

CHAPTER FOUR

GLOSSES, INTERPOLATIONS, AND OTHER TYPES OF SCRIBAL ADDITIONS IN THE TEXT OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

I. *Glosses in Greek and Latin texts from antiquity and the Middle Ages*¹

The appearance of glosses, interpolations, and other scribal additions in the textual traditions of the Hebrew Bible has special relevance to the LXX. First some definitions relating to different types of additions to the text:

(1) *Glosses*. Ancient and medieval manuscripts contained many glosses, as defined by the usage of the word in Latin and not according to the original meaning of the word in Greek. In the study of ancient Greek and Latin texts the term 'glossa' carries a very distinct technical sense, which is also applied to medieval texts, though with some differences:² 'A word inserted between the lines or in the margin as an

¹ Bibliography: Delitzsch, *Lese- und Schreibfehler*, 132-143; Dijkstra, "Glosses"; Driver, "Glosses"; M. Elyoenay (Kantrowitz), "Explanations to Ancient Words of Difficult Meaning in the Text of the Bible," in: *Hagut Ivrit b^e Europa* (Tel Aviv 1969) 41-48 (Heb.); M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1985) 38-43, 166-170; Fohrer, "Ezechiel"; Freedy, "Ezekiel"; Hall, *Companion*; J. Herrmann, "Stichwortglossen im Buche Ezechiel," *OLZ* 11 (1908) 280-282; idem, "Stichwortglossen im Alten Testament," *OLZ* 14 (1911) 200-204; R.W. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia 1974) 32-36; J. Krecher, "Glossen," *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie* III (Berlin/New York 1957-1971) 431-440; Kutscher, *Language*; McCarter, *Textual Criticism*, 32-36; L.D. Reynolds-N.G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars—A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (3d ed.; Oxford 1991); P. Rost, "Miscellen, I. Ein Schreibgebrauch bei den Sopherim und seine Bedeutung für die alttestamentliche Textkritik," *OLZ* 6 (1903) 403-407, 443-446; 7 (1904) 390-393, 479-483; S. Talmon, "Aspects of the Textual Transmission of the Bible in the Light of Qumran Manuscripts," *Textus* 4 (1964) 95-132 = Cross-Talmon, *QHBT*, 226-263; J. Weingreen, "Rabbinic-Type Glosses in the Old Testament," *JSS* 2 (1957) 149-162.

² *Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd ed.; Oxford 1989) VI, 591. The Dictionary adds: 'hence applied to a similar explanatory rendering of a word given in a glossary or dictionary. Also, in a wider sense, a comment, explanation, interpretation.' The *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2d ed.; Oxford 1970) [= *OCD*] subdivides the entry 'glossa' into two sub-entries, focusing on the meaning of the word in respectively Greek and Latin sources. For the former *OCD* provides the following definition:

explanatory equivalent of a foreign or otherwise difficult word in the text.³ Of a different nature are glosses in Sumerian and Akkadian texts (see below), since these glosses, often written within the text, were meant to be an integral part of that text.

(2) *Scholia*. Like the gloss, the scholion (σχόλιον) is a marginal note, but usually it explains a difficulty in the context or section rather than the meaning of individual difficult words. Individual scholia usually are part of a larger collection of scholia on the text, forming a commentary to that text. Thus, while the term gloss is usually applied to sporadic interpretations of separate words, the scholion is part of a hermeneutic tradition. Some scholia are short, similar in length to glosses, while others are more extensive.⁴ In the world of the Bible the Masoretic notes are the closest parallel to the scholia from the Greek and Latin world. In classical Greek and Latin manuscripts glosses and scholia usually are not found together in the same manuscript.

Glosses and scholia were not the only elements that were added to texts upon the completion of the copying. Six additional types of elements were sometimes added as well.

(3) *Interlinear and marginal corrections*. Single letters or complete words were inserted into the text by the original scribes or subsequent ones after the copying of the main body of the text was completed when it was recognized that the text was wrongly copied. In principle, correctional activity could also adapt the manuscript to another manuscript of the same composition, but there is little evidence for such practices in the case of the Bible.

(4) *Exegetical elements ('interpolations')*. Such elements were often inserted into the text by later scribes or readers, in the margin, between

In Greek literary criticism γλῶσσαι meant any words or expressions (not being neologisms or metaphors) ἃ οὐδεὶς ἂν εἶποι ἐν τῇ διαλέκτῳ (Arist. *Poet.* 1458^b32), i.e. belonging not to the spoken language familiar to the critic (1458^b6), but to a dialect, literary or vernacular, of another region or period (1457^b4).

The modern use of the term 'gloss' does not reflect the meaning of that word in Greek, but rather that of the identical word in Latin, described as following in the same Dictionary: . . . marginal or interlinear interpretations of difficult or obsolete words.

³ At a second stage these glosses were often collected, alphabetically or not, as so-called 'glossae collectae' or glossaries, and some of these actually constitute the basis of primitive dictionaries of equivalents. These glossaries were numerous in antiquity, and even more so in the Middle Ages. See especially the detailed description by B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (3d ed.; Oxford 1983) 46-66. In fact, although the glossaries had their origin in the margins of manuscripts, once collected, they became independent units and thus started a life of their own.

⁴ See the descriptions, definitions, and bibliography in the relevant entries of the *OCD* and *apud* B.M. Metzger, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible* (New York/Oxford 1981) 46-48.

the lines, or even in the text itself (by the original scribe, copying from an earlier manuscript).

(5) *Variant readings*. Deviating textual traditions, deriving from external sources (additional manuscripts of the same composition) and relating to readings included in the body of the text, were sometimes recorded in the margin, or, in Sumerian and Akkadian texts, in the text itself, in the latter case often separated by a special sign.⁵ Modern readers used to critical apparatuses are too quick in considering marginal notes as variant readings; however, the notation of variant readings was probably very rare in antiquity. In the case of the biblical text, it is not impossible that many of the readings preserved by the Masoretes as *Qere* originally constituted such variants.

