

treatment of Psalm 2:12 to which three pages are devoted (pp. 160–163). The well-known emendation *nashqu be-raglaw* found in the Kittel *Biblia Hebraica*, is unreservedly accepted. However, it has been overlooked that the Hebrew verb *n-sh-q* never takes the preposition *b-*. Significantly, this celebrated emendation has itself been “corrected” in the latest Stuttgartensia edition by replacing the *be-* with *le-*. This, though, vitiates the impact and rational of the textual argument, as everyone familiar with the issues will realize at once. But this is a minor point in a book so rich, informative, and well written as this.

Nahum M. Sarna  
 Brandeis University  
 Waltham, Mass.

Menahem Cohen, ed. *Miqra'ot Gedolot Ha-Keter: Joshua-Judges*. Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1992. 180, 100\* pp. (Hebrew).

With this volume of the first two books of the Former Prophets, Bar-Ilan University Press, under the editorship of Menahem Cohen, launches its new critical edition of the *Miqra'ot Gedolot*. The need for such a project is clear; the results of this first volume are outstanding; the promise for the series is even higher.

The presentation of the Joshua-Judges material comprises the first 180 pages of this book; then follow 100 asterisked pages with Cohen's detailed introduction to the entire project.

This new edition of the *Miqra'ot Gedolot* is characterized by the following features. The biblical text utilized is the Aleppo Codex, whose Hebrew name, *Keter 'Aram Šobah*, supplies the formal title of this series. Appearing alongside the biblical text are three sections of Masoretica: Masorah Qetana (Masorah Parva), Masorah Gedolah (Masorah Magna), and an innovative section entitled 'En ha-Masorah (on which see further below); Targum Yonatan; and six rabbinic commentators: Rashi, Radaq, Rabag, R. Yosef Kara, R. Yeshayah Mi-Trani, and R. Yosef Ibn Caspi (as the series progresses, the commentators will differ for the different books of the Bible). All of these appear in exquisite Hebrew fonts of the regular type (i.e., the so-called Rashi script is not utilized). Even the smallest printed material, the Masoretica, is

easily readable. When the biblical text is cited in the Masoretica or in the commentaries, it appears in boldface type; this enables the reader to find what he or she is looking for very quickly. I cannot emphasize enough how physically attractive these pages are in their use of fonts, page layout (e.g., a goodly amount of white space), and overall presentation. The result is a user's dream!

The lengthy introduction by Cohen discusses the various problems with former editions of *Miqra'ot Gedolot*, and the solutions and innovations instituted by the *Ha-Keter* edition. For almost five hundred years now, all editions of *Miqra'ot Gedolot* (or the Rabbinic Bible) have been based on the work produced by Jacob Ben-Hayyim in 1524–25 for master printer Daniel Bomberg of Venice. Ben-Hayyim tried to use the best manuscripts of the Bible available to him, but in truth they were mainly from Italy and indeed were mainly from the area near Venice. As we now know, far better manuscripts were extant in his day, but they never reached him. The errors which crept into Ben-Hayyim's text were at every level: the differences between *plene* and *defectiva* spelling, the marking of the vowels, and the use of accent marks. For example, in Josh 6:20 at the two words *wayyitqě'û* and *wayyilkědû*, Ben-Hayyim (and thus many modern printed editions [including two that I consulted at random]) omitted the *ga'yah* (*meteg*) on the first syllable; it appears there in the Aleppo Codex, the Leningrad Codex, and other better manuscripts (p. 19\*).

The texts of the Targumim that Ben-Hayyim printed are notoriously poor. Errors arose through the penetration of Hebrew forms into an Aramaic text, through the penetration of better-known forms from the Talmud Bavli into the lesser-known Aramaic of the various Targumim, and through simple corruption of letters and vocalization. As scholars today now recognize, the best manuscripts of the Targumim are the Yemenite ones, and they have been utilized in the *Ha-Keter* edition. Examples of the first category from Ben-Hayyim (again repeated in printings in use today) are the forms *ûlēbānōnā'* in Josh 1:4 and *darkāk* in Josh 1:8. The former includes the Hebrew form for 'Lebanon'; the correct form is *wēlibnān*, showing the Aramaic form for 'Lebanon'. The latter utilizes the pure Hebrew word *derek* 'way', which is never used in Aramaic; the correct form is *'ôrḥātāk* (p. 30\*).

