To Read or Not to Read?
Translating the Qere/Ketiv in
Modern English Translations of the Old Testament

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Introduction
The purpose of this paper is (1) to give a brief overview of what constitutes the Qere/Ketiv in the Masoretic notes of the extant codices, (2) to survey the history of interpretation as to the origins, purpose, and classifications of the Qere/Ketiv and to offer a brief evaluation of the various scholarly perspectives, and (3) to present the Qere/Ketiv involving לֹא and לוֹ as a test case to see how modern English translations of the OT choose either the Qere or Ketiv in their respective translations. The translations chosen for this test case are:

New American Standard Bible (The Lockman Foundation, 1995) – NASB
New Revised Standard Version (NCCC, 1989) – NRSV
The Revised English Bible (Oxford Univ Press, 1989) – REB
New International Version (Zondervan, 2011) – NIV
English Standard Version (Crossway, 2011) – ESV
New English Translation (Bible Studies Press, 2011) – NET
Holman Christian Standard Bible (Holman Bible Publishers, 2010) – HCSB
The Tanakh (Jewish Publication Society, 1985) – JPS
The Tree of Life Version (Messianic Jewish Family Bible, 2014)

The Qere/Ketiv – What is this?
“Qere” (קרוי) is the passive form of the Aramaic verb meaning “read.” Likewise, “Ketiv” (כתיב) is Aramaic for “written.” When the reader is to substitute a different word or pronunciation for a word in the written text, a circule is placed over the word in the text to alert the reader that the word written in the margin is to be substituted. Further, as an aid to the reader, the vocalization and (sometimes) the accentuation signs (טאמים) placed on the word in the text are actually those which are to be used when reading the substitute word given in the margin marked by a dotted  ק or sometimes קרי or קרי (see Fig. 1).

In BHS and BHQ, this same convention is followed. The Ketiv is written with the vowels of the Qere, with the consonants of the Qere in the margin marked by a ק (see Fig. 2).
In some earlier manuscripts, only the part of the word or a single letter needing to be changed was written in the margin or in some cases, between the lines. This method is frequently found in the Palestinian system. Likewise, in the development of the *Qere/Ketiv*, rather than using ק, קְר, or קרי to mark the *Qere* in the margin, a symbol resembling a nun sofit (ן) was used (see Figs. 3 & 4ab).

According to Yeivin,

This sign is found in MSS with Tiberian, Palestinian, or Babylonian pointing, and continues in use up to the twelfth century.

Several explanations have been given for why a mark resembling the nun sofit would have been used to identify a marginal *Qere* by the Masoretes, but they have not proven satisfactory under scholarly scrutiny, and Yeivin as well as Dotan suggest that it is simply a mark that resembled a nun sofit but is not itself a letter nor an abbreviation for a word. In current Masoretic studies, the Tiberian tradition of marking the *Qere* with ק is most often referred to in discussions on the *Qere/Ketiv*.

In addition to the *Qere/Ketiv* noted in the Masorah Parva, there are some “constant *Qere*” (*Qere perpetuum*) which are not indicated with an explicit Masoretic note, but the *Ketiv* is nonetheless vocalized with the vowels of the *Qere*. Examples are the *Ketiv* יהוה which is vocalized as יהוה, using the vowels of the *Qere*, unless יהוה appears next to אֲדֹנָי, in which case it is vocalized as אֲדֹנָי, utilizing the vowels of אֱלֹהִים. Other constant *Qere* include אדֹנָי, pronounced אֲדֹנָי though not noted as a *Qere/Ketiv*, perpetually pronounced as though written אֱלֹהִים, and יְרוּשָׁלַיִם pronounced as though written יְרוּשָׁלַם.

**The Origin, Purpose, and Classifications of the Qere/Ketiv: An Overview**

What follows is a brief overview of the origin, purpose and classifications of the *Qere/Ketiv*, done by summarizing the conclusion of a number of recognized scholars in the field of Masoretic studies. The summary is arranged chronologically by the date of publication of the respective scholar’s work in which his conclusion regarding the *Qere/Ketiv* is written.

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Since the vowels of the *Ketiv* are not reproduced by the Masoretes, content to transmit only the vowels of the *Qere*, Ginsburg states:

> The Massorites, therefore, who have decided that the marginal *keri* is the correct one, have in all these instances deprived us of the vowel-signs which were originally affixed to the words exhibited in the text.⁴

Even though Ginsburg recognizes that according to the Masoretes the *Qere* was the “authoritative reading,” he considered the *Ketiv* to be the preferable reading.

