

Is the Bible a Sure Word of God?

Origins, Canon and Biblical Narrative

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Friday Presentation (1)

The Origins of the Bible: Two Approaches.

Sabbath Presentation with discussion (2)

Canon and Church: Canonization and the Question of Ultimate Authority

Presentation/Sermon (3)

The Treasure in the Jar of Clay: Understanding the Divine and Human in Scripture

Presentation (4)

Bible as Story: From the Death of Scripture to a New 'Revelation'.

Presentation (5)

Bible as Worldview

Informal session

Sunday Presentation (6)

Bible as Sure Word of God

Wrap up and summary

The Origins of the Bible

Two Approaches

Inductive Historical Model

Based on the investigation of the historical data.

Underlying assumption is that scripture is like other works of human composition.

Direct correlation between the purely human historical investigation of the composition and origins of Scripture and the hermeneutical method.

We should investigate what we call the Bible without theological or canonical assumptions about its origins just following a pure historical approach.

Deductive Composition Model

First of all looks at the Scripture's final form as we have it today.

Read it with an eye to the unity of the material.

If the basic collection process of what we call the canon or Bible today suggests overarching unity why would the reading be concerned – in the first place – with diversity of the material?

The question of the editorial composition of the Bible is secondary to the question of canon.

A Survey of the Biblical Origins of the OT Text

Biblical origins - it is basically the history of the transmission, copying and preservation process.

How did they developed into many copies and variations? Are these copies similar, diverse, how do we know which text provides the 'original' reading?

Source Criticism - Redaction Criticism - Text Criticism

I. The Masoretic Text (MT) of the Old Testament

The OT is based on the so called Masoretic form of the text. It is a text from 1008 AD, technically called B19^a

The key work was the punctuation or vocalization of the text.

1. **Puncta Extraordinaris** - Extraordinary Points.
2. **Nun Inversum** - Inverted Hebrew letter 'N' - 'Nun'.
3. **Sebirin** - Assumptions.
4. **Ketib and Kere** - Write and Read.
5. **Tiqqune Soferim** - Scribal corrections.
6. **Itture Soferim** - Scribal omissions.

The precise mid-point of the Torah - **Lev 11:42** in the word 'gachon' (belly) and it is the letter '**vav**' which is punctuated as 'o' -

בָּחֹן

2. Old Testament Manuscripts

1947- Dead Sea Scrolls or Qumran Scrolls

Biblia Hebraica text: www.bibliahebraica.com

The Great Isaiah's Scroll from cave no 1 - 1Q Is^a



The Great Isaiah Scroll 1Q Is^a



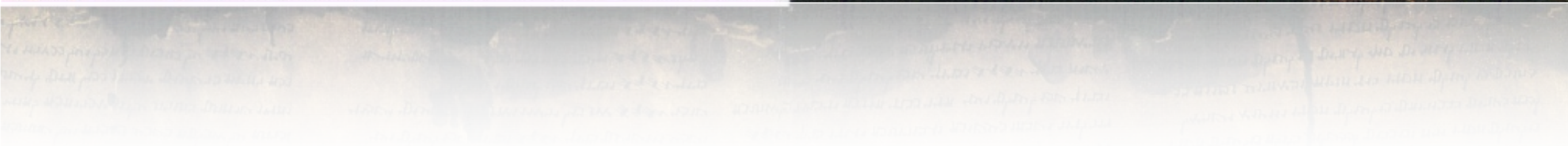
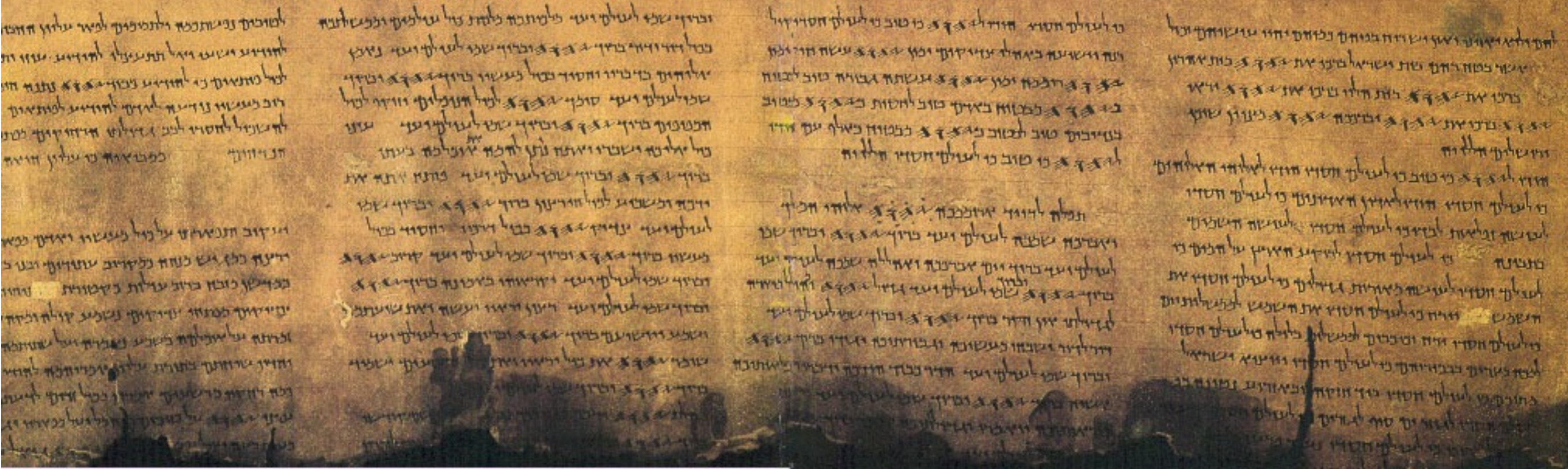
The Habakkuk Commentary I Q^p Hab