(6) *Scribal remarks and signs*. Marginal notes reflecting scribal remarks are rare in some texts, but more frequent in others. They may draw attention to a detail in the text, or introduce an addition to the text, or remark on the condition of the material (thus in Akkadian texts—see Krecher [see n. 1], 438-439). Scribal signs (not remarks) of different types are not infrequent in some Alexandrian Greek texts and several Qumran texts. They refer to such matters as new paragraphs and elements in the text to which attention is drawn.

(7) *Remarks on the content*. These, too, were probably rare. MT T S V (not the LXX) contain such a note in the body of the text.⁶

(8) *Headings to sections of the text*.⁷

It is not easy to distinguish between these eight groups of additions to the body of the original text, partly because the borders between the types of additions are often not well defined, partly because manuscript evidence about the first stage of the addition is usually lacking. The purpose of these groups of additions is different, so that they should be kept separate as much as possible. Of these, some groups tend to be written especially in the margin and others between the lines, but with the lack of evidence on the original documents no clear statements can be made. In certain manuscripts scholia or glosses are very frequent. In other manuscripts corrections are frequent. The interlinear and marginal

⁵ The inclusion of the additional elements in these texts was executed in a variety of ways. Sometimes it was written in small signs next to the word it referred to, at other times it appeared between that word's different components, or was written at the edge of the tablet, and at again other times it was separated from the preceding word by a special sign. That sign, named 'Glossenkeil,' appeared in different shapes, among them a diagonal line and a double-wedge shape. On all these systems, see Krecher (see n. 1) 433.

⁶ Jer 51:64 'Thus far the words of Jeremiah' (the next chapter serves an appendix to the book).

⁷ In the biblical text, see, for example, Jer 23:9 'Concerning the prophets.'

addition of exegetical additions (interpolations), scribal remarks, remarks on the content, headings, and variant readings is rare in the known manuscripts. The addition of marginal glosses and scholia was institutionalized, so to speak, since they were often transmitted as such with the manuscripts, while interpolations and corrections were not preserved as such, since they were meant to be included in the body of the text during the next phase of the text's transmission.

For textual critics all these groups of additions to the text are noteworthy since they show the multifaceted textual transmission in all its complexity. Furthermore, these additions are of particular interest, though also a source of frustration, since often they create much confusion when texts containing these additions were copied into new copies. For while elements written in the margin could be separated from the textual transmission of the body of the text, mishaps were bound to occur with interlinear additions, whatever their original intention may have been. The basic problem for copyists of texts containing any type of additions is how to copy these added elements, if at all. This problem pertained in particular to interlinear additions. Scribes who added the elements between the lines wanted some of them to be part of the running text (corrections and interpolations), while other elements were not meant to be made part of the running text. Hence, by definition any scribe who at a second stage inserted earlier glosses, remarks on the content, scribal remarks, or variant readings into the body of the text, as it were, took a wrong decision; in other words, by acting contrary to the intention of the person who added a certain element, he created an unnatural or corrupt text. Many an addition thus entered the running text wrongly.

We do not know how specific texts developed and therefore most assumed additions to the original texts are only hypothetical. Unfortunately, scholars are rather quick in assuming that words in the body of the text derived from such interlinear elements incorrectly integrated into the text. As a matter of fact, Reynolds and Wilson (see n. 1), 206 assume that only infrequently were glosses incorporated in the body of Greek and Latin texts. In our view, a similar understanding pertains to the transmission of the Hebrew Bible. There are no clear statements on this phenomenon in the scholarly literature, but often the impression is created that glosses and interpolations were frequently inserted into the text.

We now turn to the presumably incorrect integration into the text of elements that were not meant to be there, in the first place of *glosses*. At this stage of the discussion interpolations and corrections are

disregarded, since they were meant to be an integral part of the text. The other types of additional elements, such as scribal notes and remarks on the content as well as variant readings were rare and they therefore concern us less. Scholia were usually written in the margin, and they were not confused with the running text, and besides, since there are no scholia on Hebrew biblical texts, they need not be treated here. This leaves the interlinear glosses as the major source for confusion.

The assumption that interlinear additions were at a second stage incorporated into the running text is supported by explicit manuscript evidence from Greek and Latin texts (see Reynolds-Wilson (see n. 1), 207 for an example). Such direct evidence is, however, extremely rare. Less rare, but still rare, are actual interlinear additions of glosses in Greek and Latin manuscripts from antiquity. Admittedly for most of the presumed glosses no manuscript evidence is available, since these glosses presumably had already been integrated in the text itself. The recognition of such glosses is mainly based on content analysis when scholars recognize that a given word which could be taken as an explanation of another word in the context does not suit the syntax or context. In such cases it is often suggested that that word, originally serving as an interlinear gloss, had been wrongly inserted into the text. Strictly speaking, the element which has been recognized as constituting a misplaced gloss must, according to the scholar, be removed from the text, and should, in his mind, be reinstated in its proper position as an interlinear gloss in a manuscript. The assumption of some such glosses is supported (not proven) by their absence in certain textual witnesses. If such support is altogether missing, the assumption of a gloss constitutes a special type of emendation, for which content analysis is our only guide.

Misplaced glosses are more easily detected in poetic texts than in prose because of the structure of poetry. For a large collection of examples for classical Greek and Latin texts, see Hall, *Companion*, 193-197 and see further Reynolds-Wilson (see n. 1), 206.

II. *Marginal and interlinear glosses in the manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible?*

When turning to the textual transmission of the Hebrew Bible, we note that more or less the same types of scribal additions as have been recognized in Greek and Latin as well as in Sumerian and Akkadian texts have been surmised for the early manuscripts of the Bible. In the history of research this is not surprising, since many categories of thinking have been transferred from the study of the classical texts to

that of the Bible. Each case of transferring patterns of thinking from one area to another should be evaluated in its own right, so that generalizing conclusions concerning the value of a comparative procedure should be avoided. In favor of transferring assumptions from the Greek scribal tradition to that of the Bible it should be noted that many parallels in details have been recognized between the two (especially in scribal signs and habits). However, we will see below that the case of glossing is different, so that the existence of parallel procedures actually has not been proven.

