SOME REMARKS ON 4Q252 AND THE TEXT OF GENESIS

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Introduction
The importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the better understanding of the textual history of the books of the Hebrew Bible in the Second Temple period is now generally accepted.\(^1\) The scrolls have shown that “the Massoretic text is only one of the textual forms of the ancient biblical text.”\(^2\) In showing this the scrolls have highlighted much of the imprecision in the technical terminology used by text-critics of the Hebrew Bible. In speaking of the variety of forms of the biblical text in the Second Temple period E. Tov generally uses the term “witness” for the proto-Masoretic, Masoretic, pre-Samaritan and Samaritan texts as well as for the biblical texts found at Qumran, some additional Hebrew materials, and for the ancient translations;\(^3\) the term “witness” does indeed have a certain neutrality about it and does not presuppose any kind of relationship between the various texts. E. Ulrich, sensitive to the processes of textual development for each biblical book, prefers to use the term “edition” and attempts variously to show how each textual exemplar reflects a different stage in the development of the text.\(^4\) Thus for him the “Massoretic edition of Jeremiah is demonstrably secondary to the earlier edition

\(^1\) Many scholars have worked in this field in the last fifty years. Much of their work is best presented in a systematic way by E. Tov in Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress Press; Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1992).


\(^3\) See especially the nomenclature in Chapter 2 of his Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible.


of that book in the Hebrew text of 4QJer\textsuperscript{b} and the Greek translation of it in the Septuagint.\textsuperscript{5} In a recent article which bears directly on the purposes of this study, J. R. Davila has reverted to the more traditional terminology of “text-type” which he uses somewhat in imitation of text critics of the New Testament to mean “the largest group of sources that can be objectively identified.”\textsuperscript{6} For Davila the allocation of any exemplar to a particular text-type depends upon a number of well-tried criteria, chiefly that agreement in unique secondary readings should be given most weight. In this study I will endeavour to work within Davila’s terminological framework to assess the text of Genesis as it is reflected in 4Q252, 4QCommentary on Genesis A.

As noted, for several books of the Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls have enabled scholars to reconsider their textual history so that it has become commonly acknowledged that in the Second Temple period there was more than one text-type in circulation in Palestine. This is certainly the case for Samuel, Jeremiah and Daniel,\textsuperscript{7} and may well prove to be the case for other books too, especially if those who argue that 11QPs\textsuperscript{8} represents an alternative edition of the Psalter ever win the day.\textsuperscript{8} In many cases this has had the corollary of vindicating the Greek translators; rather than being characterized as frequently treating the Hebrew Vorlagen with

\textsuperscript{5}“Jewish, Christian, and Empirical Perspectives on the Text of Our Scriptures,” 74.


\textsuperscript{7}As argued persuasively by E. Ulrich, “The Canonical Process,” 267-291.

disdain, they are now recognized as representing their particular Hebrew tradition more or less faithfully.

Whereas the plurality of text-types for some biblical books is readily accepted, in the case of the Book of Genesis, even in the light of a preliminary assessment of the Qumran manuscripts, such plurality is not generally assumed in recent scholarship: “There does appear to be only one text tradition of Genesis, that to which the MT and the LXX are witness.”9 In addition, for most scholars the text of Genesis in the Samaritan Pentateuch (=SP), with which the LXX sometimes agrees, is not sufficiently distinctive to warrant being described as a separate text-type; in Genesis it contains variant readings, perhaps warranting the description “recensional,” but no distinguishable text-type. Furthermore, before the publication of the cave 4 manuscripts of Genesis in their principal editions, the only clear evidence from the Qumran caves for the character of the text of Genesis was to be found in a rather limited set of fragments; there was nothing in them which would allow for the view that there were two or more text-types for the text of Genesis. Fourteen of the nineteen fragments of 1QGen are too small to identify with certainty;10 for the other five fragments there are a couple of orthographic variants from the MT, and two readings which agree with the SP ([ם] ל in Gen 3:11; and the inclusion of ה in Gen 22:14), neither of which is significant enough to suggest major recensional activity. The text of the two fragments of 2QGen most probably agrees with the MT exactly,11 whilst the single fragment of 6QpaleoGen,12 having but two minor variants

9E. Ulrich, “The Biblical Scrolls from Qumran Cave 4: An Overview and a Progress Report on Their Publication,” RevQ 14 (1989-90) 219. For LXX note the following statements by J. W. Wevers: “We do have Qumran fragments of Genesis, as well as other ancient witnesses such as the Samaritan Hebrew text and the Targums, as well as the Genesis Apocryphon; these must be carefully compared throughout, and there will indeed be passages where the [Greek] translator either must have had a different reading or misread his Hebrew text — in fact, throughout the Notes that follow it is at times stated that the Gen text was based on the Samaritan rather than the BHS text — but it is strongly urged on the reader that one must begin with a prejudice towards the text which we actually have” (italics mine, emphasizing the singular); “it makes sense to conclude that the Hebrew text which the Jewish community of Alexandria had in the third century BC could not have been as wildly different from MT as earlier scholars of Genesis sometimes maintained” (J. W. Wevers, Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis [SBLSCS 35; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993] xiii).


from the MT (אָמְרָה לְמִימָנוּת = SP, LXX for MT’s אָמְרָה לְמִימָנוּת in Gen 6:19; אָמְרָה לְמִימָנוּת in Gen 6:20), is suitably described by its editor: “texte et graphie semblent peu différents du texte massorétique.” The four small fragments of 8QGen yield hardly any text at all. Fragments 1 and 4 seem to correspond with Gen 17:12-19, but fragments 2 and 3 can be more certainly identified as part of Gen 18:20-25. In Gen 18:25 מַעֲשָׂתוֹ is written in full orthography, but more intriguingly it seems as if one phrase in the text of Gen 18:25 (MT שִׁדְּרוּ מִים לְשַׁמְשֹׁת = SP, LXX) was corrected to אָמְרָה לְמִימָנוּת in agreement with two Greek uncials and many minuscules as well as the Latin traditions; here is evidence that this minor variant, hitherto known only in the versions, was present in Hebrew traditions, where perhaps at some point the text represented in the MT and SP was created through assimilation to Gen 44:7. On the basis of these small fragments there is little reason to suppose any major recensional activity with regard to the text of Genesis, let alone the need to propose that there is more than one text-type for the book. All that the presence of these manuscript copies of Genesis from the late Second Temple period has required is that scholars move the text as represented in the MT from center stage to being one of a number of textual exemplars, each of which contain a few minor scribal variants, some probably deliberately and some accidentally introduced.