The Habakkuk Commentary 1QpHAB

The Psalms Scroll 11QPs

The Psalms Scroll 11QPs



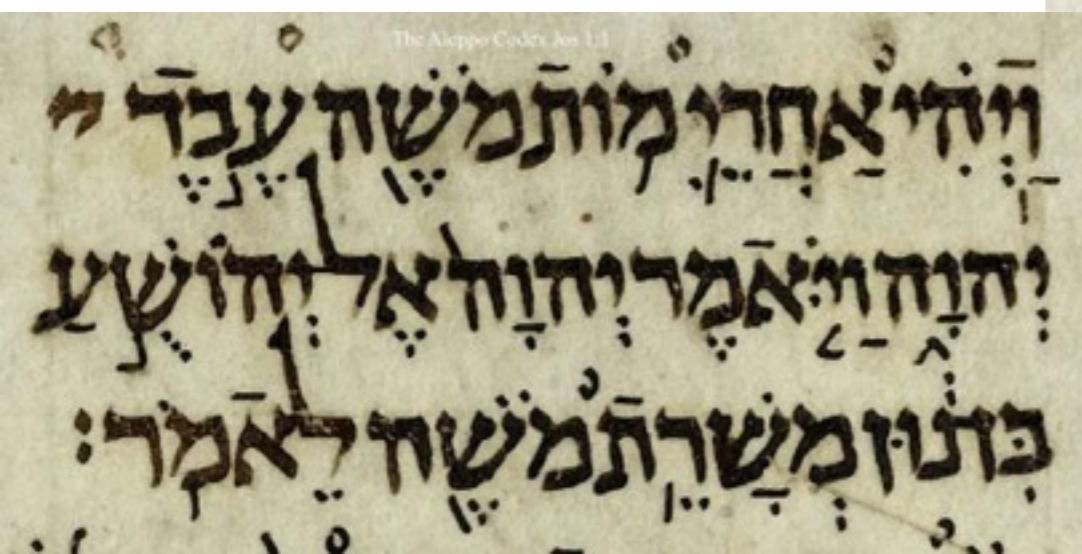
The Nash Papyrus



Cairo Geniza Collection - Cairo Codex of the Prophets (C)



Aleppo Codex



3. The Non-Hebrew OT Texts

Septuagint (LXX)