At this stage a brief remark is in order on terminology. The terminology used in biblical scholarship with regard to scribal additions is less precise than in classical research. While there are differences between individual scholars, most of them indiscriminately use the term 'gloss' for all types of added elements and this situation complicates our analysis. Especially confusing is the habit to use the term gloss for exegetical additions (interpolations).⁸ As mentioned in n. 2, glosses are basically ' . . . marginal or interlinear interpretations of difficult or obsolete words,' while interpolations are (exegetical) elements added to the text, explaining the base text or changing its implication. A basic distinction between these two types of additions is that an interpolation (exegetical addition) was meant by the scribe to be part of the running text, while a gloss was not.

One of the difficulties in the analysis of assumed glosses and interpolations lies in the lack of convincing evidence in the ancient sources. For, while in classical and Mesopotamian texts we can actually point to the physical existence in manuscripts of various types of added elements, only limited evidence is available for biblical texts. In the period preceding the discovery of the Qumran scrolls, it seems that no marginal glosses (or, for that matter, any marginal notations) were known at all from Hebrew biblical manuscripts, and it seems that this claim still holds today for glosses, even after the discoveries at Qumran. Nevertheless, the assumption of misplaced glosses and other elements in the running text was and is widespread in biblical studies. Possibly some scholars considered the marginal *Qere* a good parallel for the assumption of glosses. But the nature of these *Qere* notes differs from the assumed

⁸ This difficulty is apparent in the terminology used by Fohrer, "Ezechiel" and Delitzsch, *Lese- und Schreibfehler* (for whom some glosses are 'clarifying' and others 'correcting' and 'cross-referring'). It is not impossible that this terminology derives from the scholarly literature on the Sumerian-Akkadian texts. Every element appearing after the 'Glossenkeil' (cf. n. 5) in that literature is named a gloss, not only glosses proper (in this case, translations of words), but also phonetic instructions, textual variants, and scribal remarks.

glosses. For almost all the assumed glosses are exegetical, while the *Qere* notes are not. The latter notes should be considered as variant readings, corrections, or a combination of the two practices.⁹ Another type of supporting evidence invoked before the discovery of the Qumran scrolls was that of the ancient versions. Their evidence could be relevant when elements of MT are lacking in one of the versions (especially the LXX), or conversely, when elements found in one of the versions are lacking in MT. But the data in the versions are of a different nature, and they do not necessarily constitute relevant ‘evidence.’ When a word suspected as a ‘gloss’ in one source is lacking in another textual witness, its very absence may support the assumption of a gloss, but does not prove it. After all, anything could have happened to the texts in question, including the omission or addition by the translator, without any connection with the phenomenon of glossing.

It was thus premature to claim before 1947 that the biblical text contains glosses or other types of scribal additions, and in our view this situation has not been changed with the discovery of the Qumran scrolls. At first sight it would seem that these scrolls finally provided the factual basis for the assumption of extraneous textual material in the margins and between the lines, and this type of argument is indeed used in the literature, especially by Dijkstra, “Glosses.” A mere glance in 1QIsa^a shows several hundred elements added between the lines and a few added in the margin. It was, however, recognized that this material is not relevant to the issue of glosses in the biblical text. For with one or two possible exceptions (see below), the additional elements in the scrolls contain no glosses.¹⁰ They also do not contain scribal remarks (as distinct from scribal signs found in several texts), headings, remarks on content, or scholia. This then reduces the possible explanations of the additional elements in the Qumran manuscripts to three: corrections, exegetical additions (interpolations), and variant readings. There is little evidence in favor of the second and third options, so that we are left with the first one. Indeed, the scrolls contain many instances of obvious scribal correction, reflected by cancellation dots, the reshaping of letters, and crossing out with a horizontal line.¹¹ Furthermore, the great majority of the additional elements agree with MT (and the ancient translations

⁹ For a discussion of these possibilities, see *TCHB*, 58-63.

¹⁰ See E. Tov, “The Textual Base of the Corrections in the Biblical Texts Found in Qumran,” in: D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls—Forty Years of Research* (Leiden/Jerusalem 1992) 299-314.

¹¹ For some examples, see Tov, *TCHB*, 213-215.

when their evidence is relevant).¹² The combined evidence of the correcting techniques and an analysis of the content of the added elements leads us to the conclusion that these additional elements are in the nature of corrections. The exact pattern of the agreements of these corrections is somewhat unclear. The agreement with MT is misleading, since the added elements usually agree also with the other textual witnesses. These corrections thus do not reflect a consistent revision toward MT, but they probably adapted the text written by the first scribe either to the base text from which it was copied or to a text used by a later scribe, or to both. In any event, the text to which the copied text was corrected happened to agree with one of the proto-Masoretic texts.

But even if there remains some lack of clarity regarding the nature of the correcting process, one thing is clear. The great majority of the added elements in the Qumran scrolls are neither glosses as defined above nor interpolations (exegetical additions). In the literature the term 'correcting gloss' is sometimes used, but this term of compromise makes the terminology unnecessarily vague. Glosses and corrections are different categories for scribes. The great majority of the added elements in the scrolls can only be viewed as corrections. Some of the elements added in the scrolls have been left out from the text originally copied, and as a rule the text is erroneous or does not read smoothly without them.¹³

Direct evidence for the existence of glosses is lacking for manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible, but the assumption that glosses were once incorporated in biblical manuscripts is supported by the occurrence of different types of marginal and interlinear additions in the following sources: several Sumerian and Akkadian texts,¹⁴ among them the Amarna letters,¹⁵ a Ugaritic text,¹⁶ many Greek and Latin texts from antiquity,¹⁷ T^N, various manuscripts of the LXX and V,¹⁸ as well as a rich scribal tradition from the Middle Ages in all languages,¹⁹ including

¹² For 1QIsa^a see Kutscher, *Language*, 522-536. For a scroll like 4QJer^a, which contains many corrections, the evidence is overwhelming (see *DJD* XV, 151-154).

¹³ Isa 20:2 מעל השק מפתח; 23:8 אשר כוהניו שרים; 65:12 בחרתמה לוא הפצתי, and elsewhere.

¹⁴ See n. 5 above. For a very detailed description of the different types of glosses in this literature, see Krecher (see n. 1).

