

The Psalm 22:16 Controversy

New Evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls

Shon Hopkin

Few verses in the Bible have produced as much debate and commentary as Psalm 22:16: “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.”¹ The discussions center on the last character (reading right to left) of the Hebrew כָּאָרוּ (“pierced/dug”), assumed to be the word from which the Septuagint Greek ὠρυξαν (“they have pierced”) was translated—assumed because the original Hebrew texts from which the Septuagint was translated are no longer extant. If the last character of the Hebrew word was a *waw* (ו), as the Greek seems to indicate, then the translation “pierced” is tenable. But a later Hebrew text called the Masoretic text has a *yod* (י) instead of a *waw* (ו), making the word כָּאֲרִי, which translated into English reads “like a lion my hands and my feet.”² Thus, two divergent possibilities have existed side by side for centuries, causing much speculation and debate. The controversy has often been heated, with large variations in modern translations into English, as evidenced by a brief survey of some important Bible translations:

“they pierced my hands and my feet” (King James Version)³

“they have pierced my hands and my feet” (New International Version and Revised Standard Version)⁴

“piercing my hands and my feet” (Anchor Bible)⁵

“they have hacked off my hands and my feet” (New English Bible)⁶

“as if to hack off my hands and my feet” (New Jerusalem Bible)⁷

“like a lion they mangle my hands and feet” (The Psalms for Today—R. K. Harrison)⁸

“like a lion they were at my hands and feet” (*Tanakh*, Jewish Publication Society)⁹

“my hands and feet have shriveled” (New Revised Standard Version)¹⁰

“they have bound me hand and foot” (Revised English Bible)¹¹

“they tie me hand and foot” (Jerusalem Bible)¹²

Anciently, the debate was fought between Christians, who saw this verse as an indisputable prophecy of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and Jews, who denied the existence of prophetic references to Jesus in the Hebrew Bible. The battle continues in modern times between traditionalist scholars, who favor the ancient Christian interpretation, and some textual critics, who deny the existence of the prophecy of future events in the Bible.

Latter-day Saints should consider the debate in light of Joseph Smith’s claim that we “believe the Bible to be the word of God, as far as it is translated correctly.”¹³ Therefore, in studying the etymology of biblical

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I first became interested in the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) as an undergraduate at Brigham Young University, where I worked as a research assistant for Donald W. Parry, Professor of Hebrew Bible and a member of the international team of translators of the Dead Sea Scrolls. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in Near Eastern Studies from BYU, where I studied Aramaic and biblical Hebrew, I continued my studies there and obtained a master’s degree in Near Eastern Studies in 2002.



During my graduate program, I studied Hebrew but did little work with the Dead Sea Scrolls until, in connection with my master’s thesis, my study of Psalm 22:16 led me to check the DSS as the earliest reflection of the psalm’s original rendering. Peter W. Flint, Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University, had published his translation of the DSS Psalms recently enough that no other studies had been done that included an analysis of the DSS Psalter. The text of the DSS will continue to be vital for our understanding of the earliest renderings of Hebrew scripture and, in my opinion, should be consulted in any textual study of the Old Testament.

passages, Latter-day Saints should use whatever tools of analysis are available to translate biblical texts correctly. One of these tools is to compare texts with similar texts and traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Since the discovery of the Scrolls, scholars have been able to use them (mostly fragments of scrolls actually) to better understand the original meanings of Hebrew words and phrases. The same is true for the twenty-second Psalm. Evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls strongly supports the Septuagint translation “pierced” in verse 16.¹⁴

The Controversy

The Jewish translators of the Greek Septuagint in Alexandria, Egypt, about 200 BC surely had no idea what textual arguments they were engendering when they translated the Hebrew text of Psalm 22:16 into the Greek ὠρυζαν (“they pierced my hands and my feet”).¹⁵ Centuries later, the passage became a serious bone of contention between Jewish translators and Christian ones. Christian authors and apologists—who, up until the last few centuries, preferred the Greek Old Testament almost exclusively over the available Hebrew texts—have seen in the Greek an explicit reference to Christ and the crucifixion.¹⁶