> Without entering into a discussion on the merits or demerits of these official various readings as a whole, it is now admitted by the best textual critics that in many instances the reading exhibited in the text (*כתיב*) is preferable to the marginal variant (*קרי*), inasmuch as it sometimes preserves the archaic orthography and sometimes gives the original reading. The *Kethiv* or textual reading moreover is in many instances not only supported by MSS. and early editions, but by the ancient Versions.⁵


After given a brief survey of extant proposals for the creation of the *Qere/Ketiv* system, proposals he dismisses for lack of supporting data, Gordis goes on to give his understanding of how the early *Qere/Ketiv* system developed. Taking the circumlocutions for the Tetragrammaton as the earliest case in point,⁶ along with euphemisms when the biblical text was read in the synagogue, he writes:

> In the case of the Tetragrammaton and the euphemisms, it is easy to understand how the terms Kethib and Qere originated. Where one word was written (Kethib) in the text, the Reader was commanded: Read (Qere) so-and-so!” The Q was a direction to the Reader, to guard against blasphemy and obscenity, and the Reader who insisted on reading the K was therefore removed from his post. The meaning of the term is entirely natural and unforced.⁷

Gordis offers a further proposal regarding the existence and rise of the early *Qere/Ketiv* system. The basis for this proposal is that the *Qere/Ketiv* notations had their beginning before the invention of the *nikkudot*, in particular, the Masoretic vowel signs.

> It is our contention that the Kethib-Qere device was also utilized for the fixing of pronunciation before the invention of the vowel signs, and that a large percentage of the KQ are therefore not manuscript variations, but guides to the correct reading in the absence of vowels.⁸

While the early *Qere/Ketiv* were given as a guide to the reader, according to Gordis in time there came about “a radical and far-reaching extension of its original use.”⁹ He bases this upon the talmudic story, found in y.Ta'anit IV.2.¹⁰

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⁵ Ibid., p. 184.

⁶ Gordis contends that the “the earliest example where a word in the Biblical text was not read and another was pronounced in its place, is the *Tetragrammaton:* יהוה” (p. 29). He goes on to suggestion that the regular use of *κύριος* by the Lxx to translated the *Tetragrammaton* indicates that the translators were following the *Qere perpetuum*.

⁷ p. 31.

⁸ p. 35, emphasis his.

⁹ p. 40.

¹⁰ The report is also found in *Sifre Deut.* §356; *Avot de R. Natan*, version B, ch. 46; tractate *Sopherim*, VI, 4. For studies related to this report of שלשה ספריםמצאו помощью, see Jacob Z. Lauterbach, “The Three Books Found in the Temple..."
Three scrolls were found in the Temple courtyard, the Me'oni scroll (סֵפֶר מְעוֹנִי), the Za'atutei scroll (סֵפֶר זַעֲטוּטֵי), and the Hee scroll (סֵפֶר הִיא). In one they found written: It is a dwelling place (מְעוֹן) for the God of ages, whereas in two was written: It is a dwelling place (מְעֹנָה) for the God of ages. They maintained two and discounted one. In one they found written: And he sent the lads (זַעֲטוּטֵי) of the children of Israel, whereas in two was written: And he sent the youths (נַעֲרֵי) of the children of Israel. They maintained two and discounted one. In one they found written nine times (הִיא) whereas in two (הִיא) was written eleven times.

From this account, Gordis concludes that while the sanctioned reading was entered into correct manuscripts, the suppressed reading may have continued to be the reading in ordinary copies that made no claim to accuracy.

The earliest stage, then, in the treatment of variations was the rather crude procedure of accepting the reading vouched for by the larger number of manuscripts, and consigning the minority reading to oblivion. But such a procedure could not have been considered satisfactory for long. Depending merely upon majority of available copies to determine the authoritative reading undoubtedly would have raised suspicion of the possibility that the original readings might be lost. Thus Gordis proposes that the next step in the process was the method of conflation.

Whenever two variants contested a given passage, an attempt was made by the Masoretes to embody them both in the text, if possible. This practice, it is true, often created an anomalous form or a difficult construction, but it had the merit of preserving readings that would otherwise have perished.

After listing numbers of examples in which conflated readings seem to appear in the Tanach, he notes that, in practical measures, such a method of conflation could not have continued for long since it would have created difficult and impossible texts, in which the confusion was usually far more noticeable than the preservation of the variants. In addition, it had an even more serious drawback—its inadequacy. Very few divergences were susceptible to conflation; the vast majority could not be treated in this fashion at all. It is for this reason that conflation finds no recognition in Rabbinic or Masoretic tradition. Its period of activity must have been short-lived and its influence upon the history of the text relatively slight.

Gordis suggests that in light of these inadequacies, other methods were employed to treat variants, such as the use of dots over words whose authenticity was doubtful. Yet any method utilized by which variants were retained in the text, even if marked as such, was destined to chaos. Scribes seeking to copy manuscripts as rapidly as possible would not only incorporate new variants but would very likely fail to distinguish variants previously noted. This leads Gordis to propose that the solution was “to adopt a standard codex by which others might be revised and which would serve as the archetype of all future

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12 p. 41.
13 Ibid.
14 p. 43.
manuscripts.” He suggests that

after the destruction of the Temple and the loss of political independence, Pharisaism became the only form of Judaism, and its archetype succeeded in becoming the textus receptus. The slightest peculiarities of this text, such as majuscules and minuscules, suspended letters and dotted words, were transmitted with reverential care and fidelity, exactly as they occurred in this standard codex.

