**Reassessing the Transmission Process of the Samaritan Pentateuch**

Abstract:  
This paper explores the transmission process of the Samaritan Pentateuch and examines the degree of proficiency and precision of the ancient scribes who transmitted the Samaritan Pentateuch. It focuses on textual variants that can be ascribed to graphic similarity between letters attested in the Masoretic Text and in the Samaritan Pentateuch. The paper demonstrates that with respect to variants that apparently originate solely in graphic similarity between letters, the Samaritan Pentateuch contains primary readings in an equal number of instances as the Masoretic text. This fact may indicate the meticulous work of the scribes in the Samaritan tradition. This sort of work is not entirely free of errors, but the fact that their number is roughly similar to that of the Masoretic Text—which was also transmitted with great meticulousness—shows that the free attitude of the Samaritan scribes was not accompanied by careless transmission.

The Masoretic Text (MT) and the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) are the two comprehensive witnesses to the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch and they represent two textual traditions that were found in Israel in the Second Temple period. The current paper examines the transmission process of SP, an exemplar of an editorial-harmonistic textual tradition.[[1]](#footnote-1) The scribes who transmitted SP allowed themselves the liberty of improving the text in content, language, orthography and further small details.[[2]](#footnote-2) This study examines whether the widely-recognized connection between the conservative scribal approach of MT scribes and their meticulous textual transmission, has a mirror parallel in the SP, i.e., whether scribes’ free attitude to the text is accompanied by careless and inaccurate transmission.

The level of the accuracy of the transmission process will be quantifiable by the relative incidence of secondary readings due to graphic similarity between letters in SP as compared to MT.[[3]](#footnote-3) Interchanges of similar letters are committed unintentionally and are an inevitable part of copying and transmitting a text. However, their frequency will be lower as the level of scribal scrupulousness increases.

Our discussion focuses on the processes that occurred during the transmission of the MT and SP. The most comprehensive and oldest manuscripts of both of these two versions belong to a late stage in the transmission of the Pentateuch: the three most important manuscripts of the MT date from the beginning of the tenth century BCE (the Aleppo Codex [MTA], in which most of the Pentateuch is no longer extant, from about 925 CE; the Leningrad Codex from 1009 [MTL] ; and the Cairo Codex of the Pentateuch (MTc) from tenth century and of the Prophets (MTc3), which contains internal evidence pointing to a date of 895, but is probably later).[[4]](#footnote-4) The earliest extant manuscripts of SP date from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries CE.[[5]](#footnote-5) Nevertheless, even though these manuscripts belong to a late stage in the transmission of the Pentateuch, the study of the biblical scrolls from Qumran has shown that the medieval copies are reliable evidence of ancient textual traditions with a long history of formation and transmission. Still, there is a centuries-long gap between the partial documentation from Qumran and the comprehensive manuscripts from the beginning of the second millennium CE. Thus, accepted text-critical methodology involves making conjectures on the basis of the combined textual evidence stemming from the collective product of generations of transmission, rather than being able to point to specific periods in the transmission process or to identify the activity of individual scribes.

1. The Inferior Status of SP as a Textual Source

Before the discovery of pre-Samaritan scrolls from Qumran, SP was primarily compared to MT, which led to a negative bias against SP. A significant landmark in this context is Gesenius’s work at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Gesenius counted approximately six thousand variants between MT and SP, sorted into eight categories. He opined that most of the Samaritan readings were secondary, while there are only six cases in which SP preserves the preferable reading.[[6]](#footnote-6) Gesenius’s claim about the inferiority of the SP influenced the scholars who came after him, and they underestimated its importance and the value of its contribution to textual criticism of the HB.[[7]](#footnote-7)

This attitude continued even after the discovery of the pre-Samaritan scrolls at Qumran, and even to current scholarship, and was influenced by the characterization of the Samaritan tradition as an expansive and harmonizing tradition. So, for example, Tal-Florentin, marked many variants in their edition of SP as “deliberate variants,” thereby rejecting the possibility that they represent ancient readings.[[8]](#footnote-8) Thus, despite the recognition of the importance of the SP for the study of textual criticism of the HB and the renewed research interest in SP following the discovery of the Qumran scrolls, the assumption persists concerning its character, as a version that contains a considerable quantity of secondary readings.

