A PECULIAR TEXTUAL PHENOMENON

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The *homoioteleuton*, the accidental leaving out of a passage or a few words due to an identical ending, is a well-attested textual phenomenon. More precisely, a phrase is sometimes overlooked owing to the same or similar words appearing twice within a short distance from each other. In the course of copying a manuscript, the copyist’s eye is likely to wander and fall not on the locus he was about to copy, but on a nearby point containing the words which he should have copied later. Thus, at times, several words — or more — are omitted. Examples of this phenomenon come to light when comparing parallel texts within the Hebrew Bible, or by comparing the MT with translations, mainly with the LXX. Recently a number of conclusive examples of this phenomenon appeared in 1QIs.

Editor’s note: This article of the late Dr. Raphael Weiss was published in Hebrew in *Studies in Bible Dedicated to the Memory of Israel and Zvi Broide* (eds. J. Licht and G. Brin; Tel Aviv 1976) 93–96, and again in his collected essays: *Studies in the Text and Language of the Bible* (Jerusalem 1981) 46–49. We offer it here to the non-Hebrew readers on account of its importance as an enquiry into textual phenomena that occurred in the transmission of biblical texts. Our thanks to Ms. Judith H. Seeligmann who kindly translated the essay into English.

For a clear example see 1 Kgs 8:16 as against its parallel text in 2 Chron 6:5–6. The copyist of the book of Kings skipped two sentences: "... לֹא בָּרָדָה יָדָה שֵׁם שֵׁם (2 Chron 6:5b–6a) on account of which appears twice. Part of the omission from the MT of 1 Kgs (אֲחָדָה בָּרָדָה יָדָה שֵׁם שֵׁם) obtains in the LXX of 1 Kgs.

This phenomenon is especially common in the MT of 1 Samuel. Omissions of this kind from the Hebrew can be restored by retroversion from the LXX. Most famous among these are 1 Sam 10:1; 14:41.

In two instances a copyist (not the writer) of the scroll became aware of the omission and restored the missing words (either in the margin or between the lines): 38:21–22; 40:7–8. Cf. E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll* (STDJ 6; Leiden 1974) 555–556.
In the present article, we shall deal with a phenomenon which is the reverse of the *homoiooteleuton*, and much less common: an amanuensis who copies a number of words twice because he found them enclosed between two identical words. Instead of copying from the second locus where the words appeared, his eye wandered back to the first, whence he carried on his copying, thus unduly repeating his text.

Before coming to some biblical passages which can be elucidated bearing this phenomenon in mind, we shall try and throw light on such an instance of iteration in post-biblical literature, found in one of the Judean Desert Scrolls. In the community rules of 1QS we read (VI:4–6):

4 מהרי ערכו השם על כל ואלהורש
5 לשהת רבים ישלה ויירשוה להבך ברארשת חולים ואלהורש
6 להבך ברארשת חולים ואלהורש ואל ימש במקומן אחר ימי העשרה

The redundant doublet in lines 5–6 (italicized) is easily explained, seeing that in both lines 4 and 5 we read the words *ואל ימש*. When the copyist of the Manual of Discipline reached the end of line 5, he did not go on copying from there *ואל ימש*, but erroneously believed himself to be at the end of line 4, and therefore continued his copying once again from the beginning of line 5: ... לשהת רבים. That is how the duplicate came into being. Manuscript d of the Manual of Discipline found in cave 4, some of whose versions were published by J. T. Milik, does not show this doublet. By way of comparison let us look at the description of the eschatological ceremonial session of the congregation of Qumran as found in 1QSa, col. II, lines 17ff. Here too we encounter the use of a ‘double phrasing’ when depicting the entire setting, though the repetition here is of a different order:

5I have followed the transcription in M. Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark’s Monastery* II (New Haven 1951).


7The completions are according to J. Licht, *The Scroll of the Rule* (Jerusalem 1965) (Hebrew). The scroll was first published with different completions by J. T. Milik, *Qumran Cave I* (DJD I; Oxford 1955) 111.
Bearing this phenomenon in mind we may be able to make some sense of three muddled, almost obscure biblical texts. These passages have so far been regarded as a ‘collation of variants’; or as conflated readings. Others did stumble upon the duplicates in these texts, but were unable — or did not try — to explain how they came about, or regarded them as ‘a simple case of dittography’.

In the story of the bringing up of the Ark of the Lord (2 Samuel 6: 3-4) we read:

\[\text{ירבדב את אָרוֹן האָלָלָם} \text{אל הָעַנֵּלָה והָדָשָׁה יְשָׁאלוֹ} \text{בָּמוּד אבִידָר אַשֶׁר בּוֹכָּה הָעַנֵּלָה} \text{ואָנוּי} \text{בִּין אֱבִיקוֹד הָמוֹן אַתַּי} \text{הָעַנֵּלָה וְדָשָׁה יְשָׁאלוֹ מְפִית אַבִינֹד אַשֶׁר בּוֹכָּה} \text{ע} \text{אָרוֹן} \text{הָאָלָלָם וַאֲנוּי חֵלֶל לְפִי אֲדֹרֶת.}\]