Many centuries after the composition of the Greek Septuagint, the two sides of the controversy were so solidified that Jews and Christians could determine who had produced a Bible by turning to this verse. A story is told that one of the early rabbinic Bibles of the sixteenth century was originally to contain the reading of כארו (“pierced/dug”) in Psalms 22:16. The Jew who was checking the proofs did not approve of this translation. He told the printer—the famous Daniel Bomberg—that if he did not restore כארי (“like a lion”), no faithful Jew would ever buy copies of his translation.¹⁷

With the advent of modern textual criticism, כארי (“like a lion”) has continued to have strong support, especially because many scholars have viewed with distrust any text that clearly fits a Christian interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, suspecting textual tampering. The arguments against these types of texts are often circular. If a person does not believe that prophecy exists, any text that would appear to predate an event of which it speaks is disallowed and is believed to have been added after the actual event. To these scholars, the phrase “they pierced my hands and my feet” should be rejected, especially because it does not seem to fit the context of the verses around it: a victim surrounded and tormented by his enemies. The solution of these scholars has been to make educated guesses as to what textual gloss or error could have crept into the text and what the most likely original Hebrew reading was.¹⁸ On the other side, scholars

who support the Septuagint reading have continued to make arguments in its support notwithstanding this and other objections. They argue that “pierced” fits the context without difficulty as long as the possibility of prophecy is not disallowed, pointing out that alternative proposals are even less satisfying.¹⁹

The Septuagint and Supporting Documents

From the advent of textual criticism until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint was recognized as reflecting one of the earliest textual traditions of the “proto-text” of the Hebrew Bible. Scholars strongly value the Septuagint because it was translated by Jews *before* the Jewish/Christian controversies. However, some evidence exists that the Septuagint was subjected to changes after its initial translation, and those changes could have been influenced by the later Jewish/Christian debates.²⁰ While many well-known revisions beginning early in the second century AD reflect the state of the Septuagint text at that time,²¹ a small window of time remains from the beginning of the Jewish/Christian controversy until the appearance of later changes—a period of time in which the text could have been modified. This caution in regards to the Septuagint, combined with a modern distrust of scribal transmission in general, has caused many scholars to suspect that Christians tampered with the text in order to obtain the prophecy of Jesus.

In the case of Psalm 22:16, however, sufficient early witnesses show that, at least by the beginning of the Jewish/Christian controversy, the Septuagint text was solidified. For instance, the Peshitta, or Syriac version of the Old Testament, translated in the late first and second century AD, is believed to have been a Jewish translation directly from Hebrew, although in places the Septuagint appears to have been consulted.²² Whether from the Septuagint or from Hebrew manuscripts, the christological interpretation of the verse was greatly strengthened by the Peshitta’s rendering “they have pierced.”²³

Thus, the Greek word ὤρουξαν (“they have pierced”) was accepted long ago as a third-person plural verb (instead of a noun), although disagreement as to the interpretation of that verb remained (it could mean dig, bury, gouge, or bore, as with a horn, pick, or sharp tool). Indeed, two important Jewish translators from the second century AD—Aquila and Symmachus—employed a third-person plural verb in this location, although they differed as to the meaning of the verb. Aquila’s first revision read ἥσχυοναν (“they have disfigured”). His second revision was given as ἐπέδησαν (“they have bound”).²⁴ Symmachus translated the text in the late

second century AD as ὡς ζητοῦντες δῆσω (“like those who seek to bind”).²⁵ These two translations were given after the beginning of the Jewish/Christian controversy and thus were likely influenced by it. Even so, both translations support the existence of a third-person plural verb in the Septuagint, although they disagree as to how the verb should be translated.

