

--Variations showing only in the later Masora are likely editorial suggestions and should not be given great force or importance.

--Variations depending on something such as the Sam Pent deserve consideration so long as the passage is not one of the partial sections where religious ideology within the community may have led to an alteration of the legal codes.

b. Greek or Greek + Hebrew variant

These matters are true with variants in the Hebrew text...Hebrew variants. When we place the Greek text beside it, we make these observations:

--A variant that is uniform in the LXX deserves honest consideration and study. Normally it should not be taken as a better reading than the MT but it must be considered as a viable alternative and, if it has some Hebrew agreement in one of the Hebrew variants, it has good grounds.

--A variant that is not uniform in the LXX manifests the idea that the Greek translators were not certain about the term. It may be seen as throwing light on a hard form, etc., but is no substitute for the Masoretic wording.

--A variant that seems to come from a fundamental misunderstanding of the Hebrew idiom may be set aside as having little real support value in the study of the text..

c. Hypothetical arrangements

Combinations of witnesses may be considered under these heads:

--If a Hebrew variant should have the support of the LXX, the Vulgate, the DSS, the Sam Pent--that is pretty strong evidence for the alternate reading. If there is a variant but all of these witnesses show an alternate form, the whole thing is up for grabs and will generally be decided by context. One must use common sense in this case...and that means most of us are in real trouble.

--A preponderance of Hebrew witnesses standing against the MT and being supported by some other translation witness also makes a strong case.

--But no one witness in and of itself should be allowed to stand against the MT in final analysis.