A more balanced approach to the Samaritan variants is called for when we distinguish between deliberate exegetical changes aimed at eliminating difficulties and reconciling contradictions in Scripture, on the one hand, and inadvertent scribal errors, on the other. We should also take into account that errors are likely to occur independently in each one of the versions. The current study examines variants caused by graphic similarity between MT and SP versions, as a subset of scribal errors that occur during the transmission process. The systematic collection of all these differences, the textual assessment of each case on its own merits, when possible, and a summary of the data show that with respect to variants of similar letters, it is not possible to postulate a textual superiority of the MT over SP.

1. Variants Due to Graphic Similarity between MT and SP

Variants due to graphic similarity are a familiar phenomenon in textual criticism of the HB. These interchanges can occur under various circumstances. Sometimes the shape of the letters is so similar that they are virtually indistinguishable, which in some cases even requires the scribe to consider the context when deciding between letters. Other times, letters share one or more elements, so that any change or minor damage to the scroll can result in their interchange.

* 1. The scripts used for the transmission of the Pentateuch

The transmission process of the Pentateuch involved two scripts: Paleo-Hebrew script and square script. Therefore, interchanges between letters may have occurred in Paleo-Hebrew script (e.g. *mem*-*nun*), in square script (e.g. *waw-yod*), or in both scripts (*dalet-resh*). SP was additionally transmitted in Samaritan script, which was branched from the Hebrew script.[[9]](#footnote-9) In general, there is no evidence of interchanges between SP and MT of graphically similar letters specific to the Samaritan script.[[10]](#footnote-10) However, this observation is limited by the scarcity of extant epigraphic artefacts written in Samaritan script from the early centuries CE, and the lack of a comprehensive accepted typology of the development of the Samaritan script.[[11]](#footnote-11)

2.2. Firm and Complex Variants

In the course of the discussion of variants due to graphic similarity, it is necessary to distinguish between firm and complex cases. Firm cases are cases in which it may be assumed that there is a high probability that they occurred due to graphic similarity, since there is no other readily apparent reason standing behind the interchange. This applies in cases where the pair of letters are similar only graphically, and there is no other resemblance between them, such as phonological or morphological similarity.

Complex variants are those that could result from a combination of factors: graphic similarity between the letters and another factor, such as dialectical changes, morphological differences, weakening of gutturals, or exegetical emendations. This is applicable, for example, in cases where the Samaritan readings aligns with the general characteristics of SP. In these variants, the Samaritan reading is consistent with the tendency of SP to remove contradictions and anomalous forms in the text and to introduce small harmonizations. Therefore, they may reflect a deliberate emendation in the SP. However, since these variants are limited to exchanges of graphically similar letters, there is also the possibility that they were created as a result of such an interchange.

Variants involving exchanges of the letters *waw*-*yod*, which reflect interchange of nominal patterns (*qatil*-*qatul*) or verbal forms (*weqatal*-*yiqtal*), will also be considered complex cases. The starting point for discussion of these exchanges is that they depend on linguistic factors and not on scribal errors. Nevertheless, it would not be right to evaluate them exclusively on the basis of a pure linguistic factor. This is because from the Hasmonean period, and especially in the Herodian period, *waw* and *yod* are practically indistinguishable. It must therefore be assumed that in this case both the graphic similarity and the linguistic innovations would have been combined. A scribe may not have been able to determine the form of the verb or the noun-pattern in front of him, and he would have relied on a paleographic-linguistic assessment in order to make his decision. Thus, the variation between the forms in MT and SP would have originated in the graphic factor, and the decision would have depended on the linguistic background known to the scribe.

Nevertheless, in the following instances, *waw*-*yod* interchanges will be classified as firm cases despite the multidisciplinary similarities between them:

(1) When the exchanges produce a solidified or unique version.

(2) When the MT reading does not conform to conventional biblical syntax.

(3) When the Samaritan version is contrary to the tendency to prefer noun patterns or verbal forms that are characteristic of the Samaritan dialect.

In all of these cases, the interchanges create an unusual or difficult reading, and they are unlikely to be the result of a deliberate emendation on the part of the scribe. Presumably, therefore, these are errors whose origins lie only in the considerable graphic similarity between the letters, and they are classified as firm cases. This principle will be illustrated by a number of representative variants.

