

## THE SECOND ISAIAH SCROLL FROM QUMRÂN (IQIsb)

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**T**HE manuscript, in scroll, and a few fragments which fell from it during the long centuries it lay in its hiding place, was recovered in two stages from Qumrân Cave One, the first during the rifling of the cave by Beduin, presumably in 1947, and the second during the later examination of the cave in 1949 by Mr. Lankester Harding and Father de Vaux. Consequently, the two parts became separated and they now lie in two museums, territorially only a couple of miles apart, but politically in two different countries and possibly never to be brought together. The scroll itself formed part of the collection which was taken to the U.S.A. whence it was removed by purchase to the Hebrew University in Israeli Jerusalem, and there finally unrolled and published together with fragments which had become dislodged from its outer folds during treatment. It is well reproduced in *'Ošar ha-megillôth ha-genuzôth* and its English version, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University*.<sup>1</sup> It contains the following texts :

Plate 1,	Fragment 1.	Is.	10.17-19	
	„ 2.		13.18-19	
	„ 3.		16.7-11	
	„ 4.		19.20-20.1	
	„ 5.		22.24-23.4	
Plate 2,	„ 6. right		26.1-5	
			left.	28.15-20
	„ 7.		29.1-8	

<sup>1</sup> Edited by E. L. Sukenik (Jerusalem, 1954), pp. 27-30 and Plates. The English edition, also by E. L. Sukenik, was prepared for the press by N. Avigad, and published in Jerusalem in 1955. The relevant introductory material (in the English edition) is on pp. 30-4.

Plate 2, Fragment 8.	30.10-14
"    9.	30.21-26
"    10.	35.4-5
"    11.	37.8-12
Plate 3,    "    12.	38.12-22, 39.1-8

Plates 4-15 contain the continuous, though in places fragmentary, text of chs. 41-66, and despite the torn condition of the leather, there is ample textual material for analysis and conclusions.

The separated fragments were transferred from the cave to the Palestine Archaeological Museum in Jordan Jerusalem. Their publication forms part of the first volume of *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, I. Qumrân Cave I*,<sup>1</sup> by Father D. Barthélemy, O.P. The texts consist of :

Fragment 1.	Is.	7.22-8.1
"    2.		12.3-13.8
"    3.		15.3-16.2
"    4.		19.7-17
"    5.		22. 11-18
"    6.		24. 18-25.8
"    7.		Two consonants on each of three lines which defy identification.

All these texts are very fragmentary.

It is not within the purview of this article to discuss the more technical, scribal aspects of the manuscript ; suffice it to say that in form the script is extremely tidy and professional, and its date, according to most assessors, is first century A.D., therefore somewhat later than the majority of the Qumrân Cave One manuscripts. This comparatively late date, however, has no particular significance for the present article because the manuscript is presumably a copy of an earlier prototype, and, since the discussion deals with arguments based on the character of the text itself and not on the script, this assumption is tacitly accepted. The close affinity of the text in this scroll with the Massoretic

<sup>1</sup> Edited by D. Barthélemy, O.P. and J. T. Milik (Oxford, 1955), pp. 66-8, and Fragments 1-7 on Plate XII.

text of Isaiah has received frequent comment and is probably the reason why the scroll has attracted comparatively little attention among textualists. Nevertheless it is the significance of this characteristic that forms the main point of discussion in the present article.

A preliminary enquiry will establish the extent and nature of the variants from the M.T.<sup>1</sup> The almost complete absence of textual variants is the clearest indication of the close affinity between the two text-forms, for in one instance only can a case be made for a significant variant reading. It is in 53.11 where the scroll, in common with IQIsa and the LXX adds אור to יראה, thus presenting a rendering, "he shall see light". It is frequently regarded as an improvement on the present text, and it appears to fit metrically and has Version support. Professor Seeligmann<sup>2</sup> has held that  $\phi\omega\varsigma$  in this context may be due to inner-Greek interpretation, but the Qumrân Cave Four Samuel texts, with their remarkable similarity to parent-LXX text-forms, may now bring about a reversal of the tendency to resort to "inner-Greek" explanations for divergences between the M.T. and the text of the LXX. The supporting evidence of IQIsa in the present instance adds to the plausibility of the variant. The case, however, for its acceptance as a variant reading should not necessarily be taken as a plea for it as a superior reading.