¹⁵ See F.M.Th. Böhl, *Die Sprache der Amarnabriefe mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Kanaanismen* (Leipziger Semitistische Studien V,2; Leipzig 1909) esp. 80-89; P. Artzi, "The Glosses in the El-Amarna Tablets," *Bar Ilan Annual* 1 (1963) 24-57 (Heb.); Krecher (see n. 1).

¹⁶ See S.E. Loewenstamm, "Eine Lehrhafte Ugaritische Trinkburleske," *UF* 1 (1969) 74.

¹⁷ For a large collection of examples, see Hall, *Companion*, 193-197; see further Reynolds-Wilson (see n. 1), 206.

¹⁸ See C. Morano Rodríguez, *Glosas Marginales de Vetus Latina en las Biblias Vulgatas Españolas* (Textos y Estudios 'Cardenal Cisneros' 48; Madrid 1989).

¹⁹ See, i.a., B. Smalley, "Glossa ordinaria," *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* XIII (Berlin/New York 1984) 452-457.

Hebrew sources.²⁰ Only one such example is known from the Qumran texts.

Isa 7:24	MT	שמיר ושיה (= LXX T S V) thornbush and thistle
	1QIsa ^a	ברזל שמיר ושיה iron thornbush and thistle (the addition is interlinear, above שמיר).

In this case the added word in 1QIsa^a explains a word in the text.²¹

In the same way as the Qumran scrolls reflect no glosses, they contain no, or hardly any, interlinear or marginal interpolations (exegetical additions).

An example of a possible (grammatical) interpolation is the following instance:

Isa 44:3 MT	כי אצק מים על צמא ונוזלים על יבשה אצק רוחי על זרעך
	Even as I pour water on thirsty soil, and rain upon dry ground, <so> will I pour my spirit on your offspring.
1QIsa ^a	כי אצק מים על צמא ונוזלים על יבשה אצק רוחי על זרעכה
in	The word 'so,' added in modern translations, was also added in 1QIsa ^a .

The absence or rarity of physically recognizable interpolations does not exclude the possibility that some of the plus elements of the scrolls vis-à-vis the other texts are actual interpolations that had been exegetically added by scribes in the body of the text. These assumed interpolations, however, do not establish the scribal habit of adding interlinear or marginal interpolations.

We now summarize our analysis of the ancient evidence. Even if hardly any glosses can be located in the known textual witnesses, it does not necessarily follow that the ancient Hebrew texts were not glossed. For one thing, the absence of glosses in the Qumran texts should not be taken as representative for the transmission of the biblical text as a whole since the Qumran scrolls are relatively late in the development of the biblical text. The biblical text could still have been glossed at an earlier stage of its development, that is, prior to the middle of the third century BCE. Although direct evidence to this effect is lacking, there exists some circumstantial evidence in the form of details lacking in one or more of

²⁰ For Ben-Sira, see W. Caspari, "Über die Textpflege, nach den hebräischen Handschriften des Sira," *ZAW* 50 (1932) 160–168; 51 (1933) 140–150.

²¹ In the spoken language of the Second Temple period, שמיר had a secondary meaning of 'iron,' to which the glossator probably referred. Relevant material was collected by S. Lieberman, "Forgotten Meanings," *Leshonenu* 32 (1967-1968) 99-102 (Heb.); E. Qimron, "Textual Remarks on 1QIsa^a," *Textus* 12 (1985) 77-83 (Heb. with Eng. summ.).

the textual witnesses, which could have been inserted as glosses in another text.

III. *Reconstructed glosses in the textual witnesses of the Hebrew Bible*

With real evidence lacking, many glosses are reconstructed on the basis of circumstantial evidence such as mentioned in the previous section. Even more instances are reconstructed without any textual basis, and they are thus in the nature of emendations, although this term is usually not used in this context. Most of these reconstructed glosses are little more than a scholarly exercise in ingenuity.

With these clarifications in mind, we now turn to the instances which are claimed to be reconstructed glosses in the biblical text. Unfortunately there is no generally accepted terminology or understanding for this area. It seems that most scholars use the term 'gloss' as a general term for all elements not extant in the body of the text written by the original scribe, but added by another hand.²² Some scholars speak about glosses and 'other marginal notes' as two different categories, while for others the two are identical.²³

That in biblical scholarship the use of the term 'gloss' is very loose,²⁴ denoting almost anything added to the main body of the text, is also clear from Driver, "Glosses." This study is usually taken as the standard article on the topic, in which the author constantly and inconsistently interchanges the terms 'gloss' and 'interpolation'.²⁵ The background of

²² The definition by Dijkstra, "Glosses," 55, n. 2, probably reflects the consensus of scholarship in this regard: 'We use a somewhat extended definition of the gloss; not only as an addition inserted between the lines or in the margin of a manuscript, but also elements of textual growth inserted in the text base, whether intentionally or unintentionally. As we will see, it is impractical to make a distinction between glosses proper and expansions in the text-base because both are found added *prima manu* and *secunda manu*.' Likewise, Klein (see n. 1), 32 says: 'A gloss is any kind of explanatory information added to a text by a scribe.'

²³ In the older study by Delitzsch, *Lese- und Schreibfehler* the major category is that of marginal notes. In his analysis, misplaced marginal notes ('Dem Schrifttexte einverleibte Randnoten') are subdivided into variant readings, glosses (clarifying, correcting, cross-referring), sundry additions, and scribal/editorial notes. For Delitzsch, glosses are thus a subdivision of misplaced marginal notes. On the other hand, Fohrer, "Ezechiel," 39 describes the gloss with the minimal designation of a 'fremdes Einschiesel,' and he notes (without any explanation) that some of the categories of glosses recognized by him referred to marginal notations and others to interlinear ones.

²⁴ For similar difficulties with the description of added elements in the Mesopotamian literature, see n. 8.

²⁵ The article starts off as following: 'So far as I am aware, there has never yet been any thorough study of *glosses* in the Hebrew text.' But in the next sentences Driver oscillates between two different terms: 'Commentators and exegetes have been left to do as they like,

this confusion is that most of the instances named glosses in Driver's study, and in the scholarly literature as a whole, are in fact reconstructed interpolations.

Some of the reconstructed glosses are genuine glosses as illustrated (not proven) below, while most of them are no glosses at all.