The Samaritan Pentateuch

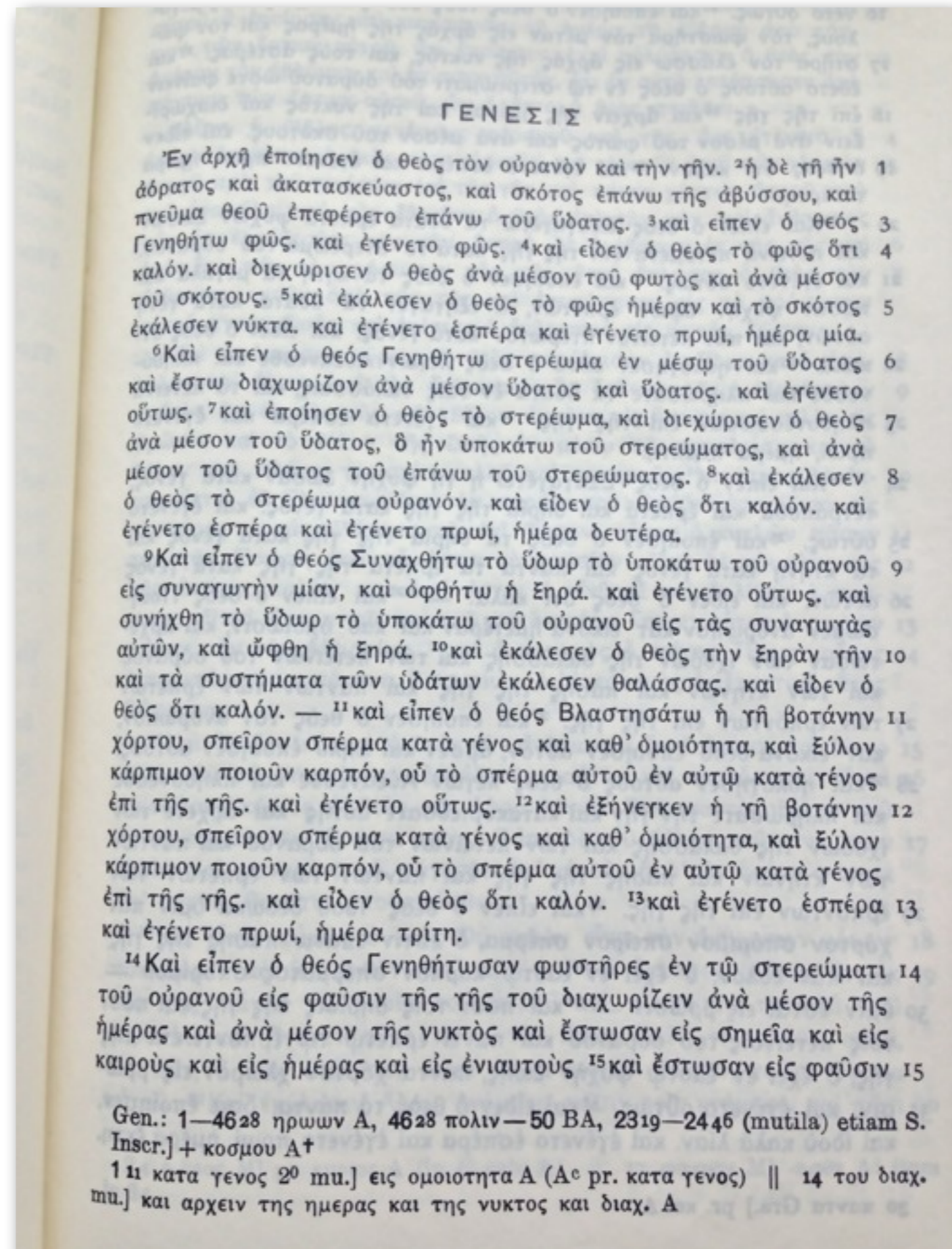
Aramaic Targum

Syrian Translation (Peshitto)