The complete publication of the Genesis texts from cave 4 has changed the parameters of the discussion somewhat. On the basis of a careful statistical analysis of the variant readings for the cave 4 Genesis manuscripts, MT, SP and LXX, Davila has made the provisional conclusion that “we can isolate two text-types in Genesis. One is represented by LXX and the other by M, SP, 4QGen", 4QGen, and possibly 4QGen’. 4QGen" and 4QGen’ are very fragmentary, but their preserved texts are closest to the latter text-type.” The principal purpose of this study is to list and catalogue in a preliminary fashion the principal non-orthographic and non-morphological variants in the text of Genesis as it may be represented in the Genesis

13.Ibid., 105-106.
14.The small fragment of the other manuscript from cave 6 containing a phrase related to Gen 10:6 or 20 (6Q19), though listed by E. Ulrich in “An Index of the Passages in the Biblical Manuscripts from the Judean Desert (Genesis-Kings),” Dead Sea Discoveries 1 (1994) 115, is clearly in Aramaic and cannot be used for text-critical purposes.
16a.Text-Type and Terminology,” 36.
Commentary, 4Q252. 4Q252 columns 4-6 contains explicit quotations of Genesis with commentary; columns 1-3 contain paraphrastic reworkings of selected passages of Genesis. Whereas the explicit quotations can readily be used for text-critical purposes, the paraphrastic sections have to be used more cautiously, since many apparent variants may be little more than exegetical clarifications introduced by the commentator. The variants from the paraphrastic sections discussed below have all been included because they may have some status for the text criticism of Genesis as is explained for each item.

A supplementary purpose of this study is to show again that the stages between biblical text simpliciter, if such a thing can ever be known, and the fully elaborate exegetical paraphrase are immensely complex. Before the discovery of the scrolls it was customary for text critics to dismiss minor variants as scribal errors, that is, as mistakes in transmission. But the scrolls have shown that some variants were probably deliberately introduced at an early stage in the transmission of the text; not all so-called exegetical variants should be deemed to belong to the latest stages in the

17The principal edition of 4Q252 is published in Qumran Cave 4: Parabiblical Texts Part 3 (ed. J. C. VanderKam; DJD XXII; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). Most of the data discussed in this study is described there, but has deliberately been left unassessed.


A diplomatic transcription of the text based on the photographs and the actual manuscript fragments themselves is readily available in G. J. Brooke, “The Thematic Content of 4Q252,” JQR 85 (1994-95) 33-35.

18As pointed out clearly by E. Tov, “Biblical Texts as Reworked,” 117.
transmission of a text. Before both the content and the precise form of the text were fixed, scribal practice operated within bounds of some flexibility; the continuing and lively significance of the text was at least as important as the precise representation of an earlier text.

The Textual Variants

I. 4Q252 ≠ MT ≠ LXX

1. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, lines 1-2 (Gen 6:3)

4Q252: אֲלִיוֹדָה יָמָר
MT: יַאֲמָר יִהְיֶה
LXX: καὶ ἐπεφέν κύριος ὁ θεός

The classic way of reading this evidence would be either to suppose that LXX represents an original Hebrew which has then been reduced one way in the MT tradition and another in that represented in 4Q252, or to suggest, less probably, that the translator of LXX knew of both Hebrew traditions and combined them. However, several other factors need to be taken into account and the matter handled rather differently. Firstly, several Greek miniscules of group C do not read κύριος and so agree with 4Q252; this group is late but is related to the earlier catena tradition. Secondly, although source critics might point to the characteristics of the representation of the divine name in the various pentateuchal sources, it may be more pertinent to recall that in the manuscripts from Qumran which reflect the ideology of the community (such as 4Q252), the tetragrammaton is handled in a variety of ways. In addition to various scribal devices which draw attention to the tetragrammaton, it may be that in deference to the divine name the compiler of 4Q252 or his source altered it to θεός. Nowhere in the extant parts of 4Q252 does the tetragrammaton occur. However, it must be recognized that "im Sprachgebrauch der Qumrangingemeinde war θεός sicher nicht beheimatet." Thus it is likely that

19 For LXX, J. W. Wevers comments only that "the speaker is κύριος ὁ θεός but only ἦσσε in the Hebrew," Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis, 76.


21 Note the technical self-designation דַּבָּרָה יִהְיֶה in 4Q252 5:5.

22 H. Stegemann, "Religionsgeschichtliche Erwägungen zu den Gottesbezeichnungen in den Qumrantexten," Qumrán: sa piété, sa théologie et son milieu (ed. M. Delcor; BETL 46; Paris: Duculot; Leuven: University Press, 1973) 208. The statement was certainly appropriate in 1978; there needs to be a new study on the divine epithets covering all the texts from
the variant belongs to a stage earlier than that of 4Q252 itself. The SP and targums are uniform in representing a reading of יוהו here.

In sum, the Greek evidence seems to attest the presence of אלוהים in its Vorlage, exclusively so in several manuscripts of group C. Whilst the scribe or author of 4Q252 may have been concerned to alter the tetragrammaton to אלהים, given Greek evidence and the non-Qumran character of the designation, it is likely that he found it in his textual tradition as well; perhaps at most he was the one responsible for reducing יוהו אלהים in some manuscript tradition to the single אלהים. Here 4Q252 has a unique reading.

2. 4Q252, frg. 6, column 5, line 3 (Gen 49:10)

4Q252: דָּגֵל בַּיְם
MT: דָּגֵל בַּיְם
LXX: εἰς τό νησίν ματρίων αὐτῶν

The manuscript itself is no longer clearly legible at this point, so it is necessary to rely on the photograph of this word in PAM 43.381. It is fortunate that several examples of both dalet and reš survive in the surrounding words; there is a clear difference between them in the top right hand corner of the letter. Were it not for the way the leather of this part of the fragment has shrunk and deteriorated, there would probably be no doubt about which letter should be read. On the basis of computer enhancement of the image a vertical stroke on the right hand top of the letter is clear; thus dalet should be read here, rather than reš. דָּגֵל is supported consistently by the SP, and was proposed here by Y. Yadin in 1957. The reading is also to be preferred on the basis of the internal logic of the exegesis that 4Q252 is presenting at this point.

The appearance of דָּגֵל in 4Q252 here supports the antiquity of this reading, but the translation of LXX shows that the reading of the MT is also ancient. The Greek translator seems to have tried to make suitable sense of the metaphor by rendering "feet" as "thighs," as is also the case in Deut 28:57. Not surprisingly Aquila reverts to the more literalistic μεταξὺ ποδῶν αὐτῶν.