The Masoretic Text

The grouping of the biblical books that came to comprise the canon of the Hebrew Bible (which was adopted and labeled by Christians as the “Old Testament”) is considered to have been chosen around AD 90 at the earliest. However, most evidence points to the existence of large textual variations within this collection until the end of the third century AD, with some continuing variations until the end of the fifth century AD.²⁶ Sometime around the end of the second century AD the word כארי (“like a lion”) as opposed to the third-person plural verb כארו (“pierced/dug”) appears in Hebrew manuscripts. Eventually, כארי came to be the majority Masoretic reading, and accordingly the less-well-attested כארו appears as a variant reading in the Masoretic notes.²⁷ כארי definitely appears to have been in place by the sixth century AD, as it is supported by a Cairo Genizah palimpsest of the *Hexapla*, which reads ὡς λέων.²⁸ The Targum, probably written in the third or fourth century AD, reads “They have opened their mouths at me, like a tearing and roaring lion.”²⁹ In support of the argument that the כארי (“like a lion”) reading in the Masoretic text had not shown up before the end of the second century AD, one can point not only to the Jewish translators Symmachus and Aquila, who do not follow it, but also to the second-century Christian apologist Justin, who frequently reproached the Jews for introducing textual changes to support their arguments but who says nothing about this particular passage.³⁰

Evidence from Parallel Biblical Texts

One objection to the translation “pierced” given by modern scholars is that the traditional meaning for כרה (the root from which כארו derives) is “to dig” or “hollow out,”³¹ which does not seem to fit the piercing of the body by nails. However, Franz Delitzsch, in support of the translation “pierced,” has appealed to a parallel Hebrew verb, נחר, which is known to have the double meaning of “to dig” and “to bore,” as into the body (Judg. 16:21; 1 Sam. 11:3; and Job 30:17). Delitzsch thus surmised that the parallel כרה could easily have this same double meaning as well. The best parallel Hebrew text for the verb כרה in the Old Testament is Psalm 40:6, where it is used to refer to a body part and can be interpreted as “pierced” or “opened.” It reads,

“Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; my ears hast thou opened.” Indeed, the Septuagint translates כרה in Psalm 40:7 exactly the same as it does in Psalm 22:16, adding considerable support to this interpretation of both verses. Finally, theological dictionaries and lexicons point out that this verb is generally used for digging wells and cisterns.³² With this context of boring into the ground until water springs forth, the concept of piercing a hand until blood issues forth does not seem terribly out of place.

It is important to note that although the Christian Fathers relied heavily on Psalm 22:16, it was never quoted in the New Testament. Other passages from Psalm 22 were quoted in the passion narratives, but not verse 16. Some have argued that this absence indicates that Psalm 22:16 read differently in the original Septuagint text and went through a revision after the writing of the passion narratives. That silence carries some weight, although it can be offset by the first-and-second-century-AD Peshitta translation of “pierced.”

The Dead Sea Scrolls

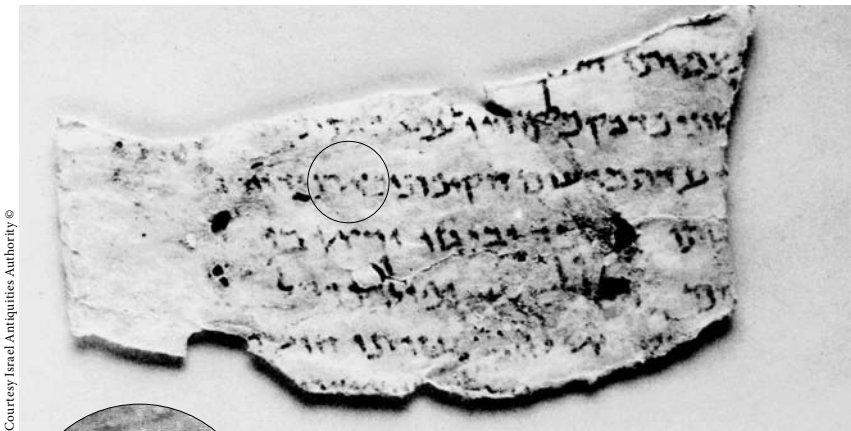
The Dead Sea Scrolls, written from 300 BC to AD 68, have done much to affirm that the Septuagint preserves an early reading of the Hebrew scriptures. A few of the Hebrew texts used by the translators of the Septuagint were likely very similar to biblical manuscripts discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls, especially where the Septuagint differs from the Masoretic. This may indicate that the Scrolls are a window to the Hebrew texts from which the Septuagint was translated.³³ In the book of Psalms in particular, lists of verses have been compiled in which the Septuagint disagrees with Masoretic text but agrees with the Dead Sea Scrolls.³⁴ The Scrolls that have a bearing on the discussion at hand date to the middle of the first century AD before the Jewish/Christian controversy was under way.³⁵ This makes the Dead Sea Scrolls the oldest extant textual witness of the Psalm, although the original translation of the Septuagint—which is largely preserved in later, although altered, versions—predates it.