In the next verse, 53.12, the scroll has, along with IQIsa and also LXX, the 3 p.m. suffix instead of M.T. ולפשעים which gives "their transgressions" for "the transgressors". It makes

<sup>1</sup> A detailed collation is given by S. Loewinger, "The Variants of DSI 11" *Vetus Testamentum*, iv. 2 (April 1954), pp. 155-63, which lists all kinds of deviations from the text of *Biblia Hebraica*<sup>3</sup>, including minor and insignificant details of orthography—for, surely, not all orthographic variants have the same textual significance! In many cases parallel readings from manuscript sources in Kennicott, de Rossi and Ginsburg are given, and also from the Versions ranging from Septuagint and Targums to Mishnaic and Talmudic material. A shorter but equally useful collation is provided by Sukenik in the commentary section of *'Oṣar ha-megillôth ha-genuzôth* pp. 28-30 (English edn., pp. 31-4) and Barthélemy supplies textual annotation to his transcript of the textual fragments in *Qumrân Cave I*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah* (Leiden, 1948), pp. 108, 119, and B.O. 1949, pp. 7 f.

good sense as “but he bore the sin of many, and for their transgressions he made intercession”. It may indeed be argued that here, as in 53.11, the textual support of LXX and IQIsa is significant, and that the present variant gives better parallelism. But it is also important to note that variation in the matter of suffixes falls into another category, in which it appears that the scroll reflects an interpretation of the text rather than an alternative text-form. There are other instances of the same type.

1. In 43.6, M.T., IQIsa and, with one exception, all other known readings give “bring *my* sons from afar, and *my* daughters from the ends of the earth”, but the present scroll has “thy sons” and “thy daughters”. The exception is Kenn. MS. 253, from A.D. 1495, which has “thy sons”.

2. In 43.8 the scroll has אֹצִיא “I will bring forth” in contrast to M.T. *Hiph'il* imperative, הוֹצִיא, “bring forth”, or the plural as in IQIsa and many moderns (cf. *B.H.*<sup>3</sup> *app. crit.*). Ziegler, in the Göttingen Septuagint, refers to support for this reading in Bohairic.<sup>1</sup>

3. In 49.3 we have what appears to be a change in the opposite direction, from the M.T. 1 s.m. אֶתְפָּאֵר to the 3 s.m. הִתְפָּאֵר. But the change makes no sense, since the context now gives, “And he said to me, Thou art my servant, Israel, in whom he will be glorified”. It may be that here we have a simple scribal error, or confusion between gutturals, of which there are many in the scroll, as will be noted later.

4. In 58.5 the scroll reads “thy head” for M.T. “his head”; in 60.21, it reads, as do IQIsa, LXX and OL, “his hands” for M.T. “my hands”;<sup>2</sup> and in 62.7 it reads, with partial support from Kenn. 76 (A.D. 1296) the plural לַכֶּם for M.T. לוֹ. In 63.3 the scroll’s גִּאֲלֹתִי, supported by IQIsa, seems to confirm the idea that M.T.’s so-called Aramaised *Hiph'il* is a scribal error for a *Pi'el*.

5. A change of tense seems to be introduced in 22.17, where, for M.T. וַעֲטֹךְ, the scroll has the first two consonants of וַעֲטֹךְ,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Loewinger, *op. cit.* p. 157, n. 7.

<sup>2</sup> A glance at *B. H.*<sup>3</sup> *ad loc.* will show that the parallel, מַטְעוֹ, is a *Qrê-Kthibh* variant; the scroll supports the latter and is consistent with יִדְיוֹ. In other words, it is a likely correct reading of the confused M.T.

and the inherent difficulties of this form<sup>1</sup> make the support of this reading, together with that of the first scribe of IQIsa, significant.

Such changes of person and tense are by no means unknown in both LXX and the Massoretic transmission itself. In Is.1.29 for M.T. יָבֵשׁ, three Hebrew MSS., LXX, Pesh. and Targ. read the second person plural; in 3.13, LXX and Pesh. have עָמוּ for M.T. עָמִים; and further instances can easily be found.