2.2.1 *waw*-*yod* Interchanges Classified as Firm Cases

2.2.1.1 Interchanges in Verb Forms and *weqatal-yiqtal* Forms that Deviate from the Mainstream of Interchanges of Forms

The interchange between *weqatal-yiqtal* forms is related first and foremost to changes that occurred in syntax of the verb in the Hebrew of the Second Temple period. Imperative verbs of the form *weqatal* in MT frequently appear in SP in the imperfect *yiqtal* form. Another example is the use of *weqatal* verbs in conditional sentences. Whereas conditional sentences in conventional biblical syntax require an apodosis beginning with a verb with a prefixed *waw*, Samaritan Hebrew reflects a decline in precision in the use of forms with the consecutive *waw* in this syntactic situation.[[12]](#footnote-12) This decline joins the list of linguistic characteristics of the Second Temple period that can be identified in Samaritan Hebrew.[[13]](#footnote-13)

In light of these data, it is likely that interchanges of *waw* and *yod* in the forms *weqatal-yiqtal* were dependent on linguistic factors, and possibly on the graphical factor as well. In the following examples, however, it seems that the interchanges took place solely because of the graphic similarity between the letters. This is because in these cases the text of MT and/or SP go against the grain of the usual interchanges of verbal forms (Example 1) or against the rules of conventional biblical syntax (Example 2).

Example 1: יִטְהָר – וטהר (wṭā̊r) (Num 19:12)[[14]](#footnote-14)

This verse describes the procedure of decontamination of a person who comes into contact with a corpse or was in proximity to it. The first colon of the verse in MT indicates that the purification ritual entails the application of the water on the third day, which would then lead to cleanness on the seventh. However, this contradicts the second colon, which stipulates that the purification entails two applications of the water, one on the third day and the other on the seventh. Therefore, most commentators rightly prefer the Samaritan reading, which is also reflected in the Septuagint (καὶ καθαρὸς ἔσται).[[15]](#footnote-15) Furthermore, the accepted interpretation of the verse in the rabbinic literature accords with the second colon of MT, as well as with the Samaritan version and LXX translation of the first colon, i.e., that the waters of purification must be applied twice. This exegesis is also supported by the Masoretic cantillation marks, which accentuate a division on the word הַשְּׁבִיעִי by placing a *tipha*.

In the case at hand, the interchange of the forms *weqatal-yiqtal* is reversed from the conventional norm: the MT takes the *yiqtal* form while the SP takes the *weqatal* form. It can therefore be supposed that the scribal error occurred in the MT as a result of the graphic similarity between *waw* and *yod*.

Example 2: וְטָמֵא – יטמא (yiṭmā̊)

Additional Occurrences of יִטְמָא שִׁבְעַת יָמִים in Num 19:

The MT Num 19:11 does not conform to conventional biblical syntax.[[16]](#footnote-16) This verse contains a conditional sentence with a participle, הַנֹּגֵעַ, in the protosis, and so we expect that the apodosis will open with a verb in the imperfect.[[17]](#footnote-17) The deviation in MT occurs only in verse 11, as verses 14 and 16 conform to the syntactic rules for the structure of a conditional sentence beginning with a participle. In addition, the Samaritan reading, which is reflected in the LXX as well, conforms to the accepted structure. Therefore, it seems that the MT is a result of a one-time scribal error that does not recur in the additional occurrences in the chapter, and is best explained as the result of the graphic similarity between *waw* and *yod*.

* + - 1. *waw*-*yod* Interchanges that generate a difficult or unique version

Example 1: שְׁאֵרִית – שארות (šā̊rot)

Gen 45:7: וַיִּשְׁלָחֵנִי אֱלֹהִים לִפְנֵיכֶם לָשׂוּם לָכֶם שְׁאֵרִית בָּאָרֶץ וּלְהַחֲיוֹת לָכֶם לִפְלֵיטָה גְּדֹלָה

“God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant (MT: שְׁאֵרִית; SP: שארות) on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors”

In this verse, Joseph identifies himself to his brothers and offers them comforting assurance that they need not be sad about having sold him into slavery, since it was God who sent him to Egypt as part of a divine rescue plan for the days of famine in Canaan. The word שארית means a remnant, descendants who survived a disaster, and לשום שארית denotes ensuring that somebody will have heirs.[[18]](#footnote-18) Thus, the meaning of Joseph’s words is that God sent him to Egypt before the brothers, in order to place him in a position to care for them during the famine so that they would thereby be saved.