One of the Dead Sea Scrolls fragments contains Psalm 22:16. This fragment, published in 1997, was discovered in a cache of Scrolls at Naḥal Ḥever in Israel during the early 1950s. Significantly, the 5/6 Ḥev–Sev4Ps Fragment 11 of Psalm 22 contains the crucial word in the form of a third-person plural verb, written כָּאָרוּ (“pierced/dug”).³⁶ While it can often be difficult to distinguish between a *waw* (ו) and *yod* (י) in the Dead Sea texts, the editors of the most authoritative edition of the scrolls, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, confirm this reading in its transliteration and in two

notes: “Although the photograph . . . is very faded, most of the letters are clearly identifiable under magnification,” and regarding כָּאֲרוֹ the editors conclude, “with *waw* (ו) and *yod* (י) clearly distinguishable in this hand . . . this important variant [כָּאֲרוֹ] reading is assured.”³⁷

Nevertheless, in 2004, Kristin Swenson continued to argue for the translation כָּאֲרִי (“like a lion”). In doing so, she discounts the evidence of this fragment, stating in a footnote, “Peter Flint records it as כָּאֲרוֹ [‘pierced/dug’] . . . However, the facsimile reveals a badly faded text that is nearly impossible to read.”³⁸ The photograph of this fragment, however, which is published here from the clearest images available (fig. 1), confirms that Flint was correct and that, accordingly, Swenson’s arguments should be reevaluated.

The discovery of the text of Psalm 22:16 at Naḥal Ḥever strikes at the heart of the controversy. This important text adds strong support to the Septuagint’s translation, which has stood in conflict with the Masoretic text for so long. This new evidence from the Dead Sea wilderness shows that the Hebrew rendering of כָּאֲרוֹ (“pierced/dug”) was not a late change introduced into the manuscripts of the Psalms in support of Christian theology, but rather that it existed before the Jewish/Christian controversy began.³⁹



Courtesy Israel Antiquities Authority ©

FIG. 1. This Dead Sea Scroll, found at Naḥal Ḥever, contains several lines from Psalm 22. Published here for the first time with magnification and darkening, this fragment clearly shows that the final letter in the crucial word כָּאֲרוֹ is a *waw* (ו), not a *yod* (י). This confirms that the text should be translated “they pierced/dug,” rather than “like a lion.”

Conclusion

Having revisited the translation of Psalm 22:16 in light of the recent evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls, we see that “pierced” remains the best possible interpretation. Even if individuals accept “pierced my hands and my feet” as the correct translation, they are left to determine whether or not this phrase points to Jesus.

For Latter-day Saints, the Book of Mormon provides a witness to prophecies of the Savior in the Old Testament, including prophecies of crucifixion. Nephi spoke of the words of Neum, who prophesied that the very God of Israel would “be crucified.” Nephi, Jacob, and Benjamin shared this prophetic view.⁴⁰ Perhaps they drew some of their knowledge of the crucifixion from the original Hebrew text of Psalm 22.