6. There are three places where the scroll has changed the gender of the M.T.: in 26.1 הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת for the M.T. masculine; 53.3, מְכַאֲבִים for plural feminine (where, by analogy of the next verse and Ps. 32.10, the scroll seems to be correct); and 66.17 where אָחַת occurs for M.T. אָחָד, (and where again the M.T. itself seems to support, in *Qrê*, the reading of the scroll).

7. The vast majority of variants deal with *waw* and *yodh*, both medial and final, but in neither case do they indicate significant textual variation. Father M. Martin, in a recent careful and elaborate analysis of this kind of vocalic-consonantal variation<sup>2</sup> between the scrolls themselves and between biblical scrolls and the M.T., has shown that, among a variety of scribal characteristics, IQIsb exhibits a very distinctive use of *waw* as *matres lectionis* which is quite different from that found in the other five scrolls<sup>3</sup> of Cave One and also in the Massoretic transmission. Put very simply, it is that vocalic *waw* occurs only in monosyllables, with the exception of Massoretic Segholates, and in suffix-less words; at least, that is the rule of the main scribe of the Scroll and the few deviations do not, according to Martin, challenge the general position. In the case of the regular verb, the *Qal* uses vocalic *waw* for Infinitives and Participles, and in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. BDB ad. loc.

<sup>2</sup> *The Scribal Character of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2 vols. 1958, 1959), pp. 1-715.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit. p. 269. Martin develops this point to show that "IQIsb conserves some traces of the pre-contraction period, when only final vowels were indicated. . . . The principle of developed consonantal spelling was bound to lead to a further extension of vowel-letter usage, which in the Maccabean period attained full generalisation. But there is no trace of this latter stage in IQIsb" (p. 345).

verbs ע"ו, the general rule applies, that *waw* is used in simple forms which have no terminations or suffixes.

Deviations in the consonantal incidence of *waw*, especially as a conjunction, and variations between singular and plural are not orthographic, but are more likely stylistic and interpretative.

The following instances occur :

(a) Where the scroll has plural for M.T. singular :

26.2, ויבאו for M.T. ויבא.

43.9, with support from IQIsa and from De Rossi 850, יגידו for יגיד.

53.8, לקחו for M.T. לקח.

54.3, with IQIsa and Targ. יירשו for M.T. יירש.

57.2, with Targ, יבאו for M.T. יבוא, but later in the verse, נכחה with support in Kenn. 300 (*Minḥath Shai*), replaces the M.T. נכחו.

58.3, נפשתינו, with IQIsa and LXX against M.T. נפשנו.

58.11, with IQIsa יחלצו for M.T. יחליץ.

59.4, where, in the second stichos, finite verbs in the plural replace the M.T. infinitive absolutes.

(b) The reverse : the scroll has singular for M.T. plural.

60.5, יבוא for M.T. יבאו.

60.21, מטעו for M.T. מטעיו.

(c) variation in *waw* conjunctive (or consecutive) :

30.13, ויבוא for M.T. יבוא.

43.7, ואף for M.T. אף with LXX support, though it might be dittography.

43.12, has no conjunction for M.T. והשמעתי, and is supported in this by LXX.

46.6, *waw* present with ישכרו, against M.T. but with LXX and Pesh.

49.7, יקומו has the support of Kenn. 195 (1590) against M.T. and IQIsa וקמו.

53.3/5, two cases of added conjunction ; (v. 3) ונבוזה, with Vulg. and Kenn. 150 (probably late thirteenth century); likewise (v. 5) ומדכה with LXX, Kenn. 351 (thirteenth century).

53.8, omitted conjunction with ממשפט.

54.4, omitted conjunction with אל.

55.13, ותחת, with IQIsa, Qr<sup>e</sup>, Targ., Vulg., Rabbinic sources and Hebrew MSS. against M.T.

Chapter 58 seems to show considerable variation, for there are discrepancies in vv. 1, 2, 3, 4 (*bis*), 5 (*bis*), 6, 7, 8 (*bis*) and 13: in some instances the scroll has support from the VSS and IQIsa.

62.7, omits *waw* from ועד, as do some 15 Kenn. MSS.

8. There are, moreover, a few other minor modifications of a miscellaneous kind.

In 47.13 ה is prefixed to שמים, as also in Kenn. 30 (*ca.* A.D. 1200); likewise in 49.6, to נקל, with Targum; and in 60.2, to וערפל. On the other hand, the article is omitted from ארץ in 24.19.