All scholars have noticed the dittography from the word הָדָשָׁה, at the end of v. 3 up to הבּוֹכָּה in v. 4. This dittography is not extant in the biblical parallel of 2 Chronicles 13:7 nor is it represented by the LXX to our verses. Obviously, this duplicate resulted from what had been said before in v. 3. While copying from the manuscript in front of him the copyist wrote down the word הָעַנֵּלָה, and, looking back into his source, his eye fell not upon הָעַנֵּלָה at the end of the verse, but on the previous occurrence of הָעַנֵּלָה, at the beginning of the verse. Thus he came to copy once again הבּוֹכָּה... יְרָשָׁה. Even after realizing his error he did not erase the duplicate, but left it as written, and continued his copying: עַמָּן אָרוֹן האָלָלָם etc. This explains the words הָעַנֵּלָה יְרָשָׁה (instead of הָדָשָׁה יְרָשָׁה), as his eye fell on הָעַנֵּלָה at the opening of v. 3, where the carriage, not being mentioned before, needed no definite article. Hence, the adjective הָדָשָׁה יְרָשָׁה has remained indefinite. With all due caution, I feel tempted to say that on the basis of the doublet which came about in the MT, we could surmise that in the specific manuscript of the book of Samuel from which our copyist worked the passage in question was arranged in four lines as follows:

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9See below, notes 12, 16.

That is to say, lines 1 and 3 ended with the same word (עלהל). When the copyist finished copying the third line, he erred due to the identical ending of the two lines, believing himself to have ended the first line, and continued: דרש ורשאהו מבית אביכר אשרב בתה (=line 2); only then did he copy שם ראור האלוהים etc (=line 4).

That is how we can make sense of the duplication, though it is not necessarily this arrangement of lines which caused the mistake.

Another example along the same line is the text of Isaiah 17:12–13:

ויהו הנק הפנים רבע נמון קמה ק縮ו זיואר לאמות נאמנים ממקה עידנים ישכן
לأمנים קswana ממק רבע ישכן וגו ננס ממרות

The words לאמות which open v. 13 are redundant.11 They are but a duplicate from v. 12 (with the change (מעם רבע ממק כבירים ישנן)).12 If here too we try and arrange the text as it may have been before the copyist, we may shed light on how the present text originated.

ויהו הנק הפנים רבע
�名 קמה ק縮ו זיואר לאמות נאמנים ממקה עידנים ישכן
לאמנים קswana ממק רבם ישנן
וגו ננס ממרות

As third and last example we shall bring the words of one of the courtiers of the king of Israel as they read in 2 Kgs 7:13. The text of MT is garbled:

11 The words are not translated in the Peshitta.


13 Noting the similarity between יד and וו, the two words ישנא ישנא should be regarded as identical. 1QIs reads: ישנא ישנא (at the end of v. 12 MT). However, the writer of the scroll reads the end of v. 12 and beginning of v. 13: ישנא ממק כבירים (וישנא לאומות) ישנא ישנא.
Instead of copying: אָשֶׁר נֶשֶׂאֵר בָּהּ כָּל חוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל אָשֶׁר חָיוֹת וְנֶשֶׁלָּה וּנְרָאָה.

The words were copied twice, because the copyist went back to the first אָשֶׁר נֶשֶׂאֵר בָּהּ instead of carrying on from the second אָשֶׁר (תִּפְרָד אָשֶׁר) as he should have done. Again it is possible that the אָשֶׁר appeared twice at the beginning of a line in the manuscript from which the amanuensis worked, thus causing the doublet:

1. אָשֶׁר נֶשֶׂאֵר בָּהּ כָּל חוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל
2. אָשֶׁר נֶשֶׂאֵר בָּהּ כָּל חוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל
3. אָשֶׁר נֶשֶׂאֵר בָּהּ כָּל חוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל

We did not intend to focus upon the doublets themselves, but on how they came into being. Even if copyists became aware of the doublet, they did not dare correct text which was regarded holy. This attitude accounts for the method of superlinear points (dots, נְקֵדִים אֱלִינִים), a system by which in a number of passages dubious words were marked by placing dots over them. These words escaped being eliminated by the awe in which the holy writ was held. Attention should also be paid to 1 Chron 15:18. The list of Levites there enumerates יְצִירָאֵל וְשִׁמְרוֹת (וְשִׁמְרוֹת יִשְׁמְרָאֵל) שִׁמְרוֹת etc.

(Nota the vocalization חֵלֶק, not חֵלֶק). These Levites are mentioned again in the next chapter at 16:5 16:5, however בֵּן has been left out: יְצִירָאֵל וְשִׁמְרוֹת. It seems that the copyist of chapter 15, following the pattern ‘x son of y’ he was used to,

14יְצִירָאֵל וְשִׁמְרוֹת אָשֶׁר נֶשֶׂאֵר בָּהּ (Jos 2:3). So Jud 11:31; 1 Kgs 21:11 (a combination of אָשֶׁר נֶשֶׂאֵר בָּהּ + נְקֵדִים אֱלִינִים), Neh 1:3.

15The words in bold type are missing in many Hebrew mss.

16Talmon (above, n. 12), regards this verse as well as a conflated reading.


18Cf., for example, the word אָשֶׁר in Num 3:39, or חֵלֶק in Isa 44:9 (Talmon, ibid., p. xx).
wrote נ ב after the first name mentioned (as in the previous verse): נ. Having noticed his error he did not persist in it, but neither did he blot it out. 19

19 Other readings as well can be explained by assuming that the copyist left his mistake (in italics), but annotated it, with the correct reading. Thus, נ מ נ מ ... נ מ נ מ (Exod 22:9); נ מ נ מ (Isa 28:25).