Christ’s words to the Nephites are definitive of his crucifixion: “Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world” (3 Ne. 11:14). One of the satisfying reminders of the Book of Mormon is that it serves to strengthen the Bible’s witness of Christ as the Gospel narratives are confirmed by other words that have come forth in recent times. God declared that this would happen in 2 Nephi 11:3: “Wherefore, I will send [the Book of Mormon’s] words forth unto my children to prove unto them that my words [the Bible] are true. Wherefore, by the word of three, God hath said, I will establish my word. Nevertheless, *God sendeth more witnesses*, and he proveth all his words” (italics added). In this particular case, the Dead Sea Scroll fragment of Psalm 22 helps translators to cut through the fog that has been created by centuries of intellectual debate. This text serves to strengthen and prove the Bible’s and Book of Mormon’s testimonies of Christ as the crucified Lord, he who was “pierced” and “wounded for our transgressions, [and] bruised for our iniquities” (Isa. 53:5).

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1. *The Holy Bible: Authorized King James Version with Chapter Summaries* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2000).

2. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990), 1104; Charles Lee Brenton, *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament and Apocrypha with an English Translation* (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1851; reprinted Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1978), 710. The translators of the King James Version primarily used the Masoretic (Hebrew) text (or other translations of it), but resorted to the Septuagint or other alternate readings when these appeared to be more accurate, to contain an earlier tradition, or to be more appropriate for their Christian audience.

3. *The Holy Bible: Authorized King James Version with Chapter Summaries* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2000).

4. *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1996); *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha: Revised Standard Version* (New York: Oxford, 1977).

5. *The Anchor Bible: Psalms I: 1–50*, trans. Mitchell J. Dahood (New York: Doubleday, 1965).

6. *The New English Bible with the Apocrypha*, ed. Samuel Sandmel (New York: Oxford, 1976).

7. *New Jerusalem Bible*, ed. Bert Ghezzi (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 2002).

8. R. K. Harrison, trans., “The Psalms for Today,” *Norlie’s Simplified New Testament in Plain English for Today’s Reader* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1961).

9. *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh: The Traditional Hebrew Text and the New JPS Translation*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999).

10. *Harper Collins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, ed. Wayne A. Meeks (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

11. *The Oxford Study Bible: Revised English Bible with the Apocrypha*, ed. M. Jack Suggs (New York: Oxford, 1992).

12. *The Jerusalem Bible*, ed., Alexander Jones (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966).

13. *Times and Seasons* (March 15, 1842): 706–10 (emphasis added).

14. Eugene Ulrich, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Their Implications,” *Der Septuaginta-Psalter und seine Tochterübersetzungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2000) states: “Numerous other scrolls have documented the same phenomenon, providing Hebrew originals for readings found in the LXX [Septuagint] which differ from the Masoretic text.”

15. Elliger and Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 1104.

16. Readings given by the Masoretic text are often the subject of debate because the Masoretic text solidified at such a late date. The vowelizing of the text, in particular, was added by the Masoretes, who thereby strongly determined how the text would read. For an excellent example of how changing one simple vowel given by the Masoretes can offer a completely different reading, see Donald W. Parry, “Temple Worship and the Possible Reference to a Prayer Circle in Psalm 24,” *BYU Studies* 32, no. 4 (1992): 59.

17. Paul Louis Bernard Drach, ed., *Sainte Bible De Vence*, 27 vols. (Paris: Cosson, 1827–33), 9:464.

18. These were not the only problems scholars viewed with the text. First, the middle א (*aleph*) could not easily be explained in a root normally third-weak (כרד). Second, to some scholars it seemed a bit of a stretch to make a verb normally

