ מַלְּ), 1 Sam 25:8 (חַם אַ), Isa 58:14 (גַּ מַלְּ), Jer 27:20 (לַ מַלְּ), Ezek 43:15 (לַ וּכְהָ), Ezek 44:3 (יָגַ מַלְּ), Esth 4:4 (לַ מַלְּ), and 2 Chr 36:14 (בַּ מַלְּ). We also added a *qere*

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in eleven other words, seven of them Aramaic, in Daniel and Ezra, and four in Samuel and Chronicles, all in analogy to similar words with a *qere*, since the *qere* is inherently necessary, although this is not indicated in the margin of the manuscript (apparently due to the scribe's negligence): אֲנִיָּהּ (Dan 2:38), עֲלֵךְ (Dan 4:22), עֲלָאָה (Dan 4:22, 29), כְּרִאָה (Dan 6:1), גַּפָּה (Dan 7:4), עֲבָרְךָ (Ezra 4:11), נְיִוֹת (1 Sam 19:23), וְעֲלִיו (2 Sam 20:8), וְהִכְיִנוּ (2 Chr 35:4), and also הַשְּׁלִישִׁים (1 Chr 12:19) which carries the erroneous marginal note וָק (= *waw qere*) instead of יָק (= *yod qere*).

(4) In the Pentateuch the manuscript has a *qere* in the word נֶעֱרַךְ in ten instances in Deuteronomy (ch. 22), while the instances in Genesis (chs. 24 and 34) are not marked with *qere*. For the sake of convenience and for aesthetic reasons the procedure was unified and no *qere* is marked in Deuteronomy either. We followed a similar practice with the word אֲרִתְחִשְׁתָּהּ in not adding a *qere*, since this is not customary in printed editions, it being in the nature of a *qere perpetuum*. In two instances only was a *qere* supplied to this word where the manuscript clearly marks a *qere*, but not in places with other indications, such as: יִתִּיר אֵ (Ezra 4:11), אֵ לֶק (= *la qere*; Ezra 8:1), and תֵּא לֶק (Ezra 7:12).

For typographical considerations the way of presenting *qere we-la ketiv* and *ketiv we-la qere* differs a little from the manuscript. The former is given as a regular *qere* and the place in the text to which it refers is left empty of letters, having vocalization and accents only (e.g., 2 Sam 8:3). The latter is marked in the margin without vocalization and next to it the indication לֹא קָרִי, while in the text the word is given without vocalization and accents (e.g., 2 Sam 13:33).

THE PRINTING AND THE SYMBOLS

The present Bible edition is unique also on account of several innovations in the form of the printed symbols, some of which appear also in other printed editions, though rarely, while others were introduced for the first time in this Bible.

The system of typesetting Hebrew has greatly improved in the age of computers. This Bible has been prepared electronically—from initial data entering to final typesetting. Modern techniques have made it possible to place vowel signs and accents next to each other in their exact place under the letters, even in narrow letters and in complicated combinations. Mr. Shimon Deutsch set the text using the Hebrew typesetting program TAG, developed by Mr. Daniel Weissman. The symbols for the accents and vowels were redesigned for this Bible. The basis of the letters is the traditional font Vilna. The basis of the vocalization and accents is Frank Ruehl.

In our innovations of the typographical form we endeavored not to deviate from the forms familiar to the reader, but within this range we nevertheless aimed at approximating as closely as possible to the manuscript's original forms.

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Some of the new symbols are:

◌ֿ — The original form of the *qameš* in our vocalization system, and this is how it appears in the Leningrad manuscript.

◌ֿ, ◌ֿ — To distinguish between the accents *yetiv* (the large sign at the beginning of the word) and *mahpakh* (smaller and under the stressed syllable). This distinction is made for typographical reasons and for the reader's convenience; it is not in the manuscript.

◌ֿ — *Galgol* or *yerah ben yomo* is the original form of the conjunctive accent preceding *qarne para* (= *pazer gadol*) in the Twenty-One Books of the Bible (sixteen times) and the conjunctive accent preceding *pazer* in the three Poetical Books.

◌ֿ — In the Poetical Books this accent is the conjunctive accent preceding *‘ole we-yored*, and in the manuscript it is shaped like an inverted *athnah* and differs from the *galgal*. In the course of time the shape and even the name of these last two symbols were merged.²⁰ We saw no reason for not following the system of the manuscript in this instance and thus restore it to its rightful place.

We shall not enumerate all the innovations; careful readers will discover them for themselves. We have taken great care over the accurate reproduction of the manuscript also as regards the placing of the symbols, and we neither added to them nor detracted from them. Any masoretic peculiarity in dots, unusual *dageshes*, accents, etc. are all given in the body of the text, just as in the manuscript, which made it unnecessary to remark on them separately.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

On the occasion of the appearance of this entirely new edition, the people whose initiative, participation, and financial support made possible the realization of the first 1973 edition should be remembered here in gratitude and appreciation.

The late Noah Moses, formerly Director of the “Yediot Aharonot” daily, and the late Mr. Zvi Stern, formerly director of ADI Publishers Ltd., whose devotion and exertions made the project possible.

The Chief Rabbinate of the Israel Army encouraged us to prepare the original edition and stood at our side in solving halakhic problems concerning the recitation of the Weekly Portions. It was their decision to adopt it as the Army edition given as an official gift to every recruit.

²⁰ I. Yeivin, *The Aleppo Codex of the Bible*, 333.

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My assistants at the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Languages of Tel Aviv University helped me diligently in preparing the text of the first edition and in checking the photos of the manuscript.

Mr. Nathan Fried prepared the list of Haftarot and Special Readings from the Torah (Appendix E, pp. 1253–64), utilizing his detailed knowledge of the customs of the various communities. This list, translated by Prof. Myron B. Lerner, has been adopted in this edition too.

Now, after at least six corrected printings and after the Bible edition has been in circulation for almost thirty years, I am deeply indebted to Hendrickson Publishers for having undertaken the vast enterprise of issuing a completely new edition, and for having charged Dr. John F. Kutsko, Senior Academic Editor, with the heavy task of conducting and supervising the production. His dedication, scholarship, and wide expertise have been an invaluable asset for bringing the project to a successful completion.

Nurit Reich was a member of the academic team of assistants who helped me in the preparation of the text of the first edition, and she continued to help me prepare this new edition with great devotion, assisting me in correcting the text and in proofing the printed sheets.

Shimon Deutsch and Daniel Weissman have been very instrumental in developing and applying modern computerized techniques for the setting of the intricate signs and symbols.

The following persons proofed the new edition: John Cook, John Ellison, Michael Heiser, Robert Holmstedt, Andrew Jesson, Michelle Kwitkin, Alan Lenzi, Margaret Odell, Frances Reed, Sarah Shectman, Tara Smith, David White, and Christopher Wyckoff. Michelle Kwitkin has aided us at every stage of the project.

Besides these mentioned, a considerable number of people were instrumental in preparing this edition, in the academic-scientific, in the publishing, and in the technical fields, and many friends, colleagues, and students brought to my attention various typos and errors in the previous edition and in the subsequent printings.

I owe a debt of deep gratitude to each and every one of them for their part in this important undertaking.

ובריך רחמנא דסייען

Aron Dotan
Tel Aviv University, 2001