1. 'Genuine' reconstructed glosses are rare

While there are probably very few instances in the biblical text of what properly may be named (reconstructed) 'glosses,' one group stands out as presenting relevant material, viz., short explanations of names and words, added to the completed text, either during the textual transmission, or at an earlier stage.²⁶ For example,

Gen 14:3 ... at the Valley of Siddim—that is (*hu*), the Dead Sea (all textual witnesses).

Gen 36:1 This is the line of Esau—that is (*hu*) Edom (all textual witnesses).

These remarks may have been added in the margin, or directly into the running text. In the latter case the term 'gloss' is used somewhat loosely. Usually textual evidence is lacking for these glosses, but it exists in the following example,²⁷ in which the added element was inserted in a wrong place in the text, probably from the margin.

Josh 18:13 ועבר משם הגבול לוזא אל כתף לוזא נגבה דוּיא בית אל
From there the boundary passed on to Luz, to the flank of Luz, southward—that is, Bethel (all textual witnesses).

The words 'that is, Bethel' refer to Luz, and not to their present place in the sentence.

Also in the following instance the explanatory note may have been added secondarily as it lacks in the parallel verse 18:16.

keeping what they will in the text and discarding what they will as *interpolations* in it on purely subjective grounds. ... Until a scientific basis, however, has been laid for identifying *glosses* with a reasonable degree of certainty ... the principles by which *glosses* may be recognized ... Two classes of *interpolations* ... even though these are or may be *interpolations* in the widest sense, the text is now often unintelligible if they are removed, and they cannot properly be regarded as *glosses*.' (my italics). After these initial considerations the article speaks only about glosses.

²⁶ Cf. Driver, "Glosses," 124-126 who notes that many such additions are introduced by a word such as (*w^e*)*hu* Likewise, Fishbane (see n. 1), 44 ff. bases his recognition of glosses on the employment of what he names (p. 42) 'technical terms.'

²⁷ For a similar instance, see Isa 7:17 אַתָּה מַלְכֵי אַשּׁוּר in the context.

Josh 15:8 MT ... along the southern flank of the Jebusites—*that is, Jerusalem* (all textual witnesses).

The examples which follow illustrate possible examples of glosses explaining difficult words (see many more examples collected by Driver, “Glosses” and Elyoenay [see n. 1]).

Isa 51:17 MT את קבעת כוס התרעלה (= T V)
... the bowl, *the cup* of reeling (NJPSV)

ibid., 22 MT את קבעת כוס המתי (= T V)
... the bowl, *the cup* of my wrath (NJPSV)

קבעת is a rare word, occurring only here in the Bible, and it is not impossible that it was glossed by the next one being the common word for the same object. There is, however, no clear versional support for this assumption,²⁸ and furthermore, it is not clear why this gloss would be written twice in the same context. The two Hebrew words were probably used as juxtaposed synonyms in their natural way by the author himself²⁹ and the assumption of a gloss (Delitzsch, *Lese- und Schreibfehler*, 136; Driver, “Glosses,” 137; BHS) is therefore unlikely.

Isa 33:21 במקום נהרים יארים (all textual witnesses)
... a region of *rivers*, of broad streams (NJPSV)

In this verse it is the first word which supposedly serves as a gloss, explaining the second one (Delitzsch, *Lese- und Schreibfehler*, 136; Driver, “Glosses,” 137; BHS).³⁰

Gen 6:17 ואני הנני מביא את המבול מים על הארץ (all textual witnesses)³¹
For My part, I am about to bring the Flood—*waters* upon the earth.

²⁸ The word is not lacking in v. 17 in LXX, as claimed by BHS. In that verse LXX contains two different words for ‘cup,’ though in a construction differing from MT. In v. 22 both LXX and S contain only one word for the two synonymous Hebrew words. However, this evidence does not necessarily support the claim of BHS for possibly the translators could not easily find two synonymous Greek or Syriac words or found it not necessary to juxtapose two similar words in their translation.

²⁹ Such pairs of synonymous words are often found in the Hebrew Bible (inter alia, combinations of words in the construct and absolute state, or of two construct words, as here) and likewise in the Ugaritic literature, as amply shown by Y. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (AOAT 210; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984). This particular pair of words occurs also in parallelism in an Ugaritic text (1 Aqht 215-216; see Avishur, *ibid.*, 375).

³⁰ However, the two words describe each other, in this case in apposition, and the assumption of a gloss is therefore unlikely.

³¹ BHS mentions a Genizah fragment lacking both words (‘flood’, ‘water’).

BHS designates מים ('waters'), which stands in a loose attributive connection to the preceding word, as a gloss, with the implication that it has to be removed from the text.

The same problem exists in similarly phrased verse in the same context:

Gen 7:6 וַיִּהְיֶה בֶן שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וְהַמַּבּוּל הָיָה מֵיִם עַל הָאָרֶץ (all textual witnesses)

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came,
waters upon the earth.

'Water(s)' is designated as a gloss by Driver, "Glosses," 140 and McCarter, *Samuel*, 32. The latter uses this verse as an example for explaining the phenomenon of glosses added in order 'to explain obscure terms.'³²

The preceding analysis has shown that some glosses may have been added to the text and that vague supporting evidence is available. Thus, even though no direct manuscript evidence on glosses in Hebrew sources is known, the assumption of the existence of such glosses at an early stage of the development of the Hebrew text is not rejected out of hand. Possibly some convincing examples of this procedure can be found, but some of the aforementioned cases, which the present writer considers the strongest ones among the suggested cases, have to be explained differently.³³

Even less convincing are the following cases for which no manuscript material is available at all. It is often not clear how the words which are viewed by Driver as 'glosses' explain adjacent or other words in the context.

Job 30:3 MT הֵעָרְקוּ צִיָּה אֲמַשׁ שׂוֹאֵה וּמִשְׂאֵה . . .
... they flee to a parched land, to the gloom of
desolate wasteland.

Driver, "Glosses," 131 considers the enhanced pair of words a gloss explaining צִיָּה ('a parched land'). However, that word, which occurs rather frequently in the Bible, does not seem to be in need of an explanation.