used in the digging of pits and wells refer to piercing hands and feet with nails. In response to the first concern, Franz Delitzsch explained the presence of the *aleph* appealing to a parallel in Zechariah 14:10 with the third-weak root *המר*, which shows up in the text as *רממה*. Delitzsch (and others) posited that *כרו* was extended or changed to *כאר* by adding an *aleph* as an extended vowel indicator. See Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms*, 3 vols., trans. Francis Bolton (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1949). An even simpler explanation, although less likely, is that *כאר* is a cognate form of *כור* or *כרה*. Another parallel exists in Daniel 7:6, which reads *האמיה*. See J. J. Stewart Perowne, *The Book of Psalms: A New Translation*, 2 vols. (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1889), 1:220. For many other examples of the intrusive *aleph*, see Delitzsch's study in Franz Delitzsch, *Die Lese- und Schreibfehler im Alten Testament* (Berlin: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1920), par. 31a. See also Edward J. Kissane, *The Book of Psalms*, 2 vols. (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1953), 1:100. A short response to the second objection raised by scholars (stated above) is addressed in the section of this article entitled "Evidence from Biblical Parallel Texts."

19. One traditional religious scholar states, "The chief alternatives [to 'pierced'] (e.g. 'bound' or 'hacked off') solve no linguistic difficulties which 'pierced' does not solve, but avoid the apparent prediction of the cross by exchanging a common Hebrew verb (dig, bore, pierce) for hypothetical ones, attested only in Akkadian, Syriac and Arabic, not in biblical Hebrew." Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 107-8. For a strong example of the modern scholarly bias against prophecy, see H. J. Kraus's commentary on the Psalms: "From . . . references of the passion narrative to Psalm 22, earlier churchly interpretations permitted themselves to conclude that Psalm 22 belongs to the 'messianic prophecies.' But this interpretation has been proved to be inappropriate. Psalm 22 does not deal with the 'Messiah' (in the sense of an end-time king of salvation). Psalm 22 also is not a 'prophecy.' In this sense H. Gunkel, for instance could state: 'The messianic interpretation, last represented by Delitzsch, has conclusively been dropped since it was recognized that the psalm actually contains no prophecy and, what is more, that the idea of a suffering Messiah is foreign to the Old Testament.' This statement reflects an understanding that turns up almost everywhere in the more recent exegesis of the Psalms." Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1-59: A Commentary*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 300-301.

20. Melvin K. H. Peters, "Septuagint," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 4 vols., David Noel Freedman, ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:1097.

21. The major revisions include Aquila's revisions (AD 128), Symmachus's revision (end of second century AD), Theodotion's revision (late second century AD, although some scholars date pieces of it back to the first century BC), Origen's *Hexapla* (ca. AD 240), the *Syro-Hexaplar* (ca. AD 620), Hesychius' revision, and Lucian (ca. AD 300). Most of these revisions are unimportant in our study because they give the same word usage as our current text. However, in retaining the original translation of our text, they could serve as an additional witness to the correctness of its translation. Aquila's two revisions and the revision of Symmachus have importance in the current discussion because of changes they made to Psalm 22:16.

22. S. J. Brock, "Versions, Ancient (Syriac)," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6:794-99. Brock states: "As with the LXX, the OT was not translated as a whole,

but book by book; it is possible that some books were translated by Jews and others by Christians. . . . All books of the Peshitta OT were basically translated from Hebrew, though in some books there are the links mentioned above with the Targum traditions, and in others the translators may have made occasional use of LXX.”

23. William Emery Barnes, *The Peshitta Psalter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), 22.

24. Leonard J. Greenspoon, “Aquila’s Version,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 1:320–21. Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 76–83; Joseph Reider, *An Index to Aquila*, ed. G. W. Anderson, *Vetus Testamentum Supplement 12* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966).

25. Claude E. Cox, *Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in Armenia*, vol. 42 in *Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1996), 115; Leonard Greenspoon, “Symmachus, Symmachus’s Version,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6:251; Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, 94–99.

26. E. J. Revell, “Masoretic Text,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 4:598. Even with this late date establishing the formalization of the Masoretic text, it should be remembered that the earliest extant manuscript which forms the basis of the Masoretic Text is even much later still. It is the Leningrad Codex B19^a, dated at AD 1008.

27. Elliger and Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 1104.

28. C. Taylor, *Hebrew-Greek Cairo-Geniza Palimpsests* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900).

29. David M. Stec, trans., *The Targum of Psalms* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), 59. See also Philip S. Alexander, “Targum,” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6:326.