Further, Gordis suggests that an authoritative, archetype manuscript was adopted so that by the time of R. Akiva (c. 100 CE), a leading proponent of the new principles of interpretation, adherence to this archetype manuscript was given even further importance.

Now, when every particle and prefix, plene and defectiva, was of potential importance as the source of new Halakah, a great impetus was given to a correct and fixed text, and the result was the adoption of a standard codex.

When was this archetype manuscript adopted as the standard against which all other manuscripts would be judged? Gordis breaks with the scholarly consensus of his day and puts the existence of this archetype manuscript to at least a full generation before Akiva.

…it is far more likely that the archetype had been chosen long before Akiba, and that he and his predecessors already found it installed as the textus receptus, and therefore available as the basis for their hermeneutics.

Yet in spite of the fact that archetype, well in place before the destruction of the Temple and being regarded in accordance with its antiquity and trustworthiness, the early Masoretes must have been aware that even inferior manuscripts might contain superior or older readings at given passages. If, as it seems very likely, many other manuscripts existed during the late 2nd Temple period which were used in the Temple by scribes, and which were therefore also given due respect for their trustworthiness, Gordis believes that readings divergent from the archetype but still considered either preferable, or interesting, or at least satisfactory, were preserved in the margins of manuscripts.

Thus our written text, including the Kethib, is substantially the text of the archetype, while the Q is a selection of worth-while readings from the other non-archetypal manuscripts. These variants, we believe, make up the bulk of the KQ variations as we know them today. As a study of these will make plain, they are of all types, orthographical, morphologic, and rhetorical, but they all have one characteristic in common—they are all manuscript divergences, due to this earliest of collations.

The following are therefore the primary categories in which Gordis classes the Qere/Ketiv.

1. The earliest formulation of the Qere/Ketiv
   Guide against (1) blasphemy, (2) indecency (or obscenity), and (3) erroneous reading (i.e., guide to the reader).

2. The later formulation of the Qere/Ketiv
   Textual variants resulting from (1) orthographical variants, (2) phonetic variants, (3) morphological variants, and (5) interchange of particles.

3. A large number of the Qere/Ketiv are “unclassified.”

In this and other published articles by Orlinsky, he calls into question the scholarly consensus of his day,20 which was that

…the Qere readings frequently represent corrections of the Kethib; that is to say, that the Jewish scholars responsible for the Kethib-Qere system…finding in their text readings that were, in their judgment, erroneous, corrected them, the corrected forms constituting the Qere.21

The primary basis of his critique of the view that the Qere is a correction of the Ketiv is the fact that a study of the Qere/Ketiv themselves shows the Ketiv is often superior to the Qere.

Those scholars who have dealt directly with the Kethib-Qere recognize the significant fact that apart from those very many instances where the Kethib-Qere readings are equally acceptable to the textual critic, the Kethib reading is acceptable where the Qere is not, almost as often as the Qere is acceptable where its Ketib correspondent is not. In other words, if the Masoretes responsible for the Kethib-Qere system were correctors, why then is the Qere reading so frequently not acceptable where the Kethib is?22

Orlinsky gives an example of his critique of the prevailing view in his day, by noting the first Qere/Ketiv in the Tanach, i.e., Gen 8:17

כֹּל־הַחֲיָה ָל־הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר מִהָּנָה אָרֶץ וּפָרוּ וְרָבוּ הַיְצֵא צֵא וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ ה וּבַבָּשָׂר בָּע כּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ׃

Clearly the Masoretes were neither correctors nor selectors; i.e., they did not deal with the Hebrew text of the Bible subjectively, *ad hoc*, deciding each reading within its context. That is why the very first Kethib-Qere in the Bible, Gen. 8:17, exhibits the anomalous, quite incorrect form הַיְצֵא, the alleged hiph'il imperative of the root יצא, as the Qere, and the patently correct and expected form, הוֹצֵא as the Kethib. The verse reads: “God spoke to Noah, saying, ‘Come out of the ark…and bring out (Qere הַיְצֵא, Kethib הוצא) with you every living thing…’”

He states his view of how the Qere/Ketiv came into existence:

It is our hypothesis that the Masoretes first selected the three best manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible available to them. Where the three manuscripts had no variant readings, no difficulty was experienced in vocalizing the text. But where the manuscripts differed, the Masoretes accepted the reading of the majority and vocalized it; that reading became the Qere. The reading of the minority was left unvocalized, and became the Kethib. On this view, the Masoretes did not select or correct any reading; rather, automatically and objectively, regardless of personal opinion or predilection, the three selected manuscripts themselves, by a vote of two to one, determined the Kethib-Qere system. That is why in so many scores of instances, far more than one would expect and many more than is generally realized, the reading of the Kethib is clearly superior to that of the Qere, and yet it was the latter that became the accepted reading.23