Vetus Latina

Vulgate,

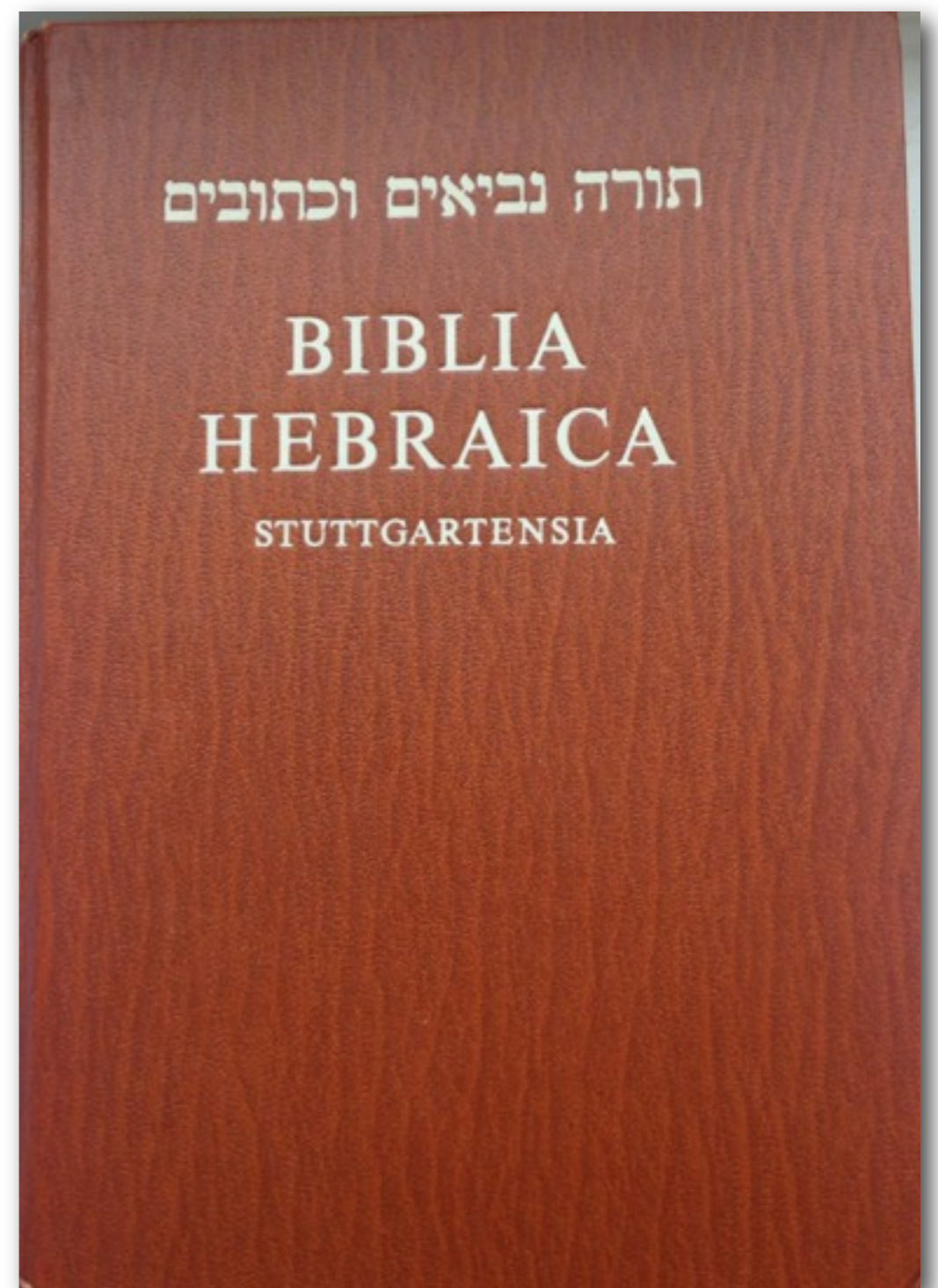
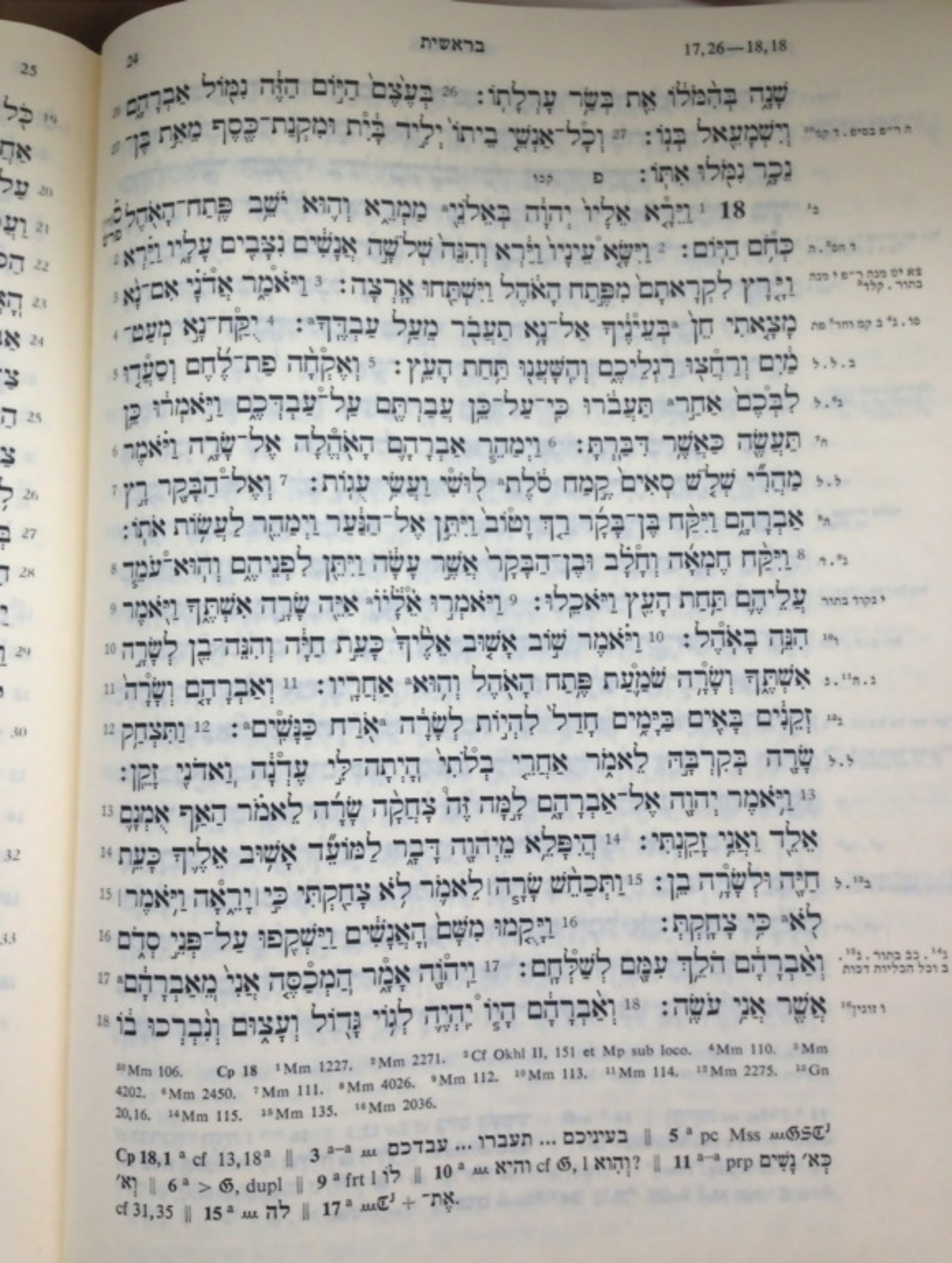
Coptic Translations