The association of 4Q252 with the Samaritan tradition may be even closer. The only other place in the Pentateuch where this precise form of בַּיְם occurs is Num 2:2

Qumran, both biblical and non-biblical.

in the reading of the SP. Intriguingly, as the Israelites are encamped, it is the banner of the camp of Judah which is described first as taking the preeminent position on the east side of the tent of meeting towards the sunrise. This would be a stance which the interpreter of Gen 49:10 could well have assumed, a favored place for the “house of Judah” (1QpHab 8:1; cf. 4QpPs 2:13-15).

Overall this reading shows that in the transmission of Gen 49:10 there has been a scribal error of either dalet to reš or of reš to dalet at some time before the third century BCE.

II. 4Q252 = LXX ≠ MT

1. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 2 (Gen 6:3)

4Q252: רוּד
MT: רוּד
LXX: οὗ μὴ καταμείνη

T. H. Lim states boldly that here רוּד is “a variant attested by the LXX.” It is indeed possible that the Greek translates a Hebrew which we now find in 4Q252, but as M. Bernstein has argued at length, it could simply be the case that the author of this section of 4Q252 decided independently that the most suitable way to render the unique and problematic רוּד was to use a form of the similar רוּד. Three factors stand against seeing a textual variant here. Firstly, “dwell” may well be the most obvious contextual understanding for רוּד, and much of the versional evidence for such an understanding could have been reached independently as translators variously sought to render רוּד. Secondly רוּד is rare in biblical texts, occurring only infinitivally in Ps 84:11 where it is rendered in Greek by οἴκεῖν, and as an imperative meaning “pile up” in Ezek 24:5. Thirdly the uniform readings of the SP, the Targums and Pseudo-Philo all variously support the antiquity of the Hebrew of the MT. Bernstein has made a strong case for seeing the reading in

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24G and L read κατὰ νότον.
27“4Q252 i 2,” 421-427.
4Q252 as “yet another example of the way in which exegesis of the biblical text can at times manifest itself in textual guise.”

However, the key to the problem is LXX. Its rendering of its Hebrew Vorlage with οὐ μὴ καταμένειν needs setting in both a historical and literary context. The verb καταμένειν occurs but eight times in LXX, only at Num 20:1 and 22:8 elsewhere in the Pentateuch, so for LXX we are dealing with a third century BCE unique translation of a rare word by another that is not common. The reading, however, is supported to some extent by the general terminology of the second century BCE Jubilees 5:8 (“My spirit will not dwell upon man forever”). Furthermore, while Bernstein is somewhat predisposed to see all variants in 4Q252 as exegetical clarifications of the plain meaning of the text, the number of variants listed in this article, many of which have some proximity to LXX, inclines me to concur partially with Lim, in the sense that here we probably have the preservation of the form of the Hebrew which also lay before the Greek translator. From this perspective, the occurrence of ידוי in the text of Gen 6:3 in 4Q252 is probably not the result of the exegetical activity of the composer or author of this Genesis Commentary; rather, it was a reading inherited by him. Thus an adequate description of the case might be put as follows: the original reading in Gen 6:3 may indeed have been ידוי, but from at least the third century BCE an alternative form of the text could have been present in Hebrew manuscripts. Thus from the perspective of the author of this Genesis Commentary the reading ידוי may have been part of the text of Genesis which he inherited and deemed authoritative in some way. Indeed, since MT Gen 6:3 is not extant in any other Hebrew manuscript from the caves to show otherwise, the reading ידוי may have been the only reading available to him. For the modern scholar the reading may seem secondary, but for the ancient author it may have seemed normative. Thus for purposes of text-critical classification ידוי is an important shared secondary reading.

2. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, lines 2-3 (Gen 6:3)

| 4Q252: יมะ ממה עשרים שנה | MT: יมะ ממה עשרים שנה |
| LXX: αἱ ἡμέραι αὐτῶν ἐκατὸν εἰκοσί έτη |

The plural possessive suffix of 4Q252 matches the plural possessive pronoun of LXX. Is this merely coincidental, since several authors variously render בְּדֵי col-

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28Ibid., 427.
lectively with plurals? The SP agrees precisely with the MT. Since 4Q252 represents an abbreviated form of Gen 6:3, and yet retains the singular יְהֹוָה in the first part of its quotation, the plural is all the more obvious as the antecedent is nearer. It might be that the suffix in 4Q252 is intended to match that in מְאֹד in the previous line. In this way, as in LXX, “the divine judgment is not on mankind as a whole but on ‘these men’.”29 This is an example of a shared secondary reading, exclusive to 4Q252 and LXX of the principal witnesses.

3. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 19 (Gen 8:12)

4Q252: וַיְהָוָה יִתְנַשֶּׁר עָדָן
MT: וַיְהָוָה יִתְנַשֶּׁר עָדָן
LXX: καὶ οὖ προσέθησα τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔτι

Though this example will also be discussed below as an agreement between the MT and LXX over against 4Q252 with regard to the occurrence of the preposition and third person pronoun, it is also included here since 4Q252 and LXX can possibly be aligned with one another in the way that the infinitive is represented. The use of the articular infinitive in Greek may well represent the ל as it is found in 4Q252, since יְהֹוָה יִתְנַשֶּׁר of Gen 8:10 is rendered quite idiomatically by πάλιν ἐξαπέστειλεν. Wevers explains the more literal Greek rendering in Gen 8:12 as a reflection of the translator’s desire to avoid repetition,30 but the translator may have had a Hebrew text in front of him presenting a slightly different Hebrew idiom which he considered to need a more literal translation. If this description of the matter is granted, this is another example of a shared secondary reading, exclusive to 4Q252 and LXX.

4. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 2, line 1 (Gen 8:13a)

4Q252: נַחַת וַשָּׁשׁ מֵאָת שִׁנְיָה לְחִי נָבֹא
MT: נַחַת וַשָּׁשׁ מֵאָת שִׁנְיָה לְחִי נָבֹא
LXX: ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ καὶ ἐξακολουθήσα τῇ ἔτει ἐν τῷ δύον τῷ Ναο

Though the text of 4Q252 is considerably reordered at this point, it nevertheless seems to be close enough to the Hebrew represented in the MT in relation to this phrase for the similarity with LXX over against the MT to be noted as a textual variant.31 The SP and the Targums as well as the Peshitta all reflect the text of the

29Wevers, Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis, 77.
30Ibid., 107.
31As noted by Lim, “The Chronology fo the Flood Story,” 293. The Greek tradition is
MT. 4Q252 and LXX present a text that is consistent in referring the year dates to the life of Noah as the text tradition does uniformly at Gen 7:11. Both the pericope beginning with Gen 7:11 and that starting at 8:13 are ascribed to the priestly tradition. Since in general, making idioms consistent is a later scribal tendency and since the compiler of 4Q252 at the beginning of his text (4Q252 1:1) is concerned to date the start of the section of his chronicle by the years of Noah’s life, for which there is no biblical parallel, it seems likely that the variant being discussed here is not original to the text of Genesis but belongs to an early secondary stage in the transmission of the text. The correspondence between LXX and 4Q252 is another exclusive shared secondary reading.