In 52.13 "high and lifted up" are transposed; likewise in 55.8 a transposition of "your thoughts are not my thoughts", and 38.19 M.T. כמוני היום is transposed.

In two cases we have variation of suffixes: in 55.11 the scroll has שלהתי for M.T. שלחתי, and in 56.8 it has לנקבצו for M.T. לנקבציו.

In 58.4, the preposition ל, with IQIsa, Targ., and Pesh. is introduced into the M.T. ומצה; in 59.2 the same preposition is dropped and the conjunction substituted, ובין, which also occurs in Kenn. 150 (late thirteenth century, and already quoted as supporting this text).

In 66.4, the preposition ב has been introduced in M.T. ומגורתם.

In 38.15, ודבר is given for M.T. ואמר.

In 59.2, אם is omitted from the M.T. כי אם.

Greater textual interest may well attach to some cases where the scroll text, whilst demonstrably presupposing the M.T., goes its own way.

(a) In 45.2 the M.T. gives "I will go before you and level the swellings" (R.S.V.), הדורים; but the scroll quite distinctly gives הרורים, probably a rare plural of הר, "mountains", which in IQIsa is given as הררים and LXX ὄρη. The IQISb form, if it stood in the prototype Massoretic text, might have been misunderstood by the Massorettes, and from it they produced the fairly understandable, but wrong, הדורים.

(b) Another interesting deviation occurs in 60.4, where M.T., according to BDB, means “Thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall be carried by a nurse”, M.T. על צד תאמנה. R.V. has “shall be carried in the arms”, with a marginal comment, “nursed upon the side”. Obviously the phrase, and particularly תאמנה, is difficult. The present scroll has תושינה, though IQIsa agrees with M.T. Loewinger<sup>1</sup> draws attention to interesting Versions and manuscript support. Kennicott gives MS. 611, a fourteenth-century Haphtorah as reading תושאנה “shall be carried”, and MS. 96, again fourteenth-century and about which Kennicott remarks “Plurimes habet variationes”, gives תושאנה and תאמנה, obviously a conflation. It might be suggested that the scroll gives an explanatory variant of the original תאמנה, with י substituted for א, or, indeed with א dropped as has happened elsewhere in the scroll, e.g. 41.19, 52.14, 55.12.

(c) In 41.11 our manuscript has ויבשו where M.T. and IQIsa have ויאבדו: “those who strive against you shall be as nothing, and shall perish” (or, with the scroll, “shall be ashamed”). The scroll repeats the word of the first stichos, and the reading is simply a scribal error, not a variant reading.

(d) Whether or not there is a significant omission in 52.11 is difficult to decide. It has nothing for צאו מתוכה of M.T., and in this it agrees with Kenn. 95, a fifteenth-century Haphtorah. On the other hand, it might be a careless haplography partially explained by צאו in the previous line, and it lacks support from IQIsa and the Versions.

(e) In 24.19 the scroll has רוע for M.T. רעה, which pleasingly underlines BDB's comment on the latter that ה should be deleted as a dittography, and read רע. The M.T. *Hithpolel* of גוד, in v. 20, is given here as התנודא, which might, however, be a scribal error for התנודדא which is the form in IQIsa. In 58.12 we have a grammatical variant, where the scroll, giving משיב for M.T. *pil'el* participle משבב, substitutes a common for a rare form.

(f) In 60, 19/20 we have a clear instance of haplography,

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 162.



where the scribe has lost the two lines of Hebrew text between the two occurrences of **לאור עולם**.

(g) In 62.6 **תמיד** is missing from the scroll, as also from IQIsa and the fourteenth-century MS. Kenn. 112.

(h) In view of the plethora of divergent forms of the divine name in IQIsa, the present scroll shows a remarkable agreement with M.T. In 38.14, the Tetragrammaton is given for M.T. **אדני**, and in 49.7 both are present whereas M.T. has only the Tetragrammaton. In 61.1 it has **יהוה אלהים** for M.T. **אדני יהוה**.

(i) Confusion between consonants (due to dictation error?):

(i) prepositions : **אל** and **על** : 38.21 ; 56.3 ; 60.5 ; 60.8 ; 66.2 ;

(ii) other gutturals : 30.13 **לפתח** for M.T. **לפתע**.

38.14 **חשקה** „ „ **עשקה**.