Thus, in Orlinsky’s view, the Qere/Ketiv system extant in the MT as found in codex L, represents the majority reading in the Qere, and the minority reading in the Ketiv, as determined by three manuscripts reported to have been found in the Temple (y.Ta’anit 23b).24

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21 *JAOS* 7 (1959), 185.
22 Ibid., p. 186.
23 Ibid., p. 187.
24 See p. 4 above.
Aron Dotan, “Masorah” in *The Encyclopedia Judaica* (Keter, 1972), 16:1401–82.25

In his *Encyclopedia Judaica* article on the Masorah, Dotan does not offer any theories as to how and why the *Qere/Ketiv* system developed, but he does note four main types of *Qere* notations in addition to *qere ve-la’ketiv* and *ketiv ve-la’ qere*. These four are:

1. **Euphemisms**: Strong language is changed to euphemism.
   “Every derogatory written expression is replaced by one of refinement, e.g., ‘Thou shalt betroth a wife and another man shall enjoy her ([Deut 28:30](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%2028%3A30&version=NRSV&v=28%3A30)): every place where *ישגלנה* is written, they read *יִשְׁכָּבֶנָּה* (shall lie with her)….” ([Megilla 4:39–41](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Megilla%204%3A39–41))

2. **Correction of Forms**: Archaic forms or grammatically exceptional forms are substituted by a standard one, e.g., the suffix of the second person feminine—*קראת* – *קראתי* ([Jer 3:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah%203%3A4&version=NRSV&v=3%3A4)), *ךְ לָ* – *לכי* ([2Ki 4:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%204%3A2&version=NRSV&v=4%3A2)), and the suffix of the verb in the perfect, plural third person feminine *נִצְּתוּ* – *נצתה* ([Jer 2:15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah%202%3A15&version=NRSV&v=2%3A15)).

3. **Correction of Errors**: Errors, or what appeared to the masoretes to be errors, are corrected…such as metathesis, substitution of letters, the omission or addition of letters, changes in the divisions of the words, the substitution of whole words, etc. For example, *רָאשָׁה* – *רָאשָׁה* ([1Sam 14:27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Samuel%2014%3A27&version=NRSV&v=1%3A27)), *יִשָּׁב – יִשָּׁב* ([1Sam 14:32](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Samuel%2014%3A32&version=NRSV&v=1%3A32)), *יָשָׁב – יָשָׁב* ([Jer 6:26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah%206%3A26&version=NRSV&v=6%3A26)); *הלָּכְת – הלכת* ([2Sam 21:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Samuel%2021%3A12&version=NRSV&v=2%3A12)); *תַּעֲר – תַעֲר* ([2Ki 20:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%2020%3A4&version=NRSV&v=2%3A4)).

4. **Mal an Tohor** (Plene and Defective): Changes in the writing occur because of *matres lectionis*. It is with regard to this group that variants in the different manuscripts are the most frequent.

5. **Qere Perpetuum**: These were handed down orally from generation to generation and are not noted by way of written symbol in the biblical text itself. These include the Tetragrammaton, the 3rd person fem. sg. pronoun, *הוא* (read as *היא*), *ירושלם* read as *יְרוּשָׁלַיִם*, etc.


After briefly noting the various viewpoints of scholars as to the origin of the *Qere/Ketiv* system, Yeivin remarks that no single position is able to give a satisfactory explanation for all examples. He notes that in rare instances of the *Qere/Ketiv*, the *Qere* is more difficult to understand than the reading of the *Ketiv*, but this hardly helps move us toward a comprehensive explanation for how and why the system was created and evolved. Here is his conclusion on the matter:

> All that is clear, however, is that the wording of the reading tradition is not, at these points, represented by the letters in the received text. Suggestions on the origin of the phenomenon are all speculative.26

He notes that the *Qere/Ketiv* system as a written notation by the Masoretes came after the invention and establishment of the vowel signs, meaning no earlier than the eighth century.27

His list of categories for the *Qere/Ketiv* notes is essentially the same as Dotan’s.

1. Euphemisms; 2. Unusual plene or defective writings; 3. “Correcting” archaic or dialectal forms; 4. Other Categories: (a) metathesis, (b) differences in word division, (c) omission of a letter, (d) addition of letters, and (e) replacement of a letter by another of similar form.

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25 Dotan’s article “Masorah” in the 2nd edition of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* (2007) is the same as that found in the 1st edition, but with the correction of some typographical errors in the earlier edition.

26 p. 61, §107.