5. 4Q252, frgs. 1, 3, column 2, lines 8-9 (Gen 11:31)

4Q252: בֵצַעְתְּךָ מַאָרָה כָּשְׁרִים
MT: רוֹצֵא אַתָּם מַאְרָה כָּשְׁרִים
LXX: καὶ ἐξήγαγεν αὐτούς ἐκ τῆς χώρας τῶν Χαλδαίων

The MT here is problematic; מַאָרָה is presented in a plural form followed by נָאָם whose antecedent is not clear. Targums Onqelos and Neofiti read נָאָם = the Peshitta. However both 4Q252 and LXX agree, together with the SP and the Vulgate, that the verb should be construed as a singular. The text of 4Q252 at this point is somewhat paraphrastic so not too much can be made to hang upon this example; both 4Q252 and LXX may represent independent interpretative renderings of a difficult Hebrew (MT), or both may have been following a Vorlage already adjusted as attested in the SP.\footnote{Wevers, Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis, 159-160, while asserting that the Hebrew is the lectio difficilior, suggests that the singular verb was original and changed to a plural in the Hebrew tradition at some point in order to incorporate Abram as co-subject with Terah in setting out from Ur, since according to Gen 12:1 it was Abram who was commanded to leave Ur, not Terah. For Wevers, the original, as preserved in LXX, would have Terah responsible for the move from Ur to Haran, and Abram responsible for the move from Haran to Canaan.}

An additional comment may be apposite. The Hebrew of the MT is clearly ancient, as the Targums suggest, and the presence of מָאָם is equally well attested, in the SP and even by G’s αὐτοῖς. Yet one cannot but wonder whether the consonantal arrangement of 4Q252 may also represent an early form of the text. Although lacking a base stroke, an initial would and would might have been read as a bet, and in remarkably uniform concerning this longer text; only three miniscules (71, 120 and 407) agree with MT, probably representing a correction towards it at some stage.
the Hebrew tradition of the MT the final mem of בֵּית reduplicates the initial letter of the following word. Though such might just be possible, the overall paraphrastic context of 4Q252 at this point shows that the compiler was concerned solely with Terah; thus the syntax of 4Q252 is more likely to have been determined not by any known text of Genesis but by the immediate needs of the commentary. The verb's singular construal remains, nevertheless, as an agreement with LXX.33

6. 4Q252 frg. 4, column 3, line 13? (Gen 28:4)

4Q252: ⲟ المتوسط אָבִיךָ
MT: אָבִיךָ אָבִיךָ
LXX: τὸν εὐλογίαν Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ πατρός σου

In this instance the Greek evidence makes for some complication but whichever strand is followed the Greek and 4Q252 agree against MT in defining Abraham as “father”.

34 The SP and G represent the reading of 4Q252 (אָבִיכָ/ to πατρός μου), whereas the remaining witnesses attest the more logical first person pronoun, since it is Isaac speaking to Jacob. Perhaps the reading of 4Q252 and the traditions which agree precisely with it represent assimilations to Gen 28:13, though it should be noted that whereas the phrase in Gen 28:13 is אָבִיכָ אָבִיכָ, in 4Q252 3:13 it is apparently אָבִיכָ אָבִיכָ. There is no Greek witness that supports the word order and second person suffix of 4Q252 for Gen 28:4, though several of the Catena group read τοῦ πατρός μου Ἀβραὰμ. Whatever the case, here is a substantial correspondence between 4Q252 and the Greek traditions; once again LXX is supported by the SP.37

7. 4Q252, frg. 5, Column 4, line 4 (Gen 49:4)

4Q252: מַתְמוּת כְּמָךְ
MT: מַתְמוּת כְּמָךְ
LXX: ἔξυφρισας ὡς ἵδωρ

33 For discussion of the rendering of מֵאָרָה in Gen 11:31 see below under III.5.
34 Followed uniformly by the Targums.
35 Together with minuscule 31, several patristic quotations, part of the Old Latin tradition and the Ethiopic.
36 This is the word order reflected in the majority of the Greek tradition in both Gen 28:4 and 28:13.
37 “Blessing” is singular in MT, SP, 4Q252 and the LXX, but plural in the Peshitta and Vulgate.
The SP and Greek tradition, as well as the Peshitta and the Targumim are uniform in reading a second person singular verb which is now represented also in 4Q252. Unfortunately this phrase is not extant in 4QGen-Exod, frgs. 15-16 (ןיאלאי). The nominal form in the MT, as lectio difficilior, is probably to be considered the more original reading, though the poetic structure of the verse may allow for two verbs in a single hemistich. Here once again is a secondary agreement between 4Q252, SP and LXX.

III. 4Q252 = MT ≠ LXX

1. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 4 (Gen 7:11)

4Q252: נחורש נשנין ... נשנינת עשר ו
MT: בוחרש בשנינת עשר יא לחרש
LXX: τῶν δευτέρου μηνὸς ἐξεβάλει καὶ εἰκάδε τῶν μηνῶς

At first sight the difference here in the number between LXX on the one hand and the MT, SP, and 4Q252 (also Jub. 5:23) on the other, would seem to be a matter of exegesis in the Greek tradition in order to show that the flood lasted exactly a year, rather than the year and ten days which the MT describes. Recently, R. S. Hendel has made the intriguing and plausible suggestion that the Hebrew Vorlage before the Greek translator contained a scribal error; some copyist had misread עשר as עשרים יא, a possibility made all the more probable by the lack of any representation of the Hebrew וי in Greek, which is standard in every case other than Gen 7:11, 8:4, and 8:14, which are the particular dating formulae relating to the duration of the flood.