The MT שארית is derived from שְׁאֵר. On the other hand, the SP שארות is derived, according to the Samaritan reading tradition, from שַׁאֲרה.[[19]](#footnote-19) The word שארית is mentioned in the Pentateuch only in the present verse, but it is repeated in this form in other books of the HB.[[20]](#footnote-20) It is also documented twenty-two times in the biblical Dead Sea Scrolls. In contrast, the Samaritan reading is unique and is not documented in any other textual witness, apart from the appearance of the word שַׁאֲרָה in Lev 18:17. Furthermore, the feminine plural form in the Samaritan reading does not fit the context. Thus, it is likely that the SP reading is secondary, and that it was created as a result of the substitution of the letter *waw* for the *yod* preserved in MT.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Example 2: יִיסָך – יוסך (yuwwā̊sak) (Exod 30:32)[[22]](#footnote-22)

The MT reading is difficult in this case as well, since the verb יִיסָךְ appears to be derived from the root יסכ, which is not otherwise attested in HB.[[23]](#footnote-23) This stands in contrast to the reading יוסך in SP and LXX, which is derived from the root סוכ in the *qal* imperfect.[[24]](#footnote-24) In terms of its meaning, the root סוכ fits well in the verse, serving to describe the non-ceremonial applications of oil. [[25]](#footnote-25) Indeed, many commentators and scholars have gone in this direction, viewing the MT version as secondary.[[26]](#footnote-26) It seems that here, too, the SP reading should be preferred.

* + - 1. Interim Summary

It can be difficult, and sometimes impossible, to determine the specific underlying cause of interchanges of letters in cases of double and even triple commonalities—graphic, phonological, and semantic. Nevertheless, in some instances, textual variants involving interchange between the letters *waw* and *yod* are defined as firm cases. This is based on evaluation of the readings resulting from the interchanges: in cases in which they are semantically or linguistically anomalous readings, it can be concluded that they are the result of a scribal error and not of deliberate emendation.

1. Textual Evidence

Comparison of the MT and SP reveals that there are 122 variants that can be attributed to graphic similarity. These variants are presented in the table in the Appendix, which includes variants that fall into the two categories defined above: firm variants and complex variants. The complex variants are marked with an asterisk (\*) in the dedicated column in the table.

The question of the preferred reading was decided in cases where this is possible, i.e., in cases with sufficient linguistic, literary or exegetical data.[[27]](#footnote-27) The evaluation of the variant readings sheds light on the manner in which the variants were created, so that one can point to the letter that appeared in the primary reading and was replaced by the one similar to it in the secondary reading. In such a study, in which there is a collection of all the relevant differences between the MT and SP, there is added value to the process of textual evaluation. A summary of the number of preferable and secondary readings in each version can be used as a criterion by which we can test the textual value of MT and SP when it comes to variants due to graphic similarity.

The table in the Appendix shows that in 61 cases it is possible to determine with a reasonable level of certainty which of the reading is preferable, while acknowledging the built-in subjectivity of the decision. In order to examine the number of preferable readings in each version, we will exclude the cases in which there are differences in *ketiv* and *qere* in MT.[[28]](#footnote-28) In these cases, the SP reading is attested in one of the traditions of MT, and therefore they cannot be considered as differences in which SP has priority over MT or vice versa. After removing the cases of *ketiv* and *qere*, there remain 54 differences in which the preferable reading can be determined. We will now look at the number of preferable readings in each of the two versions:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Preferable Complex Readings** | **Preferable Firm Readings** | **Preferable Readings** |  |
| 21 | 14 | 35 | MT |
| 4 | 15 | 19 | SP |
| 25 | 29 | 54 | Total |

Table 1: Number of preferable readings in MT and SP

It can be seen that the MT is superior to SP in 35 instances (app. 65% of all determinate variants), while the SP readings are preferable to MT readings in 19 instances (app. 35% of all determinate versions). That is, the total number of cases in which MT readings are preferred over SP readings is significantly greater than the opposite situation in which the SP readings are deemed superior to MT readings.

However, when examining only the firm cases, whose origin is purely textual, no difference is found between the number of preferable readings in MT and SP. The exclusion of variants whose origins involve non-textual factors gives a more balanced picture of the data (table 2): out of the 29 determinate firm cases, SP is preferred over MT 15 times, while in the remaining 14 cases MT is preferred to SP. Thus, with respect to the number of scribal errors resulting from the interchange of similar letters, there is no advantage to MT over SP. On the contrary: SP has a bit of advantage over MT. This is despite the fact that it is characterized as inferior relative to the MT. In addition, although the MT is considered to be a carefully-preserved text that has been transmitted with diligence and precision, its readings are secondary in about half of the cases in which textual priority can be determined.