27 p. 59, §104.
Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, 2nd revised Edition* (Fortress, 1992)

Tov lists four primary categories for the Qere/Ketiv which have been suggested by scholars.28

1. The Qere corrects the Ketiv, as indicated by the Masorah.
   He goes on to show a number factors which mitigate against this view:
   a. Exactly the same words—with identical meaning—sometimes form the Qere word in one verse, and the Ketiv word in another one. E.g., Gen 39:20 / Judg 16:21, 25.
   b. In addition to several instances of Ketiv presumably corrected by a Qere there are identical words which have not been corrected in other places. E.g., Gen 24:33 / 50:26.
   c. The Qere words include several forms that are less plausible than the Ketiv with regard to either context or grammar. E.g., Gen 8:17 (K = אָרָץ, Q = בָּרֵךְ); 2Sam 3:25 (K =Bow, Q = מְבֹאֶ).
   d. The consonants of the Qere word are almost always similar to those of the Ketiv word, and it is unlikely that the presumed correctional activity would have been limited to similar consonants.

2. The Qere word was written alongside the Ketiv as a variant.
   Tov notes several variants on this suggested category, one by Orlinsky (see p. 6 above), that the variants were culled from one or more manuscripts, and another from Sperber,29 who seeks to show from the “parallel historic narratives” of Samuel and Chronicles, that the Qere/Ketiv were noted variant readings between the two. Against this view, Tov notes that “one may claim that it is illogical that in each case there would have existed only one variant.”30

3. Intermediate Positions: Three views
   a. According to Gordis (see pp. 3–5 above), the Qere/Ketiv originated as marginal corrections and later were used to denote optional variants, which in due course became obligatory.
   b. Another intermediate view is that all the Qere words were initially optional variants which were subsequently taken as corrections on the basis of their location in the margins of the manuscripts.
   c. A third intermediate view is that the Qere words were collected as corrections from an obligatory text such as an exemplary manuscript. Such a source could also have contained inferior readings, so that not all the corrections of this type were necessarily consistent or logical.

4. The Qere tradition did not originate in written sources but rather in the reading tradition of the synagogue.
   This view is based primarily on the fact that one never finds more than one Qere word in the manuscripts, and this points to a reading tradition, which is naturally limited to one word.

Tov gives this conclusion:

Most scholars now adhere to the first intermediate view described in paragraph γ [#3a above]. If that view is correct, most of the Ketib-Qere interchanges should be understood as an ancient collection of variants. Indeed, for many categories of Ketib-Qere interchanges similar differences are known between ancient witnesses.31

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28 pp. 60–63.
31 Ibid., p. 63.
Summary: The Origin and Purpose of the Qere/Ketiv

It would seem that the origin of the Qere/Ketiv system was developed during the Masoretic era primarily to (1) aid scribes in the accurate transmission of the text and (2) to establish the accepted reading of the text in the synagogue setting, a reading tradition that incorporated widely accepted halalachah which substituted euphemistic terms for what might be considered vulgar or degrading words when read in the context of men and women, adults and children. Such substitutions included circumlocutions for the Tetragrammaton.

In addition to these two categories which were deemed necessary for the establishment of a unified biblical text as employed in the synagogue, it also seems that (3) some of the Qere/Ketiv arose out of variants known to exist in manuscripts which were held in high regard, perhaps because of their physical location (such as having been housed in the Jerusalem Temple) or because of their association with a revered teacher or leader.

In the end, we cannot know for sure what factors played a major role in the development of the Qere/Ketiv system, but we do know the system was well established in the Masoretic era, and that the primary manuscripts and codices upon which we now depend in regard to the established text of the Tanach contain the Qere/Ketiv, and that therefore, we ought to pay attention to it as we engage in exegesis and teaching of the biblical text.

Some Rabbinic References to the Qere/Ketiv

The following are a sampling of rabbinic references to the Qere/Ketiv.

And both [two authorities who differed], said R. Johanan, based their expositions on the same Scriptural text [2Ki 20:4], for it is said: “And it came to pass, before Isaiah was gone out of the inner court [חצר = Q]” since it was written ‘the city’ [עיר = K] and we read ‘court’ it may be inferred that royal rear-courts were as big as moderately sized cities. (b.Eruvin 26a)

Here we see both Q and K are valued as assisting in understanding divergent halachic opinions among recognized authorities.

But was the fire present at the second Temple? Surely R. Samuel b. Inia said: What is the meaning of the scriptural verse [Hag 1:8] – “And I will take pleasure in it [ארץ] and I will be glorified [אכבדה]?” The traditional reading is [אכבדה] = Q, then why is the ה omitted in the text? To indicate that in five things the first Sanctuary differed from the second: in the ark, the ark-cover, the Cherubim, the fire, the Shechinah, the Holy Spirit [of Prophecy], and the Urim-ve-Thummim [the Oracle Plate]? — I will tell you, They were present, but they were not as helpful [as before]. (b.Yoma 21b)

In this case, the Ketiv is used to develop a midrashic argument to explain why the “fire” on the altar was (supposedly) different in Solomon’s temple than in the second Temple.