With regard to Gen 7:11 Hendel’s solution confirms the MT as supported by 4Q252 to contain the original reading: the flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month. LXX preserves a secondary variant which is the result of scribal error in Hebrew, though it might be suggested instead that the translator misread his Hebrew Vorlage. This is a minor matter and does not necessarily distance the supposed Hebrew Vorlage of LXX from the Hebrew tradition as represented in the

38See Davila, “4QGen-Exod”, 17
MT. As an original reading shared between 4Q252 and MT not much weight can be placed on it.\textsuperscript{40}

2. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 7 (Gen 7:24)

\begin{quote}

4Q252: רָבוּךְ חַיֵּים עַל הָאָרֶץ הַמְשִׁיס הָמָאָט וּזְמֹן

MT: רָבוּךְ חַיֵּים עַל הָאָרֶץ הַמְשִׁיס הָמָאָט וּזְמֹן

LXX: καὶ ὡσάθη τῷ ὕδατι τῆς γῆς ἡμέρας ἕκατον πεντήκοντα
\end{quote}

It is striking that while at 4Q252 1 i 8-9, quoting Gen 8:3, all three witnesses agree as might be expected (4Q252, MT: με ἡμέρας μέσα στὸ μέτωπον; LXX: ἕκατον καὶ πεντήκοντα ἡμέρας), in the occurrence of the same phrase here 4Q252 and the MT agree with one another against LXX. Two uncialss (D, M) and a large set of miniscules present the word-order as in Gen 8:3 and as in MT, SP and 4Q252. J. W. Wevers sees this as “a well-supported hexaplaric correction.”\textsuperscript{41} Since to have the numeral following the noun is common idiomatic Greek, this variant is almost certainly secondary to the Greek tradition. Thus this variant does not necessarily distance the supposed Hebrew Vorlage of LXX from the Hebrew tradition as represented in MT.

3. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 2, line 5 (Gen 9:24)

\begin{quote}

4Q252: ἡμέρας μετὰ τὸν διδυμόν

MT: ἕξηκάτων ἡμέρας μετὰ τὸν διδυμόν

LXX: ἐξεπλήσσεν δὲ Νωὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴνου
\end{quote}

The absence of the possessive pronoun in Greek may not be a genuine textual variant since Greek is well known for the way that possessives are not always made explicit, particularly in relation to parts of the body. The Greek hexaplaric tradition and a string of other versions insert ὁ νου, bringing the text back into line with the MT. As with the previous example, here is a secondary variant in Greek tradition which is probably the result of Greek idiom rather than the representation of a different Hebrew Vorlage. Once again, this variant does not necessarily distance LXX from the Hebrew tradition as represented in the MT.

\textsuperscript{40}Apart from the numbers, the phrasing of 4Q252 here is post-biblical Hebrew.

\textsuperscript{41}Wevers, Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis, 100.
4. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 2, line 9 (Gen 11:31)

4Q252: נואר כשירים
MT: נואר כשירים
LXX: ἐκ τῆς χώρας τῶν Χαλδαίων

Wevers notes that in Gen 11:28 רֹא and רָא both occur in apposition, so that the Greek translator has understood רָא as a region rather than as a proper noun; the rendering becomes determinative and recurs in Gen 11:31, which may thus be considered as a harmonization within LXX to 11:28. R. S. Hendel goes one step further and supposes that in 11:31 LXX should be retroverted to represent an original מָאָר which and that this was a harmonization with 11:28 within a Hebrew tradition. Whilst this is indeed possible, Wevers’ explanation is preferable, since it does not require a Hebrew Vorlage different from that in the MT. It should also be noted that the Greek translator has used here a standard homonym to render רָא by reading aleph as chi (cf. אֶרֶץ = Εἰρέτης) ἐκ τῆς χώρας becomes a suitable rendering of מָאָר. Whatever the precise processes of translation, LXX does not represent a Hebrew other than that present in the MT and 4Q252. Thus this variant is not significant for our purposes.

5. 4Q252, frg. 5, column 4, line 5 (Gen 49:4)

4Q252: אֵל הָעֵל מִצְוָעֵי עִלָּה
MT: אֵל הָעֵל מִצְוָעֵי עִלָּה
LXX: τότε ἐμίσανας τὴν στρομνήν, οὗ ἰνέβης

The MT (= SP) closes with what is construed as a third person form, whereas LXX consistently has a second person form for the four verbs in the verse. Whereas for the opening word of Gen 49:4, 4Q252 agreed with LXX in reading a second person verb, in this case the literal agreement is with the MT. In fact the Greek here may not represent a Hebrew consonant text any different from that preserved in the MT and 4Q252, since the Greek translator may have construed עִלָּה as an infinitive and translated it to correspond with the overall sequence of tenses in the verse.

42Ibid., 158. As Wevers notes, this rendering of רָא is found for all its occurrences; in addition to Gen 11:28 and 31, it is also found at Gen 15:7 and Neh 9:7.
43The Text of Genesis I-11, ad loc.
44Miniscule 618 alone represents this last verb of Gen 49:4 in the third person.
45As mentioned by Wevers, Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis, 822.
As with the previous examples, there is nothing in this variant to distance the supposed Greek Vorlage from the Hebrew tradition as represented in the MT.

Above are five examples in which LXX may seem to represent a Hebrew Vorlage that was different from that of the MT as supported by 4Q252. However, it has become clear that in none of the five cases is it obvious that LXX preserves a thoroughly independent textual witness for the Book of Genesis. The variants can all be seen to be either idiomatic or exegetical; they in no way necessarily presuppose a text-type other than that represented in the MT.

IV. 4Q252 ≠ MT = LXX

A. Possible original text

1. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 2, line 1 (Gen 8:14)

    ובשבעת העשר ימי התרש משה

    MT: ובעשרת השנים שבusercontent עשרים ימים

    LXX: ἐν δὲ τῷ μήνι τῷ δευτέρῳ ἑβδόμῳ καὶ εἰκάζει τό τοῦ μηνὸς

Hendel’s proposal for Gen 7:11 discussed above, in which LXX is seen to reflect a scribal error in the Hebrew, has led him to suggest that for Gen 8:14 4Q252 represents the original text (עשר עשרים ימים) which through scribal error in the Hebrew tradition is represented by עשרים עשרים as translated in LXX and by עשרים in the MT to which has been added עשרים to bring the formula back in line with others.46

Other scholars have seen that the MT and LXX witnesses should probably be given priority and that the author of the Genesis Commentary is attempting to make exegetical sense of the complex dating information in his received text of Genesis. His solution is to understand the information in the MT as referring to a lunisolar year which he proceeds to convert into a solar year.47

It is difficult to decide between these alternatives, especially as the LXX textual families b and d, the late uncial L and some minuscules present a text that agrees with the numbers of 4Q252. Nevertheless, they seem also to know of the significance of the 27th of the second month since they contain a long plus at the end of Gen

46“4Q252 and the Flood Chronology of Genesis 7-8,” 77-78.

8:14 explaining that it was then that the ark was opened.\textsuperscript{48} Given that the character of the text of Genesis as represented in 4Q252 is generally secondary, one should probably conclude that with regard to this dating formula, the author of the Commentary is being exegetical rather than preserving an original text.