Table 2:

These data first and foremost confirm the trivial proposition that exchange of letters due to graphic similarity is an integral part of the work of any scribe, regardless of the school to which they belong. However, these errors may also have the ability to serve as a metric for evaluating the accuracy and rigor of the scribes who were entrusted with the transmission of SP. When we examine a small, but established, set of interchanges due to graphic similarity, which attest to the quality of the scribe’s copying skills, we see that the copying of Samaritan scribes was meticulous and careful, producing a version with a limited number of secondary readings due to interchange of graphically similar letters. Thus, the free scribal approach that is evident in SP, in introducing exegetical and linguistic emendations, does not stand in contradiction to its careful transmission.

1. The Transmission of Pre-Samaritan Scrolls

Emanuel Tov recently conducted a statistical analysis of the relationship between the degree of textual freedom and the prevalence of scribal errors in a text.[[29]](#footnote-29) He explored selected biblical scrolls from the Dead Sea scrolls, affiliated with different textual traditions, as well as two groups of tefillin from Qumran: rabbinic tefillin and Qumran tefillin. Tov evaluated the carefulness of scribal transmission by the number of linear or supralinear corrections visible in deletions, erasures, and reshaping of letters in a manuscript. He found that there is often a correlation between the scribe’s approach and the degree of skill and accuracy of his work: a conservative scribe skillfully and meticulously reproduced the manuscript, while a scribe of free approach negligently and inaccurately transmitted his work. However, Tov’s conclusion does not apply to the pre-Samaritan scrolls, such as 4QpaleoExodm, 4QExod-Levf, 4QNumb, 4QRPb (4Q364) and 4QLevd. Tov found that these scrolls comprise harmonizing changes on the one hand, and they attest to a lack of scribal interventions on the other hand. Thus, using the criterion of scribal interventions, he concludes that the pre-Samaritan scrolls were transmitted with the same care as MT tradition, even though their prototype was of a harmonizing nature.

It is possible that there is an association between Tov’s conclusions about the reliability of the transmission of the pre-Samaritan scrolls and the conclusions of the current study regarding the degree of precision of the transmission of SP, a late exemplar of the pre-Samaritan tradition. More research on this possible connection is a desideratum.

5 Summary

This paper demonstrates that with regard to textual variants that originate only in graphic similarity between letters, SP contains almost the same number of preferable readings as MT. The textual inferiority that has been attributed to SP is therefore not evident in this subgroup of textual variants. The fact that in firm cases the SP preserves a significant proportion of preferable readings, demonstrates the meticulous and accurate work of the copyists who transmitted the texts in the Samaritan tradition. These findings may be consistent with the evidence for the reliable transmission of the pre-Samaritan scrolls.

1. \* This paper is based on my PhD thesis, written at Bar-Ilan University, under the supervision of Prof. Emanuel Tov (Hebrew University) and Dr. Nili Samet (Bar Ilan University). I am indebted to Prof. Tov and to Dr. Samet for their invaluable assistance over the course of its writing and for their helpful comments on this paper.

   Cross recognized this tradition early on as “characterized by inflation, glosses, synoptic additions and other evidence of intense scribal activity”. See lately e.g. Armin Lange,