43.8 **אוציא** „ „ **הוציא**.

(iii) sibilants : 44.25 **יסכל** „ „ **ישכל**.

(iv) quiescents : 55.12 **ימחיו** „ „ **ימחאו**.

60.13 **בראש** „ „ **ברוש**.

66.2 **ונכאה** „ „ **ונכה**.

(j) 60.13, **תרהר** for **תדהר** is, on the other hand, a visual scribal error.

(k) In one other orthographic variant, the scroll makes an interesting contribution. It is well known that the 2 s.f. verbal termination in IQIsa is commonly **תי**, which has certain affinities with the Massoretic scheme ; in IQIsb the normal 2 s.f. is **ת** but in 47.7, **זכרתי** conforms to the former.

It will be observed that there are very few readings in the above lists which can reasonably be regarded as significant variants of text ; indeed they are capable of interpretation only because they reflect the present M.T. Furthermore, it is not to be thought that the minor divergences are more numerous or more significant than those of the Massoretic transmission itself, as an examination of Massoretic texts in the collations of Kennicott, De Rossi and Ginsburg will show, or, indeed, among the texts of Cairo Genizah fragments. For instance, an interesting comparison may be made of col. 8 of IQIsb (*Jerusalem Scrolls*, Plates 9 and 10)—the most prolific in divergences—with

the corresponding M.T. of *Biblia Hebraica*<sup>3</sup>, 52.7-54.6. The scroll has thirteen orthographic and sixteen other divergences :<sup>1</sup> in two of the latter cases one or other of the texts shows omissions. Otherwise the divergences consist of the following features :

divergence of number (singular and plural)	4
„ in use of conjunction	4
„ in pronominal suffixes	3
confusion of gutturals	1
transposition of words	1
divergence of masculine and feminine endings	1

By taking one single MS. from Kennicott, the fourteenth-century MS. 96, and tracing its witness through the same passage, we find it quoted forty-two times for orthographic variants alone. Furthermore, we find that within the Massoretic transmission as a whole the qualitative divergences are more far-reaching than those between it and IQIsb. Thus, we find ירושלים substituted for ציון in 52.7, נשא קול for נשא in 52.8, חסף for חסף in 52.10, אלהינו for the Tetragrammaton in 52.12, תלכו for תצאו in the same verse. In 52.13 גבר for M.T. גבה, and in 53.1 כי replaces מי : and there are many more. There was certainly no rigid transmission of the text by the scribes of the post-ben Asher period, and the above comparison shows clearly that IQIsb approximates more closely to the M.T. than later texts, both in vocalic variants and text divergences. When we turn to Cairo Genizah fragments we see that extensive divergences of text obtained also in that collection. We might ignore for the present purpose the innumerable cases of deviation in *matres lectiones*, except by way of interest a whole set of four pointed sheets<sup>2</sup> where י is intruded wherever possible ; thus : הישמעתי and במידבר. There are abundant places where the scribe failed to distinguish between א and ע, e.g. in 38.14 we have in one fragment חשקה (“ love ”) for עשקה (“ weary ”). Likewise confusion between sibilants : in one

<sup>1</sup> The addition or omission of vowel letters in the scroll, as has been demonstrated by Father Martin, *The Scribal Character of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, should actually be discounted on any grounds other than strict orthography.

<sup>2</sup> The Taylor Schechter Collection in the University Library of Cambridge, Box A31, Fragment 29. See also p. 142 for further peculiarities of this manuscript.

fragment<sup>1</sup> we find confusion of ט with ש, and ט with צ. So that, quite apart from the innumerable instances of confusion between אל and על in the M.T., as shown by the *apparatus criticus* of *B.H.*<sup>3</sup>, there is sufficient evidence in Genizah Fragments to show that compared with them the five quoted instances of guttural confusion in IQIsb are not out of proportion.