\textit{B. Secondary variants in 4Q252’s received Hebrew text of Genesis}

1. 4Q252, frg. 3, column 2, line 7 (Gen 9:27a)

\begin{quote}
רבאודל שם ישכון
MT: רבאודל שם
LXX: καὶ κατοικήσατο ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις τοῦ Σήμ
\end{quote}

LXX commonly renders \textit{אָבָאֵל} in this way, so that the real difference is between the two Hebrew texts; the SP preserves the same word order as the MT. The poetic nature of this section of text in 4Q252 may be the cause of the alteration of the word order in the text of Gen 9:27 as it is represented there so that the \textit{waw} with the imperfect could be avoided in 4Q252, in what otherwise reads as narrative prose. As with the previous example this variant though secondary text of Genesis may be very old. The adjustment to Gen 9:27 makes God the one who dwells in the tents of Shem. The antiquity of this idea is supported by Jubilees 7:12, “may the Lord dwell in the dwelling place of Shem,” and the reading of Targum Neofiti, “and may the glory of his Shekinah dwell in the midst of the tents of Shem,” the same interpretation recurs in Gen. Rab. 36:8.

2. 4Q252 frg. 1, column 2, line 11 (Gen 15:9a)

\begin{quote}
אֶעָנָלָה וַאֲדָרֵי וַעֲצָבָה
MT: אֶעָנָלָה וַאֲדָרֵי
LXX: δάμαλιν ... αἶγα ... κρίν
\end{quote}

It seems that at this place 4Q252 offers an abbreviation of Gen 15:9.\textsuperscript{49} The three animals mentioned occur nowhere else in the Bible and so it is noteworthy that 4Q252 presents them in a different order than that found in both the MT (and SP) and LXX.\textsuperscript{50} A possible explanation might lie in the combination of \textit{עֶנֶל} and \textit{אֵין} in

\textsuperscript{48}As Hendel notes: “4Q252 and the Flood Chronology of Genesis 7-8,” 77, n. 21.

\textsuperscript{49}The omission of anything to represent the triple occurrence of \textit{מִסְלָשְׁ} deals neatly with the problem of whether it is to be understood as “three years old”, as the Greek understood it, or as “three”, as Targum Onkelos.

\textsuperscript{50}Also Josephus, \textit{Ant.} 1:184.
Lev 9:2, the first two animals brought for sacrifice at the beginning of Aaron's priesthood; perhaps some kind of assimilation to that text was in mind. However, a significant number of Greek minuscules also represent the animals in the same order as 4Q252: δόμαλιν ... κριόν... αἴγα.\textsuperscript{51} Thus the order of the three animals may rest in a textual variant introduced well before the composition of 4Q252, which the author found in the text of Genesis before him.\textsuperscript{52}

3. 4Q252 frg. 5, column 5, line 1 (Gen 36:12)

4Q252: תהל ול את עמלך
MT: תהל לכל ואל עמלך
LXX: καὶ ἔσεθεν τῷ Ἑλιφαζ τὸν Ἀμαληκ

Here the MT (= SP) and Greek tradition are uniform in representing the second somewhat redundant mention of Eliphas: “Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, the son of Esau; and she bore for Eliphaz Amalek.” The text of 4Q252 might be considered an example of the compiler’s tendency to avoid unnecessary repetition, were it not that both one Ethiopic manuscript (AethC = Frankfurt, 17th cent.) and also the Arabic tradition read as in 4Q252, “for him.” Perhaps other scribes also found the second Eliphas redundant and coincidentally made the same adjustment to their Vorlagen as the author of 4Q252 (or his source), or perhaps there is evidence here in later versions which now finds justification in an ancient Hebrew manuscript.

4. 4Q252, frg. 5, column 4, lines 4-5 (Gen 49:4)

4Q252: אל תוחר עליתת משכוני אברך
MT: אל תוחר יך עלית משכוני אברך
LXX: μὴ ἑξεστής, άνεβης γάρ ἐπὶ τὴν κοιτήν τοῦ πατρὸς σου

The verb forms all correspond here, so there is nothing in 4Q252 that might support the reading of the Peshitta (שְׁאָל), but 4Q252 disagrees with both the MT (= SP) and LXX in not having the conjunction יִמ/γάρ. The Old Latin attests autem here for the conjunction,\textsuperscript{53} and the Vulgate has quia. Intriguingly the Sahidic does not have anything corresponding with γάρ. Perhaps both 4Q252 and the Sahidic independently

\textsuperscript{51}The Göttingen f group, 799 and Chrysostom.

\textsuperscript{52}Additional examples of interchanges of word order involving pairs or short lists can be found in G. Marquis, “Word Order as a Criterion for the Evaluation of Translation Technique and the Evaluation of Word-Order Variants as Exemplified in LXX-Ezekiel,” Textus 13 (1986) 81-83.

\textsuperscript{53}The Lyons Octateuch.
represent a version of Gen 49:4 which does not present the second hemistich as a subordinate clause, but in a more poetic fashion without the conjunction. Since the versional support for the lack of the conjunction in 4Q252 is far from strong, this example may be better best classified as a stylistic variant introduced by the compiler of 4Q252.

C. Secondary stylistic variants

1. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 4 (Gen 7:11)

4Q252: בָּהֹרֶשׁ חָשְׂנִי בָּתָאַר דָּבָר בַּאָבִּים
MT: בָּהֹרֶשׁ חָשְׂנִי בָּתָאַר יָמִים לָחָרִים
LXX: τοῦ δευτέρου μηνός ἐβδόμη καὶ εἰκάζει τοῦ μηνός

This example contains information regarding the number, requiring us to discuss it in the category of 4Q252 = MT ≠ LXX. However, it is also listed here because although the phraseology of 4Q252 could have been constructed to reflect the second use of לָחָרִים, the introduction of the distinctive temporal description involving the day of the week has resulted in the commentator avoiding a repetition.\(^{54}\) Though the change is likely to be due to the commentator and is thus textually secondary, it is worth mentioning as a variant since Greek minuscule 44 also omits τοῦ μηνός.\(^{55}\)

2. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 13 (Gen 8:6)

4Q252: מַהֲנֵה נָת נָת הָלְּלִנַּה הָבִּית
MT: מַרְפָּתֵה נָת נָת הָלְּלִנַּה אָשֶׁר אֶעְשֶׁה
LXX: ἡνέργειςΝοε τὴν θυρίδα τῆς κυρίου ἡν ἐποίησεν

Abbreviations such as the one here in 4Q252 are common and do not count as textual variants. Another occurs, for example, in the very next line where the Greek faithfully translates the Hebrew as represented in the MT (לָרָאת הָכָּלָה הָמִית מַעְיֹס) but 4Q252 omits the somewhat redundant last phrase (לָרָאת הָכָּלָה). However, as with the variant form of Gen 8:4, so also in this case there is some evidence from Greek tradition for the omission of the redundant ἀσημ. It is absent from the citation of this verse by Cyril of Alexandria, from minuscule 57, and from one Sahidic manuscript. Did Cyril have at hand a copy of Genesis in Greek which reflected the text of 4Q252 at this point? Possibly, but probably not.