Another example is taken from Midrash Rabbah Bereishit:

Bring forth (خروج = K) with you every living thing that is with you…that they may swarm in the earth (Gen 8:17). R. Judan said: выход is written, but it is read יצא [= Q]; “that they may swarm in the earth” – but not in the Ark; “and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth” – but not in the Ark. (Mid. Rab. Bereishit §34.8)

There seems to be no basis in the Qere/Ketiv for the midrashic statement except perhaps that the rabbinic midrash is an attempt to give some meaning to the anomalous form выход. Rashi, apparently feeling the need to give both Qere and Ketiv their equal due, developed his own midrashic explanation for Gen 8:17.

הוצא is the Ketiv but יצא is the Qere._EXIT denotes “say unto them that they are to go out.” (Rashi on בראשית ח'יז)
Utilizing the Masoretic notes, and particularly the Qere/Ketiv, Qere veLo Ketiv, Ketiv veLo Qere, and Malei veChaseir, became standard practice for midrashic teaching among some of the medieval rabbis, exemplified perhaps in the work of R. Yaakov ben Asher, known as the Baal HaTurim (c. 1269–c. 1327). It is perhaps no surprise that the Qere/Ketiv would be used by the Kabbalists to expound “hidden meanings” and explanations of the text which otherwise could never have been imagined.

The Qere/Ketiv לֹא/לוֹ as an Investigative Sample for Modern English Translations of the Bible

The procedure for this investigation is (1) to list the occurrences in the Tanach, as represented by the Leningrad and Aleppo codices, of לֹא as the Ketiv and לֹ is the Qere, (2) to note the readings of other sources (Qumran, Lxx, Samaritan Pentateuch, Vulgate, Syriac OT) as to which reading is favored, and (3) to list the translations of this small sampling of texts from ten English Bibles (see p. 1) in order to see how they each deal with Qere/Ketiv.
Exodus 21:8

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<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>Qumran</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>אם רעה יה אבינה</td>
<td>אִם־רָעָ֞ה בְּעֵינֵ֧י אֲדֹנֶ֛יהָ</td>
<td>עָדָ֖הּ</td>
<td>ἐὰν μὴ εὐαρεστήσῃ τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτής ἣν αὐτῷ καθωμολογήσατο, ἀπολυτρώσει αὐτήν· ἐθέτεν ἐν αὐτῇ.</td>
<td>לֹא־יִמְשֹׁל לְמָכְרָ֖הּ בְּבִגְדוֹ־בָֽהּ׃</td>
<td>si displicuerit oculis domini sui cui tradita fuerit dimittet eam populo autem alieno vendendi non habet potestatem si spreverit eam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>אֲשֶׁר־לֹא וְהֶפְדָּהּ לְעַ֥ם נָכְרִ֛י</td>
<td>וְהֶפְדָּ֑הּ לְעַ֥ם נָכְרִ֛י</td>
<td>לֹא מְשַׁל</td>
<td>λα ἔθετεν ἐν αὐτῇ.</td>
<td>פָּרָ֖ה אֶנֶֽמֶךְ לַעֲנֵיהֶ֖ם.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לא יִמְשֹׁל לְמָכְרָ֖הּ בְּבִגְדוֹ־בָֽהּ׃</td>
<td>לא יִמְשֹׁל לְמָכְרָ֖הּ בְּבִגְדוֹ־בָֽהּ׃</td>
<td>לא יִמְשֹׁל</td>
<td>לֹא־יִמְשֹׁל לְמָכְרָ֖הּ בְּבִגְדוֹ־בָֽהּ׃</td>
<td>לֹא־יִמְשֹׁל לְמָכְרָ֖הּ בְּבִגְדוֹ־בָֽהּ׃</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master, who did not designate her to himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. To a foreign people he will not have authority to sell her because of his treachery against her. If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master, who did not embrace her, he shall let her be redeemed. To a foreign people he has no power to sell her because of his treachery against her.

If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master, after she has been betrothed to him, he shall let her be redeemed; but he may not sell her to a foreign nation, because he has acted unfaithfully with her.

If she is not pleasing to her master, after she has been betrothed to him, he shall let her be redeemed; but he may not sell her to a foreign nation, because he has acted unfaithfully with her.

If she is hated in the eyes of her master so that he does not take her to himself, he shall let her be redeemed. He will have no right to sell her to a foreign people, because he has dealt deceitfully with her.

If she is hated in the eyes of her master so that he does not embrace her, he shall let her be redeemed. He does not have authority to sell her to a foreign people because of his unfairness to her. [*Another reading is so that he did not designate her]

If she does not please her master, who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt unfairly with her.

If she does not please her master, who has designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign nation, because he has broken faith with her.

If she does not please the master who has selected her for himself, he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to foreigners, because he has treated her unfairly, and therefore he has no right to sell her to foreigners.

If she does not please the master who has selected her for himself, he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to a foreign nation, because he has dealt deceitfully with her.

If she is displeasing to her master who chose her for himself, then he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to foreigners because he has acted treacherously toward her.

If she proves unpleasing to her master who had designated her for himself, he must let her be redeemed; he has treated her unfairly, and therefore he has no right to sell her to foreigners.