These are examples of "small" mistakes in *Miqra'ot Gedolot* which are corrected in this new critical edition. Larger errors in Ben-Hayyim's work are pointed out in the introduction (p. 32\*) and no doubt will be corrected

in future volumes of the series. Thus, the commentaries to Proverbs and Ezra-Nehemiah ascribed to Abraham ibn Ezra in the traditional *Miqra'ot Gedolot* are actually those of Moses Qimhi. Similarly, the commentary to Chronicles ascribed to Rashi in the traditional *Miqra'ot Gedolot* clearly did not emanate from his pen. Cohen points out that most likely Ben-Hayyim is not to be blamed for these errors; he probably copied them from the manuscripts at his disposal. Regardless, it is high time that these errors were corrected in editions of *Miqra'ot Gedolot*.

A crucial issue in any work which utilizes the Aleppo Codex as a basis is what to do with the large amount of the Torah which is lacking in it. Such already has been attempted in the edition of the Bible based on the Aleppo Codex published by Mosad Ha-Rav Kook (1977); its preparer, Mordechai Breuer, utilized manuscripts akin to the Aleppo Codex, but in the end the user of this edition cannot be sure whence a particular pentateuchal reading emanates.<sup>1</sup> Cohen reviews the potential sources for recreating the Torah of the Aleppo Codex, among them the Masorah of the manuscript itself, i.e., the Masorah Qetana and the Masorah Gedolah of the Prophets and Writings obviously cross-reference the Torah as well. Scholars eagerly will await the volumes in this series devoted to the Torah to see the results of this system.

Another difference between the aforementioned Breuer edition and the *Ha-Keter* edition should be noted: the latter is absolutely faithful to the Aleppo Codex. This manuscript utilizes *hataf* vowels to a larger extent than most (any?) other witnesses. Whereas Breuer altered many of them to *shwa*, the *Ha-Keter* system is to reproduce exactly what the Aleppo Codex reads. Thus, for example, in Josh 6:22 the Aleppo Codex reads *hamāraggēlīm* (with *hataf-patah* under the *mem*), and this reading is reproduced in the *Ha-Keter* volume. Breuer's edition, by contrast, reads *hamāraggēlīm* (with *shwa*). Incidentally, from the few examples of this phenomenon in the Aleppo Codex presented by Cohen (p. 63\*), my sense is that a conditioning factor in many or most cases is the presence of a following "liquid" consonant (*l/r/m/n*), as in the above example *hamāraggēlīm* (see examples more familiar from other manuscripts as well, e.g., Gen 10:3 *'aškānaz*).

1. See also M. Goshen-Gottstein, "Editions of the Hebrew Bible—Past and Future," in *Shaarei Talmon: Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*, ed. M. Fishbane and E. Tov (Winona Lake, Ind., 1992), pp. 221–242, esp. p. 241.

The most original contribution of the *Ha-Keter* edition is the section entitled 'En ha-Masorah. Because the Masorah Qetannah especially and the Masorah Gedolah to some extent are characterized by an exceedingly high number of abbreviations, *notariqonim*, and difficult terms, and because only one who knows the entire Bible by heart really can benefit from the information contained therein (unless one were to refer constantly to a concordance), these works are basically closed books to all but a select few individuals. The average reader of the Bible simply ignores them. Cohen's 'En ha-Masorah opens these closed works by introducing a clear and concise system of citation. To illustrate, the opening three words of the book of Joshua bear the Masorah Qetannah note ך, and the next three words bear the Masorah Qetannah note ״ך בסיפ׳. At a glance the 'En ha-Masorah section of the *Ha-Keter* edition informs the reader that the words ״יהי אחרי מוה occur four times in the Bible (Gen 25:11, Josh 1:1, Judg 1:1, 2 Sam 1:1), and that the phrase משה עבד יהוה occurs fourteen times in the book of Joshua, with the complete list of citations given (Josh 1:1, 1:13, 1:15, etc.). The presence of this type of information at one's fingertips will be a boon to many readers and scholars of the Bible (it could even lessen the need for certain computer searches!). In fact, for those scholars interested in the intertextuality of biblical literature, this tool has considerable potential.

Finally, the editor and the publisher deserve great praise for the many outstanding illustrations which accompany the introduction. The detailed treatments often are illuminated by remarkably clear reproductions of the actual manuscripts and printed editions.

All serious students of the Bible, the Targumim, the Masorah, and rabbinic commentaries are in debt to Cohen and to Bar-Ilan University Press for this undertaking. We look forward to the appearance of subsequent volumes in the series; may they appear speedily in our day!

Gary A. Rendsburg  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, N. Y.