³² Whether or not *mabbul* should be considered an 'obscure term' is hard to determine. It occurs a dozen times in the Bible, but it is true that the aforementioned two instances are the first ones to appear in the Bible. 'Water(s)' should probably be taken as an apposition to *mabbul*. Textual support for the assumption of a gloss is lacking in 6:17 and is unclear in 7:6. In the latter case BHS and McCarter, *Samuel*, 33 record LXX as lacking מים, but in actual fact this pertains only to manuscript A. The word is found in all other manuscripts, though in most of them in an inverted sequence (τοῦ ὕδατος ἐγένετο). Rahlfs and Wevers print the text of papyrus 911 (ὁ κατακλυσμὸς ἐγένετο ὕδατος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς).

³³ In the recognition of glosses it should be remembered that the assumed gloss should always be a word that is more frequent and/or less difficult than the word that is glossed.

Ps 73:19 MT סָפוּ תִמּוּ
 ... wholly *swept away* (NJPSV)

According to Driver, "Glosses," 137, the second word is a gloss on the first. However, it is not clear why this word would have to be explained. Furthermore, the decision which of the two words is a gloss of the other seems to be somewhat arbitrary. In this case, the recognition of a gloss probably derives from Driver's wish to remove one of the two words because of metrical considerations.

Jer 5:15 MT גֵּר אֵיתָן הוּא גֵּר מֵעוֹלָם הוּא
 It is an enduring nation, *it is an ancient nation.*

Without any supporting evidence Delitzsch, *Lese- und Schreibfehler*, 135, suggested that the second phrase is a gloss to the first one.

Scores of examples may be added from the analyses of Delitzsch and Driver of reconstructed glosses which in our mind are no glosses at all. While the assumption of ancient scribal glosses is not rejected out of hand, the following should be remembered.

(1) There is no early or late evidence from Hebrew biblical manuscripts for the very existence of interlinear or marginal glosses.

(2) The versional evidence adduced in favor of this assumed scribal habit does not prove the existence of glosses; at most it can be adduced as direct supporting evidence.

(3) The stylistic pairing of synonymous words such as in the last examples should be recognized as a literary feature (see Avishur [n. 29]) rather than a basis for assuming glosses.

2. Most reconstructed glosses actually are interpolations

With this negative view on glosses in mind, we now turn to the evidence on *interpolations* (exegetical additions). In accordance with the definitions given above we suggest that most of the examples provided for (reconstructed) glosses actually are (reconstructed) interpolations. The major argument for this view is that a gloss, an explanation of a difficult word, usually provides an explanation meant to remain outside the syntax of the sentence, while interpolations, exegetical additions, are integrated into the syntax. We should therefore turn to the question whether or not there is solid evidence for the existence of interpolations in ancient sources. Driver, Dijkstra, and Klein (see n. 1) defined the gloss in such a way as to include interpolations, and by doing so they provided an answer to the question of the evidence: Since there is no manuscript evidence for glossing, there is no evidence for interpolating either. But also if the two phenomena are separated, as suggested here, Tov, "Textual Base" (see n. 10) does not present any manuscript evidence

for interpolating in the Qumran scrolls. The only relevant evidence is circumstantial, derived from the ancient versions, as in the following three examples of interpolations (named glosses):

Gen 14:22 MT ויאמר אברם אל מלך סדם הרמותי ידי אל יהוה אל עליון קנה שמים וארץ

But Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'I swear to (*the Lord*) God Most High, creator of heaven and earth.'

(= T V)

LXX S and 1QapGen XXII, 21 lack the word in parenthesis. SP reads, instead, האלהים, 'God.'

The presumably original text of this verse, reflected in the shorter text of the LXX, S, and 1QapGen, referred to God as 'Most High' (עליון), a term which also occurs in Canaanite texts, in which *Elyon* has the function of 'creator' (קנה), as here. MT T V, however, incorporated a single word, *YHWH*, thus identifying 'Most High' with the God of Israel, as if Abram is addressing Him. The original form of the text is also preserved in MT in v. 19: 'Blessed be Abram of God Most High, creator of heaven and earth.'

1 Kgs 8:2 MT All the men of Israel gathered before king Solomon in Jerusalem in the month of Ethanim (*at the Feast – that is [hu] the seventh month*) (= T S V).

LXX lacks the words in parenthesis.

The minus of the LXX, which may also be named a plus of MT T S V, contains the first mention of 'the Feast' (of Tabernacles) in the historical books (cf. Neh 8:14 which mentions that the Israelites dwelt in booths during the feast of the seventh month). In this verse the LXX differs also in other details from MT.

Josh 2:15 MT ותורדם בחבל בעד החלון (כי ביתה בקיר החומה ובחומה היא יושבת)

She let them down by a rope through the window (*for her dwelling was at the outer side of the city wall and she lived in the actual wall*).

The section in parenthesis is lacking in the LXX and its secondary character as an exegetical addition is assumed by various scholars.³⁴

These examples show that there is some circumstantial evidence for interpolations in the manuscripts of the Bible. These interpolations have been integrated into the syntax of the sentence, although in some cases that syntax limps when the addition entered the text in a wrong place.

³⁴ See Tov, "Joshua,"* esp. 334.

3. *Most (reconstructed) interpolations were created at the stage of the literary development of the biblical books*

At this point further clarifications are needed, involving one's overall view on the development of the biblical books. The focus of the discussion has shifted from glosses to interpolations since scholars usually employed the term gloss for what actually are interpolations.

The employment of the term interpolation is more complicated than depicted here. Interpolations were not only inserted into texts in the course of the textual transmission, but similar additions must have been made at an earlier stage, that of the literary development of the biblical books. The last mentioned additions should actually not be called interpolations, but we nevertheless adhere to this terminology which has been accepted in the scholarly literature since as a rule no distinction is made between the two levels. We believe that in some conditions it is possible to distinguish between the literary and textual level with reference to interpolations. It is suggested here that often a *quantitative* distinction can be made between the two levels in the following way. If a number of exegetical additions seem to be connected with each other in a coherent way, they probably constituted a layer of additions, created in the course of the literary growth of the biblical book. On the other hand, if a given addition is not linked with other ones, it may have been added by a scribe in the course of the textual transmission, although the alternative solution, that of its creation at an earlier stage, cannot be rejected. In spite of these doubts, we suggest that the majority of the exegetical additions recognized by scholars (usually named glosses) were not created at the textual, but at the literary level of the development of the biblical books. This pertains to the examples from Josh 2:15 and 1 Kgs 8:2, mentioned above, as well as to the examples to be mentioned below. This type of conclusion is based on the fact that most additions which are characterized as possible interpolations somehow are connected with other ones.