If she proves unpleasing to her master who has designated her* for himself, he must let her be redeemed; he has treated her unfairly, and therefore he has no right to sell her to foreigners because he has acted deceitfully toward her.

Both the SP and the Syriac retain the *Ketiv*. The Lxx and Vulgate translate the *Qere*. The text is not found in Qumran.

NASB – If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master *who designated her for himself*, then he shall let her be redeemed. He does not have authority to sell her to a foreign people because of his unfairness to her. [*Another reading is so that he did not designate her] Q

NRSV – If she does not please her master, *who designated her for himself*, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt unfairly with her. Q

REB – If she proves unpleasing to her master who had designated her for himself, he must let her be redeemed; he has treated her unfairly, and therefore he has no right to sell her to foreigners. Q

NIV – If she does not please the master who has selected her for himself, he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to foreigners, because he has broken faith with her. Q

ESV – If she does not please her master, who has designated her* for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has broken faith with her. [*Or so that he has not designated her] Q

NET – If she does not please her master, who has designated her for himself, then he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to a foreign nation, because he has dealt deceitfully with her. Q

HCSB – If she is displeasing to her master, *who chose her for himself*, then he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to foreigners because he has acted treacherously toward her. Q

TNKS – If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master, who should have designated her for himself, he shall assist in her redemption; he shall not have the power to see her to a strange man, for he had betrayed her. Q

JPS – If she proves to be displeasing to her master, who designated her for himself, he must let her be redeemed; he shall not have the right to sell her to outsiders, since he broke faith with her. Q

TLV – If she does not please her master *who has selected her for himself*, then he is to allow her to be redeemed. He will have no power to sell her to a foreign people, seeing as he has dealt deceitfully toward her. Q
<table>
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<tr>
<td>אַךְ אתָּהּ תֹּאכְוּ מִכֹּל שָׁרֵץ שָׁרֵץ הַהֹלֵךְ</td>
<td>ἀλλὰ ταῦτα φάγεσθε ἀπὸ τῶν ἑρπετῶν τῶν πετεινῶν. ἀπὸ τῶν ἑρπετῶν τῶν πετεινῶν, ἃ πορεύεται ἐπὶ τέσσαρα. ἃ ἔχει σκέλη ἀνώτερον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ πηδᾶν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τὴς γῆς.</td>
<td>Doctrine of Adder with idols. And whatsoever walks upon four feet, but has the legs behind longer, with which it hops upon the earth, you may eat.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Yet these you may eat among all the winged swarming things which walk on all fours: those which do not have [do have] above their feet jointed legs with which to jump on the earth.  

All versions read the Qere, and the following verse (11:22) lists those “swarming things” (中东) described anatomically in v. 21. Not found in Qumran.
Leviticus 25:30

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ואִם לֹא־יִגָּאֵל</td>
<td>ודֹּא־מַלֶּא</td>
<td>תְּמִימָה</td>
<td>ἐὰν δὲ μὴ λυτρωθῆ, ἔως ἂν πληρωθῇ αὐτῆς ἐνιαυτὸς δὸς, κυρωθῆσεται</td>
<td>ܐܢ ܠܐ ܡܬܦܪܩ ܥܕܡܐ ܕܫܠܡܐ</td>
<td>si non redemerit et anni circulus fuerit evolutus emptor possidebit eam et posteri eius in perpetuum et redimi non poterit etiam in iobele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>שׁעַד־מְלֹאת לוֹ</td>
<td>שׁעַד־מְלֹאת לוֹ</td>
<td>שׁעַד־מְלֹאת לוֹ</td>
<td>πληρωθῇ αὐτῆς ἐνιαυτὸς δὸς, κυρωθῆσεται</td>
<td>ܕܒܩܪܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܫܘܪܐ ܒܫܪܪܐ ܠܡܢ ܕܙܒܢܗ.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>יתַיֵּבְרָא</td>
<td>יתַיֵּבְרָא</td>
<td>יתַיֵּבְרָא</td>
<td>ὅλος, κυρωθῆσεται ἡ οἰκία ἡ οὖσα ἐν πόλει τῇ ἐχούσῃ τεῖχος</td>
<td>ܢܗܘܐ ܠܕܪ̈ܘܗܝ.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בּוֹ</td>
<td>בּוֹ</td>
<td>בּוֹ</td>
<td>τῷ κτησαμένῳ αὐτὴν εἰς τὰς γενεὰς αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ</td>
<td>ܘܠܐ ܢܦܘܩ ܡܢܗ ܒܦܘܢܝܐ.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לַקֹּנֶה אֹתוֹ לְדֹרֹתָיו</td>
<td>לַקֹּנֶה אֹתוֹ לְדֹרֹתָיו</td>
<td>לַקֹּנֶה אֹתוֹ לְדֹרֹתָיו</td>
<td>οὐκ ἐξελεύσεται ἐν τῇ ἀφέσει.</td>
<td>ܘܢܗܘܐ ܠܕܪ̈ܘܗܝ.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לֹא יֵצֵא</td>
<td>לֹא יֵצֵא</td>
<td>לֹא יֵצֵא</td>
<td>ιουβελ:</td>
<td>ܘܠܐ ܢܦܘܩ ܡܢ회사</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All versions, except for the Vulgate, follow the Qere. The Vulgate leaves out the phrase regarding the “walled city,” giving no evidence of the Qere/Ketiv.