In the matter of divine names, comparison of IQIsb with Genizah Fragments shows that there is a notable measure of agreement between the former and M.T. Indeed, during an examination of over seventy facsimiles of Isaiah texts from the Old Cairo Genizah, the present writer was impressed more than by anything else by the frequency of deviation in the matter of writing the Divine Name. In Cambridge University Library Box 31, the following occurs :

- Fragment 6. Is. 22.5, omits the Tetragrammaton from the full title of M.T.
- Fragment 11. Is. 49.14 omits M.T. וְאֵדְנִי.
- Fragment 16. Is. 11.11 has the Tetragrammaton for M.T. אֵדְנִי, in common with many manuscripts.
- Fragment 19. Is. 40.10 has אֱלֹהִים for M.T. יְהוָה.
- Fragment 27. Is. 7.14 has the Tetragrammaton for M.T. אֵדְנִי, and in 10.16 omits the Tetragrammaton, though *B.H.*<sup>3</sup> *apparatus criticus* indicates still further divergences in both passages.
- Fragment 29. which contains four sheets, has consistently substituted אֵדְנִי for M.T. יְהוָה in every passage where it occurs, viz. 43.10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16; 44.2; and 65. 25; 66.1, 2; 66.5, 6, 9, 12.

Another interesting substitution occurs in the same MS.; in 66.8 it gives אָחַת for M.T. אָחָד—a deviation which has already been mentioned as being present, in another context but in the same chapter, in IQIsb.

It is because of this essential agreement between IQIsb and the Massoretic text that the former must be regarded as specially important. It does not have the quality of divergence

<sup>1</sup> Box A31, Fragment 28.

that is present, e.g. in IQIsa, and which points to that text as either a *Vulgärtext*, "popular" (non-standardized) or a recension text-form. On the contrary, the IQIsb deviations are not in any way greater or more significant than those in the Massoretic tradition itself. After examining a portion of the scroll which was photographed in the *Illustrated London News* for 18 February 1950, and later a longer section of it in Sukenik's *megillôth genuzôth II* (1950), Father T. J. Milik<sup>1</sup> said that the manuscript left on him the impression of a medieval codex of the Hebrew Bible, and the present writer is left with the same impression after looking at the whole of the published material.

Of course, it may be possible to argue that since the actual script of the manuscript is later than IQIsa, the text consequently shows a greater tendency to conformity with the M.T. But there are two strong counter-arguments to this view. (a) The case is adequately made by Father Martin,<sup>2</sup> in his very thorough examination of the Scribal character of the Dead Sea Scrolls, that the orthography of IQIsb must have been antecedent to that of any other Cave One Scroll, and consequently the text, too, must be older. (b) It seems illogical to assume that the biblical texts of Qumrân were influenced by Rabbinical efforts to produce or to develop the Massoretic text which was meant solely for orthodox Judaism. The Sectarians seem to have held to their own traditions and ways quite successfully in every other respect, and the very diversity of biblical scrolls in the Qumrân collection seems to suggest that the "Rabbinic" text, current among other texts, had no special "scribal" significance, or enjoyed any inherent textual prestige. As an example of the independent transmission of the text by the Sectarians, notice might be taken of the considerable deviation between the two texts in the matter of paragraphing. IQIsb has fifteen paragraphs identical with *B.H.*<sup>3</sup>, a further fourteen where there is divergence of "open" and "closed" paragraphs (though the Massoretic tradition is itself far from uniform in this matter), but twenty-two paragraphs where there is no agreement at all.

<sup>1</sup> "Il Rotolo Frammentario di Isaia", *Biblica* 31, pp. 246-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit. passim*, particularly "The Scribal Character of IQIsb", i, pp. 339-62.

The evidence seems to point clearly to one conclusion, namely that in IQIsb we have a text which was current outside orthodox Judaism but which is also essentially identical with the Massoretic text. Now it is ridiculous to think that the Massorettes at a later stage in Jewish history—or at any stage, for that matter—adopted a sectarian text as the basis of their own “standardized” form, consequently we must assume that there existed among orthodox Jews as well as the Sectarrians, at a time before the Massoretic period, a text-form which was “Massoretic”. It does not appear, then, that the בעלי המסורת ever “created” a text-form, or that the Massoretic text was something that “emerged” in the Christian era, or A.D. post-70. It was in existence, much as it stands today, at least as early as the Maccabean period. Rabbi Aqiba may well have spent twenty-two years with Nahum of Gimzo, studying the use of the Accusative particle—there was little else for him to do with the text, because it had been “fixed” long before his time. We must look again at the real activity presupposed by the popular hypothesis of Aqiba’s “standardization” of the text. For this task, and particularly for the implicit support of the likely existence of a pre-Massoretic “Massoretic” text we must thank IQIsb.