Conclusions

- (1) The MT text of the OT alongside of the other OT manuscripts provides to us the same sensible text without any major variations.
- (2) If there are departures or divergence from the MT in other texts or manuscripts, we have to follow the MT and consider the textual variations a secondary reading.
- (3) If the other texts suggest different but probable readings from the MT, and whereas there is no evidence of secondary origin of or influence on these other texts, it is still important to give primacy to the masoretic reading.

The Current Form of the MT Hebrew Text with Critical Notes



The Origins of the Bible

Two Approaches

²⁰Mm 106. Cp 18 ¹Mm 1227. ²Mm 2271. ³Cf Okhl II, 151 et Mp sub loco. ⁴Mm 110. ⁵Mm 4202. ⁶Mm 2450. ⁷Mm 111. ⁸Mm 4026. ⁹Mm 112. ¹⁰Mm 113. ¹¹Mm 114. ¹²Mm 2275. ¹³Gn 20,16. ¹⁴Mm 115. ¹⁵Mm 135. ¹⁶Mm 2036.

¹pc Mss ²5 || בעיניכם ... תעברו ... עבדכם || ³a-a || Cp 18,1 ^a cf 13,18 ^a || כא' נָשִׁים prp ^{a-a} 11 || ?וְהוּא 1, 1 || ^a 10 || לו' 1 frt ^a 9 || ^a 6 > 6, dupl || וְא' || אֶת- + ^a 17 || לה ^a 15 || cf 31,35