

5. Contemporary Text Problems We will try to illustrate these on the Overhead charts and use comparison with the DSS and the MT to show the actual occurrence and to speculate about further matters.

--Interchange of similar appearing letters: The most likely to suffer from this are beth/caph; dalet/resh; he/heth; he/tau, and a few others. The letters look similar and in a quick moment one may be copied for the other.

--Inversion: This occurs when similar appearing letters (or even diverse letters) are copied in incorrect order through a mistaken reading of which comes first.

--Haplography: Here we have the accidental single writing of a word or letter when it should have been written twice. Ah--this syllabus has a number of mistakes such as this.

--Dittography: This is the double writing of a word that should have been written once (or a letter).

--Homoteleuton: Two words in proximity and having similar appearance result in the copiest missing several words in between the two.

--Sound Confusion: Where letters that sound the same have been copied by ear and the copiest has written the wrong letter on the basis of similarity and style. Sin/samech occasionally suffer with this matter.

6. The Qumran Texts

a. Historical perspective. At this writing the Qumran texts have been a factor in the study of the Old Testament text for about 35 years. The discovery of these materials was one of the most exciting of our time and, after 1955 in particular, dominated all else in biblical archaeology until very recently. There is still a tremendous amount of material not classified in the Qumran stuff and you must make all conclusions based on it as still being tentative although some general patterns have been firmly secured.

Beginning in 1947 and continuing thereafter there was a succession of discoveries on the northwest section of the Dead Sea in the area of the old Qumran oasis and wadi. The initial finds were by "accident" although the full facts may not yet be known. Later expeditions were scientifically plotted and directed while wanderers continued to make an occasional