30. The Masoretic variance with the Septuagint seems to have gone unnoticed by Christians for many centuries, since they used the Septuagint so exclusively. However, when interest in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament was revived among Christian scholars during the Renaissance and Reformation, the Jews were immediately accused of having tampered with the text. The fact that “like a lion my hands and my feet” made such little sense seemed to justify their criticism. See John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1963), 1:373–74. Notwithstanding their traditional hostility, most level-headed Christian scholars would eventually come to acknowledge that the textual change probably came about because of a simple waw/yod confusion, and not because of any type of textual dishonesty on the part of the Jews. Switching a yod with a waw is probably the most common of textual variants witnessed by the Hebrew texts. Once the letters had become confused, the switched text likely came to be preferred by the Jews because it avoided the christological interpretation of the text, which had been so hotly contested by the Christians.

31. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1996), 500; G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995), 303–6.

32. Willem A. Van Gemeren, ed., *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1997),

2:225. The *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* states: “The use of the verb representing the root from the word group ‘dig’ is characterized by an association with the nouns ‘pit,’ ‘well,’ ‘cistern,’ ‘collecting basin,’ and ‘tomb.’” G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 14 vols. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995), 7:304. However, the dictionary also gives a specialized meaning: “The basic meaning ‘dig’ also gives rise to the more specific meaning ‘hew out’ (Ex. 21:33; Ps. 7:16; 2 Ch. 16:14; Sir. 50:3).”

33. Ulrich, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Their Implications,” states: “Numerous other scrolls have documented the same phenomenon, providing Hebrew originals for readings found in the LXX which differ from the Masoretic text.”

34. Peter W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, ed. F. Garcia Martinez and A. S. Van Der Woude, vol. 17, *Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah* (New York: Brill, 1997), 50–116; Peter W. Flint, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Their Implications for an Edition of the Septuagint Psalter,” in Ulrich, *Der Septuaginta-Psalter und seine Tochterübersetzungen*, 341–63.

35. Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, 43.

36. Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, 88.

37. James Charlesworth and others, eds., *Miscellaneous Texts from the Judaean Desert*, in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, 38 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 38:160–61.

38. Kristin M. Swenson, “Psalm 22:17: Circling around the Problem Again,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123/4 (2004), 640–41 n. 12. The versification of Psalms varies by one verse between the Septuagint and English translations, as the Septuagint assigns verse 1 to the superscriptions—headings that ascribe authorship, provide musical notation, and/or categorize the psalm. The heading (verse 1 of the Septuagint) of Psalm 22 reads, “Plea for Deliverance from Suffering and Hostility, To the leader: according to The Deer of the Dawn, A Psalm of David” (NRSV). Therefore Psalm 22:17 is the same as Psalm 22:16. Both are used by scholars.

39. In addition to the thirty-six Psalms manuscripts from Qumran, three manuscripts were discovered at Naḥal Ḥever and Masada. It has also been suggested, but incorrectly, that Psalms scrolls were found at Naḥal Se’elim and Ein Gedi. As an explanation, a Psalms text was discovered by an expedition led by Yigael Yadin on April 3, 1960, in the first chamber of the “Cave of Letters.” This piece is abbreviated 5/6 ḤevPs, with the large three-chambered cave classified as “Cave Five-Six,” since it has two openings. However, our text was found several years earlier (1951 or 1952) by a Bedouin who claimed to have found it at Wadi Seiyal (this being the Arabic name for Naḥal Ḥever and not the name for Naḥal Se’elim, as was thought). Thus the fragment with our text is named XḤev/Se 4. XḤev/Se 4 means cave “X” (=uncertain) of Naḥal Ḥever, traditionally named Wadi Seiyal, manuscript number 4 (the Psalms scroll). The scroll has also been referred to in some studies as Se II–IV. See Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, 43–44.

40. See 1 Nephi 11:33, 19:10; 2 Nephi 6:9, 10:3, 25:13; and Mosiah 3:9.