\(^{54}\)As pointed out under III.1 above, the overall phraseology here is post-biblical Hebrew.

\(^{55}\)It is the only minuscule of the Göttingen δ-group to do so.
3. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 18 (Gen 8:12)

4Q252: יִדְעָהָ, בְּשַׁבְעָה יִמְס אָחָרָהּ
MT: וְיִדְעָה בְּשַׁבְעָה יִמְס אָחָרָה
LXX: καὶ ἐπιστρέψας ἐτι ἡμέρας ἐπτά ἐτέρας

The tendency in 4Q252 towards abbreviating the Hebrew text of Genesis is evident in this example also. As with the previous item, it is unlikely that 4Q252 represents a textual variant. This is a stylistic variant comparable with the evidence in the versions that the second ἐτι at the end of the verse was omitted, perhaps because it was felt to be redundant.

4. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 19 (Gen 8:12)

4Q252: [יוֹלָה רֶשֶׁב]
MT: לֶא יֶסֶף שָׁבָב אָלָי רֶשֶׁב
LXX: καὶ οὖ πρωσέθετο τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔτι

We have discussed this sentence above as containing an example of a text in which 4Q252 and LXX may agree with one another with regard to the infinitive over against the MT. The example must be cited again here because of the way in which 4Q252 stands alone in not representing יוֹלָה. One suspects that this is yet another example of the author of the Genesis Commentary showing an abbreviating tendency, omitting any word that might seem redundant in its Vorlage.

5. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 22 (Gen 8:13b)

4Q252: בֵּאת הָוֹדֶה רָאוֹשׁ
MT: רָאוֹשׁ בֵּאת הָוֹדֶה
LXX: τοῦ πρῶτου μηνός μιᾷ τοῦ μηνός

This variant is difficult to assess because 4Q252’s post-biblical Hebrew phrases are in a rather different order from either the Hebrew as represented in the MT (= SP) or LXX. However, there seems enough in common to enable a firm agreement to be seen between the MT and LXX, whereas 4Q252 has phrased its concern to highlight prominently the day of the week, putting it first and adjusting the rest of the phrase so as to represent the received text clearly enough. The important point to note, however, is that various problems with the phrasing of this temporal idiom were felt especially in the Greek tradition: A presents the first phrase as τοῦ μηνός τοῦ πρῶτου, two minuscules (17, 400) of the hexaplaric group omit μηνός, and a large number of manuscripts omit μιᾷ τοῦ μηνός, possibly through homoioteleuton. Targum
Onqelos represents the Hebrew word for word, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan reads “in Tishri, on the first of the month, at the beginning of the year,” and Neofiti reads “in the first month, on the first of the month (בריתא קדימה בכר לירח),” with marginal notes referring to both Nisan and Tishri. 4Q252’s phrasing is an early witness, along with LXX, to the need felt to clarify the Hebrew as represented in the MT.

6. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 2, line 9 (Gen 11:31b)

4Q252: ייבא ותר ל
MT: ויבא ותר
LXX: καὶ ἐλθὲν ἐκ τῆς Χαρραν

While both 4Q252 and LXX seem independently to have produced a sequence of singular forms for the verbs in this passage, the MT and LXX agree in this short phrase in the use of רַע /ἐκ, which the author of 4Q252 probably reckoned was redundant. The SP agrees with the MT.

7. 4Q252 frg. 1, column 2, line 12 (Gen 15:17)

4Q252: תרא הער
MT: אָשֶׁר עָר
LXX: πυρὸς α窊 δήλθον

Although there is a problem in the earlier part of the verse, at this point LXX seems to be following a text like that of the MT (= SP) very closely. The context of the phrase in 4Q252 is broken, so it is difficult to see quite how the text of Genesis is being handled; it seems as if there is a considerable paraphrase taking place.

8. 4Q252 frg. 1, column 3, line 4 (Gen 18:31)

4Q252: [לָא] אָשָׁמָה]* לָא אָשָׁמָה
MT: לָא אָשָׁמָה
LXX: οὐ μὴ ἀπολέσω

The text of 4Q252 is very fragmentary at this point but the context of Abraham’s

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56 A number of miniscules and minor versions represent the verb in the plural.
57 As also the Targums.
58 See Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, 214.
59 Targum Onqelos represents the MT faithfully, but both Pseudo-Jonathan and Neofiti have elaborate expansions, the former having the fire pass between the parts, but the latter having Abram pass between them.
bargaining with God is sure enough. The text suggested here is a restoration; it may well be justified, but it is significant that neither in the MT (= SP) nor LXX are there any emphatic first person pronouns in Genesis 18 as the restoration suggests for 4Q252. There is no other versational support for the use of an emphatic pronoun in this verse. If the restoration is correct, then 4Q252 would provide a distinctive stylistic rewritten form of the bargaining dialogue between Abraham and God.

9. 4Q252, frg. 6, column 5, line 1 (Gen 49:10)

4Q252: הָלֹא יִשְׂרָאֵל מְשָׁבַת יְהוָה
MT: הָלֹא יִשְׂרָאֵל מְשָׁבַת יְהוָה
LXX: σὺν ἐκλείψει ἄρχων ἐξ Ιουδα

This variant has been widely known since it was first published by J. M. Allegro in 1956. Since שבט is a rare word in scripture, most scholars suggest that here we are dealing with a clear exegetical alteration to Gen 49:10, whereby, given the ambiguity of the term שבט, the text comes to speak more explicitly of one who rules. The interpretation of the next half line also makes the ruler explicit in identifying the דִּילִי as the thousands of Israel who are present until the coming of the anointed righteous one, the shoot of David. The Greek tradition unanimously reads ἄρχων. It can legitimately be asked what the Hebrew Vorlage for this was: is this translation a specification of שבט as ruler or is it a rendering of an original שֶׂלֶם? ἄρχων translates שבט only in this one place, whereas it renders שֶׂלֶם at Gen 42:6, Dan 2:15 (and Dan 2:10, 2:15, 5:29 0). If there was once a Hebrew text with שֶׂלֶם alone, then 4Q252 represents a secondary combination of two textual traditions. If LXX is merely specifying שבט in a certain way, as is more probable, then 4Q252 is exegetically secondary.