   For the textual characterization of SP, see e.g. Eshel\*\* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For the different scribal approaches in Second Temple period see, e.g., Sidnie White Crawford, . [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. I take the BH edition, which is based on MS Leningrad, as representative of MT, and the diplomatic edition of Tal-Florentin as representative of SP (Abraham Tal and Moshe Florentin, *The Pentateuch. The Samaritan Version and the Masoretic Version* [Tel Aviv: Haim Rubin Tel Aviv University Press, 2010]). This edition is based upon MS G6 from Shechem, from 1204 CE, and it is currently the most comprehensive edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch. For the data in Leviticus, I consulted Stefan Schorch, *The Samaritan Pentateuch III: Leviticus* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018). This comprehensive critical diplomatic edition of the Samaritan version of Leviticus is based upon MS Dublin (D1), dated to 1225 C.E. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For a fuller survey and references, see Lange, “1.2 Ancient Hebrew-Aramaic Texts,” in *Textual History of the Bible* 1A, ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden; Boston: Brill),\*\*\*\* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For an up-to-date survey of the Samaritan manuscripts, their scope and their dating, see Schorch, *The Samaritan Pentateuch III*, xxxv. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Some of these secondary readings are due to graphic similarity between letters, see Gen 14:14; Gen 22:13. See also Schorch, Tov. Tov disputes the estimate of 6000 differences and states that he found 7000 differences between the two versions. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. Geiger; Kahle, . These two scholars recognized the value of SP as a representing an early, popular textual tradition. With the discovery of the Qumran scrolls in the twentieth century, Geiger and Kahle’s claims came to be validated. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Tal-Florentin, *Pentateuch*; Tov, “New Edition,” 254. Tov criticized those who exaggerated their negative attitude to SP and rejected out of hand the possibility that it could contain original readings. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The question of when the Samaritan script began to branch off from the Hebrew script remains obscure. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For a comprehensive paleographic analysis of the interchanging letters between SP and MT, see . [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The Samaritan script is not attested in the fourth century BCE, and artefacts that have been categorized as Samaritan are still written in the Paleo-Hebrew script, such as a seal from Wadi Daliyeh and the seal inscribed with the words “Hanan ben SKWY” from Tel Michal. Samaritan inscriptions written in Samaritan script can be identified with certainty only from the beginning of the third century CE, and their quantity increased from the fourth century, in inscriptions on building stones, mosaic floors, metal amulets, and clay lamps. In the gap between those two points there are only a few inscriptions that are viewed by some scholars as Samaritan, such as the inscriptions at Emmaus (from the first and third centuries CE), the inscription from the Abba cave, and the inscription from Beit el-Mā. For a full discussion and bibliography, see Dayfani, Contribution, 153–154. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Emil Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), §112ff-§112oo; Paul Joüon, Tamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto biblico 2009), 167c; 176d. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See e.g. Kutscher, [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. MT: ‏ ה֣וּא יִתְחַטָּא־ב֞וֹ בַּיּ֧וֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁ֛י וּבַיּ֥וֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִ֖י יִטְהָ֑ר וְאִם־לֹ֨א יִתְחַטָּ֜א בַּיּ֧וֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁ֛י וּבַיּ֥וֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִ֖י לֹ֥א יִטְהָֽר [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See e.g. Baruch A. Levine, [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. MT: .הַנֹּגֵ֥עַ בְּמֵ֖ת לְכָל־נֶ֣פֶשׁ אָדָ֑ם וְטָמֵ֖א שִׁבְעַ֥ת יָמִֽים [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Occasionally, as here, שארית is followed by פליטה. For a fuller discussion of this word-pair, see Avishur, [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Cf. Rudolf Macuch, *Grammatik des Samaritanischen Hebräisch* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1969), 177. He explains the versional differences as deriving from a difference in pronunciation between Masoretic Hebrew and Samaritan Hebrew (the vocal *shewa* in the basic form שְׁאֹר in the MT is vocalized in SP as a *qamets*, שָאר, and this is why the inflected form is שָׁארוֹת). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. MT: עַל־בְּשַׂ֤ר אָדָם֙ לֹ֣א יִיסָ֔ךְ וּבְמַ֨תְכֻּנְתּ֔וֹ לֹ֥א תַעֲשׂ֖וּ כָּמֹ֑הוּ קֹ֣דֶשׁ ה֔וּא קֹ֖דֶשׁ יִהְיֶ֥ה לָכֶֽם [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Moshe Bar-Asher, “Rare Tannaitic Forms,” (צורות נדירות בלשון התנאים) discusses the occurrences of the rare form יסיכה in rabbinic Hebrew and supports the claim of scholars of rabbinic Hebrew regarding the existence of this form. Nevertheless, it is apparently not an independent and early witness to the root יסכ, but rather is derivative from MT in the verse under discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, §73f. Cf. Ben-Haim, *Literary and Oral Tradition*, 4:192, who takes יוסך as a passive form of the *hiphil* in the imperfect. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. In contrast to the root משח, which is used in ritual anointment. See William H. C. Propp, *Exodud 19–40*, AB III (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 483.  [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. BDB 691; HALOT 2:745; Waltke-O’Connor, *Introduction*, 377. See also Cornelis Houtman, *Exodus: Historical Commentary on the Old Testament* III (Leuven: Peeters 2000), 578. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. For a detailed philological analysis of the variants and the considerations that led to their textual evaluation, see Dayfani, *Contribution.* [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. See Appendix, lines number 12; 20; 21; 76; 89; 96; 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Emanuel Tov, “Approaches of Scribes to the Biblical Text in Ancient Israel” (conference paper presented at *The Scribe in the Biblical World*, Strasbourg, June 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)