In order to explain this point some generalizing statements need to be made first. The biblical books developed through the expanding of an earlier form of the composition with new layers, and in the later stages of this development especially with (a) layer(s) of exegetical comments. This view has been expressed in modern research, among other things in the writings of the present author, on Jeremiah, Joshua, Ezekiel, Samuel, and Kings.³⁵ A good example of this development is Jeremiah where the

³⁵ For a summary, see *TCHB*, chapter 7.

short text reflected in 4QJer^{b,d} and the LXX ('edition I') has been expanded with an additional layer ('edition II') in MT.³⁶ Some of these additions are expanded or additional formulae, others are editorial comments and new material, and again others have been presented as interpolations or glosses. These instances could have been presented as interpolations or glosses had they occurred as individual, scattered phenomena in a different book, but under the circumstances they should be taken as part of a literary layer. For example,

- Jer 36:6 וקראת במגלה (אשר כתבת מפי את דברי יהוה) באוני העם
 ... and read aloud from the scroll (*that which you wrote at my dictation, the words of the Lord*) to the people.
- Jer 41:1 ויאכלו שם לחם יחדו (במצפה)
 ... and they ate there together (*in Mizpah*).

Instances such as these should not be separated from the collective evidence presented by the textual witnesses in Jeremiah. Although it would be natural to evaluate each exegetical addition on its own merits as an individual instance, it would not be correct to do so in Jeremiah in view of the many pluses in MT. These pluses have to be evaluated as one unit; some of them may be considered exegetical interpolations, but most of them form an expanding exegetical layer which stresses certain aspects of the short text. Some of these are expanded or additional formulae and personal names, others are editorial remarks, summarizing statements, and even new data. The analysis thus takes the quantitative evidence into consideration. In our view, such instances have often been wrongly isolated from their environment and evaluated as individual cases of interpolation or glossing.³⁷

4. Interpolations (glosses) in Ezekiel?

The most frequently discussed book in this regard is not Jeremiah, but Ezekiel. In this book the deviations from MT in the LXX are less convincing than in the case of Jeremiah, but its evidence has been more

³⁶ For a summary and other views, see Tov, "Jeremiah."*

³⁷ For example,

Jer 27:19 כי כה אמר ה' צבאות אל העמדים ועל הים ועל המכנות
 For thus says the Lord (of hosts concerning the columns, the sea, the stands) ...
 BHS: > LXX, add cf. 52,17

Jer 27:22 ושמה יהיו עד יום פקדי אתם
 (... and there they shall remain, until the day when I give attention to them.)
 BHS: > LXX, add

Jer 29:16-20 BHS: LXX om 16-20, add; cf. 8a

influential on the analysis of glosses and interpolations in the Bible. In Jeremiah, the deviations are found in Hebrew as well as Greek sources, while the data for Ezekiel are culled from the LXX only. In this book, the deviating Greek translation lacks some 4-5 percent of the words of MT, and it has been suggested by Tov, "Ezekiel"* that the deviating Greek translation, which is generally very faithful to its parent text, was not created by the translator who shortened his *Vorlage*, but reflected a shorter Hebrew version of the book, which in chapter 7 also differs recensionally from MT. In previous research, however, the mentioned data on Ezekiel are closely connected with the discussion of interpolations in the Bible as a whole (usually named glosses in the literature).³⁸

It appears to us that the presumed interpolations in Ezekiel should be taken in their totality as representative of a layer which was added in the 'edition' of MT to the earlier (shorter) edition now reflected in the LXX.³⁹ With Dijkstra we disregard the many reconstructed interpolations in Ezekiel, most of which are insufficiently founded. The evidence of the LXX is taken as representing a different Hebrew text (edition), since the translation is always faithful. This Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX is almost always shorter than MT. In other words, MT often reflects late exegetical elements, but these elements should not be viewed as individual elements inserted into the text, that is, as interpolations or glosses, but as representatives of an extensive layer of exegetical additions.

Like in the case of Jeremiah, some of the plus elements of MT in Ezekiel could represent individual interpolations (others: glosses) and they have indeed often been presented as such (see n. 38). The examples

³⁸ While the discussions of Delitzsch, *Lese- und Schreibfehler* and Driver, "Glosses," provide many (often identical) examples of interpolations (named glosses) from the entire biblical literature, the below-mentioned three major discussions are limited to Ezekiel, in which book the minus elements of LXX are usually viewed as glosses in MT. Of great influence on the literature was the study by Fohrer, "Ezechiel"* (1951), followed by those of Freedy, "Ezekiel" (1970) and Dijkstra, "Glosses" (1986). Earlier studies, likewise on Ezekiel, less influential on scholarship in general, but of seminal importance for the analysis by Fohrer and others, had been carried out by Rost (1903-1904) and Herrmann (1908, 1911). For both, see n. 1. All these studies were limited to Ezekiel, but they referred to a topic which was to be of general importance for biblical research, that of glosses in the biblical text. It was surmised, probably unconsciously, that a similarly large number of glosses such as found in Ezekiel (364 according to Fohrer) must have been contained in other books as well. Ezekiel, however, probably presents a special situation, and thus if the view about the many glosses in that book appears to be ill-founded, the views about other books need to be adjusted as well.

³⁹ In his description of the glosses, Fohrer does not distinguish between glosses which are supported by textual evidence (LXX) and glosses which are not supported, a distinction which was to be made later by Freedy and Dijkstra.

which follow were named 'explicative glosses' by Freedy, "Ezekiel," 137-141 (the first example), and 'exegetical glosses' (the last two examples [146-149]). All elements lacking in the LXX are indicated by italics and parenthesis.