The understanding of שבט as “tribe” is overwhelmingly a characteristic of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic history, so much so that the explicit understanding of it in this way here might be classed as a Deuteronomic reading of Genesis.

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61שֶׂלֶם is used almost exclusively in late biblical books, even though שֶׂלֶם occurs in Gen 42:6 and Ugaritic literature.
62Wevers, Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis, 825, comments only that “Gen is probably right in understanding שבט ‘staff, sceptre’ as the one wielding the sceptre.”
63Such a combination is also visible in Targum Onqelos (לאו יвелиי ובן שֶׂלֶם וְאֶבִּיךָ יְהוָה); more elaborate interpretative renderings can be seen in Pseudo-Jonathan and Neofiti.
Such a reading has already occurred in 4Q252 column 3 where legal sections from Deuteronomy 13 and 20 seem to have influenced the way the Sodom and Gomorrah material is handled.64

D. Secondary phonological variant

1. 4Q252, frg. 1, column 1, line 10 (Gen 8:4)

על הָרִי גּוֹרֵרִים

MT: על הָרִי גּוֹרֵרִים

LXX: εἰς τὰ ᾠρῆ τὰ Αραφῶν

For Gen 8:4 MT, LXX, and the other versions are uniform in representing the initial aleph. The variant spelling of הָרִי גּוֹרֵרִים in 4Q252 must be compared with the consistent spelling of הָרִי גּוֹרֵרִים in the SP.65 Mention has also to be made of various spellings in the Qumran manuscripts in other contexts: הָרִי גּוֹרֵרִים (1QIṣa superscription = Isa 37:38); הָרִי גּוֹרֵרִים (1QapGen 10:12); הָרִי גּוֹרֵרִים (4Q196 2 4 = Tob 1:21). For 1QIṣa superscription E. Y. Kutscher has noted the many similarities in its approach to the SP: "and there are even orthographical affinities between the Scr. (1QIṣa superscription) and the Samar. Pent."66 While it is possible to say that in this instance 4Q252 shares an orthographic variant with SP, it could be that both merely reflect a common pronunciation which is also represented in 1QIṣa superscription. Thus, though secondary readings deriving from phonological factors can be used as evidence for textual affiliation, it does not seem in this instance that this is possible.

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this study can be summarised as follows. Variants in the text of Genesis as highlighted by its representation in 4Q252 have been catalogued here under four headings.


Two readings belong in the category which distinguishes 4Q252 from both the MT and LXX, which in these two cases disagree with one another. One attests the probable antiquity of reading אֵלֹהִים in Gen 6:3; the other in agreement with SP attests the antiquity of reading דָּגוֹל in Gen 49:10. These kind of minor variations are precisely the type of variants which characterize manuscripts belonging within a single text-type.

Seven readings belong in the category of agreements between 4Q252 and LXX against the MT. One may be the result of independent exegetical understandings of נְדֵד in Gen 6:3 by both the author of the Genesis Commentary and the Greek translator, though this is far from certain. Three may be shared stylistic improvements, perhaps arrived at independently (Gen 6:3; 8:12; 11:31). But at least two are significant shared secondary readings (“in the life of Noah,” Gen 8:13a; “Abraham, my father,” Gen 28:4) and one further variant may be equally important (נָתַן, Gen 49:4); two of these variants also find support in the SP.

Five readings were considered in the category of agreements between 4Q252 and the MT against LXX. As might have been expected, all these LXX readings could be explained satisfactorily without insisting that the Greek translator was faced with a different Hebrew Vorlage.

The last category in this study contains readings of Genesis for which 4Q252 stands alone against the MT and LXX which are in agreement with one another. There is one possible original reading (at Gen 8:14), though it is probably preferable that the variant be seen as a secondary exegetical reading, possibly borrowed from the interpretative tradition also to be found in the Book of Jubilees; the reading is thus not original to the author of the Genesis Commentary. Four other variants seem to be thoroughly secondary but not necessarily original to the author of the Genesis Commentary (Gen 9:1, 27a; 15:9a; 36:12; 49:4). Nine further variants are probably best classified as secondary stylistic readings; these are most probably due to the author of the Genesis Commentary (Gen 7:1; 8:6, 12 [2], 13b; 11:31b; 15:17; 18:31; 49:10). The number of such secondary stylistic variants could be considerably increased; only those of some text-critical significance have been discussed here. Finally, there is one inconsequential secondary phonological variant (Gen 8:4).

What does all this mean? To begin with it should be noted that the number of variants considered here is small, so any overall conclusions must be made with extreme caution. That said, it is notable that there is not a single variant unique to
LXX which would distance it from the text of Genesis as represented in 4Q252. Furthermore, there are no shared secondary readings between 4Q252 and the MT. By contrast, given the small number of variants that can be meaningfully discussed, LXX and 4Q252 seem to share a significant number of secondary readings. One or two of these may have arisen independently and not be genuine textual variants, but the majority would align the text of Genesis as represented in 4Q252 with that lying behind LXX. This alignment with LXX is over against the MT, but not surprisingly some of the agreements between LXX and 4Q252 are mirrored in the SP.

If Davila is correct in his analysis of the more extensive manuscript materials of Genesis preserved in Cave 4, then LXX may justifiably be considered to reflect a text-type of Genesis separate from the MT, SP and the Qumran witnesses. However, the text of Genesis represented in 4Q252 seems to reflect the text-type of LXX with a large measure of consistency. For the passages of Genesis considered here LXX has no independent secondary readings which require a Hebrew Vorlage different from that preserved in the MT. Thus 4Q252 may show that the text-type of Genesis now visible behind LXX was known at Qumran, since all the manuscript copies of Genesis proper found there belong to a different text-type. Given the overall correspondence between the Qumran Genesis manuscripts and the text-type of the MT, it is not easy to understand why the text of Genesis in 4Q252 should be so intricately and distinctively representative of the text-type attested by LXX. If talk of distinct text-types is found to be inappropriate, the text of Genesis represented in 4Q252 still needs to be aligned closely with that attested by LXX.

Lastly, many of the readings studied here are interpretative. Their number could be considerably increased by including others obviously in this category. The consideration of these various kinds of variants together in one study enables us to see that the history of the transmission of the text of a biblical book cannot be neatly separated from the history of its scribal interpretation. Before the letter of the text became sacrosanct, every copyist could be an exegete. Exegetical variants may still be of use in establishing relationships between textual witnesses, though clearly they cannot be put forward as preserving an original text. Thus, even if a few of the examples cited in this study are wrongly categorized, they may still form part of the analysis of textual relations.

Overall, the conundrums brought together in this textual analysis add to the interest this Genesis Commentary provides for all those concerned with the history of the text of Genesis and its earliest interpretation.