Ezek 8:3	MT	אל פתח שער (הפנימיה) to the entrance of the (<i>inner</i>) gate ⁴⁰
Ezek 1:22	MT	כעין הקרח (הנורא) with an (<i>awe-inspiring</i>) gleam as of crystal
Ezek 3:18	MT	להזהיר רשע מדרכו (הרשעה) to warn the wicked man of his (<i>wicked</i>) course

The plus of MT in this verse as well as in the next one are probably prompted by the implication of the passage as a whole.

Other plus elements of MT in Ezekiel, however, cannot be considered interpolations, viz. parallel words (the first three examples) and new material (the last two examples).

Ezek 5:14	MT	ואתנך לחרבה (ולחרפה) בנויים אשר סביבותיך (= T S V) I will turn you into a ruin (<i>and a reproach</i>) among the nations that are around you. ⁴¹
Ezek 5:15	MT	בעשותי כך שפטים (באף ובהמה) ובתכחות חמה (= T S V) when I execute judgments against you (<i>in anger and in fury</i>) and by chastisements of fury. ⁴²
Ezek 6:6	MT	... מזבחותיכם ונשברו (ונשבתו) (= T S V) ... your altars, and shall be ruined (<i>and shall be desolate</i>)
Ezek 16:13	MT	ותיפי במאד מאד (ותצלחי למלוכה) (= T S V) You were very very beautiful (<i>fit to be a queen</i>).
Ezek 20:28	MT	ויראו כל גבעה רמה וכל עץ עבת ויזבחו שם את זבחייהם (ויתנו שם כעס קרבנם) (= T S V) They saw every hill and every leafy tree, and there they made their sacrifices. (<i>There they placed their vexatious offerings.</i>)

See further 1:22 quoted above.

⁴⁰ The addition in MT is wrong in the present context. 'It is premature in terms of the itinerary of the divine tour as represented by this stage in the narrative' (Freedy, "Ezekiel," 138).

⁴¹ For a similar situation, see Jer 49:13 (לחרב) כי לשמה לחרפה (לחרב), where the word in parenthesis is lacking in the LXX.

⁴² Cf. Deut 29:27 where באף ובהמה occur in a similar context.

Because of these five examples and many additional ones (for a full discussion, see Tov, "Ezekiel"), the presumed interpolations in Ezekiel (named glosses in the literature) should be taken in their totality as representative of a literary layer, added in the 'edition' of MT to the shorter and earlier edition of the LXX. Accordingly MT might indeed reflect exegetical additions; however, these additions should not be viewed as individual elements, but as components of a separate layer. Examples like the ones adduced here thus do not prove that the book of Ezekiel abounds with many interpolations or glosses. For one thing, it would be quite unnatural to assume that this book was interpolated to such a great extent (see n. 38).

5. *Other books*

Many of the differences between MT and the LXX in Joshua are explained in a way similar to those in Jeremiah in Ezekiel. The Greek text of that book provides now a shorter and then a longer text, often in details which have been recognized as significant for the literary history of the book. Thus the aforementioned longer text of MT in Josh 2:15 does not bear the character of an individual exegetical remark, subject to textual evaluation, but it is part of a literary stratum. This pertains also to the following example, in which the minus of the LXX is enclosed within parenthesis.

Josh 1:15 MT ושבתם לארץ ירשתכם (וירשתם אותה) אשר נתן לכם משה
(עבד יהוה)

Then you may return to your inherited land (*and you shall take possession of it*) which Moses (*the servant of the Lord*) gave unto you.

In this verse, listed by Weingreen (see n. 1) 151 as an example of a gloss, the first minus of the LXX, serving as a plus in MT, is contextually an addition in the text, disturbing its syntax. However, the plus, which does not improve the meaning of MT, and hardly provides elements that are exegetically significant, cannot be considered a gloss, although with some difficulty it could be viewed as an interpolation. As an interpolation, however, it is not the individual case which is of interest, but the fact that in Joshua, MT (as opposed to the LXX) contains many more pluses of this type,⁴³ all of which together form an added layer.

⁴³ Cf. Tov, "Joshua"; H.M. Orlinsky, "The Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Septuagint of the Book of Joshua," *VTSup* 17 (1969) 187-195.

IV. *Conclusions*

The course which our investigation has taken is quite unusual. The discussion of the categories of scribal additions in ancient sources as well as of individual glosses and interpolations in the manuscripts of the various biblical books has led to negative conclusions with regard to the existence of these phenomena in the manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible. It was realized that the scholarly discussion of individual instances of glossing has been influenced much by a vast body of minuses in the LXX of Ezekiel and secondarily also of Jeremiah, which have often been described as glosses in the scholarly literature. However, the textual data which look like scribal glosses or interpolations in the MT of these books actually were probably created at an early stage of the history of the biblical books, and not as individual phenomena. In other words, the data in Ezekiel and Jeremiah which have been so influential on the research on glosses and interpolations elsewhere in the Bible, probably are irrelevant to the discussion of scribal glosses and therefore misleading. The final conclusion on the existence of glosses and interpolations in biblical manuscripts must therefore be quite negative. More in detail:

1. No glosses proper (as defined in n. 2) have been detected in the manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible. Evidence for assumed glosses in the tradition of the Hebrew Bible, deriving mainly from the versions, is circumstantial and uncertain.
2. The many interlinear and marginal additions in the Qumran scrolls are mainly in the nature of corrections and not of glosses or interpolations.
3. Almost all glosses suggested by biblical scholars are reconstructed, while some are supported by evidence in the ancient versions.
4. Most elements which have hitherto been described as glosses, actually are interpolations (exegetical additions).
5. While some of the elements recognized as interpolations must have been added at the scribal level, many (if not most) of them belonged to a layer (edition) added to an earlier text (edition) at the stage of the literary growth of the biblical books.
6. The many plus elements of the MT in Ezekiel (as compared with the LXX) are no individual glosses or interpolations, as claimed by several scholars, but a layer of additions in this book added to an earlier edition.
7. The fact that many elements in the MT of Ezekiel (as compared with the LXX) have been described as glosses in several studies from

1903 onwards has influenced scholars to believe that biblical manuscripts contained a great number of glosses (or interpolations).