**NASB** – But if it is not bought back for him within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the [walled] un-walled city passes permanently to its purchaser throughout his generations; it does not revert in the jubilee. Q

**NRSV** – If it is not redeemed before a full year has elapsed, a house that is in a walled city shall pass in perpetuity to the purchaser, throughout the generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee. Q

**REB** – If it is not redeemed before a full year is out, the house in the walled town will belong for ever to the buyer and his descendants; it does not revert to its former owner at the jubilee. Q

**NIV** – If it is not redeemed before a full year has passed, the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to the buyer and his descendants. It is not to be returned in the Jubilee. Q

**ESV** – If it is not redeemed within a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong in perpetuity to the buyer, throughout his generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee. Q

**NET** – If it is not redeemed within a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong in perpetuity to the buyer, throughout his generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee. Q

**HCSB** – If it is not redeemed by the end of a full year, then the house in the walled city is permanently transferred to its purchaser throughout his generations. It is not to be released on the Jubilee. Q

**TNKS** – But if it is not redeemed until its full year has elapsed, then the home that is in a city that has a wall shall pass in perpetuity to the one who purchased it, for his generations; it shall not go out in the Jubilee Year. Q

**JPS** – If it is not redeemed before a full year has elapsed, the house in the walled city shall pass to the purchaser beyond reclaim throughout the ages; it shall not be released in the jubilee. Q

**TLV** – But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city will belong permanently to the one who bought it throughout his generations. It will not be released in the Jubilee. Q
1 Samuel 2:3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>אל תרבו תדברי בגדה ְרוּ גְּבֹהָה</td>
<td>μὴ καυχᾶσθε καὶ μὴ λαλεῖτε ύψηλα, μὴ ἐξελθάτω μεγαλορρημοσύνη ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν, ὅτι θεὸς γνώσεων κύριος καὶ θεὸς ἑτοιμάζων ἐπιτηδεύματα αὐτοῦ.</td>
<td>Do not boast and do not speak proudly, do not go about speaking forth arrogance out of your mouth, because a God of knowledge is the Lord, and God prepares His purposes.</td>
<td>Do not boast and do not speak proudly, do not go about speaking forth arrogance out of your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed.</td>
<td>Do not multiply speaking of great things; and do not speak forth wrongful things from your mouth. Because the Lord is knowledgeable and no devices can stand before Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>אל תנסו תדברי בגדה</td>
<td>μὴ καυχᾶσθε καὶ μὴ λαλεῖτε ύψηλα, μὴ ἐξελθάτω μεγαλορρημοσύνη ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν, ὅτι θεὸς γνώσεων κύριος καὶ θεὸς ἑτοιμάζων ἐπιτηδεύματα αὐτοῦ.</td>
<td>Do not boast and do not speak proudly, do not go about speaking forth arrogance out of your mouth, because a God of knowledge is the Lord, and God prepares His purposes.</td>
<td>Do not multiply speaking of great things; and do not speak forth wrongful things from your mouth. Because the Lord is knowledgeable and no devices can stand before Him.</td>
<td>Do not multiply to speak lofty things, boasting: let old matters depart from your mouth: for the Lord is a God of all knowledge, and to him are thoughts prepared.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Lxx may have read the verb as from וכּ rather than from כּ and either followed the sense of the Qere or followed a text which had neither the Qere or the Ketiv. The Syriac follows the Ketiv. The Vulgate follows the Qere. The text involving the Q/K is missing in the DSS.

**NASB** – Boast no more so very proudly, Do not let arrogance come out of your mouth; For the LORD is a God of knowledge, and with Him actions are weighed. 

**NRSV** – Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come out of your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. 

**REB** – Cease your pr oud boasting, let no word of arrogance pass your lips, for the Lord is a God who knows; he governs what mortals do. 

**NIV** – Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed. 

**ESV** – Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come out of your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. 

**NET** – Don’t keep speaking so arrogantly, letting proud talk come out of your mouth! For the LORD is a God who knows; he evaluates what people do. [* The MT (Qere) reads “and by him actions are weighed.” The translation assumes that reading of the Qere הַי (vēlo, “and by him”), which is supported by many medieval Hebrew MSS, is correct, rather than the reading of the Kethib אַי (vēlo, “and not”). ] 

**HCSB** – Do not boast so proudly, or let arrogant words come out of your mouth, for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed. 

**TNKS** – Do not abound in speaking with arrogance upon arrogance, let not haughtiness come from your mouth; for HaShem is the God of thoughts, and [men’s] deeds are accounted by Him. 

**JPS** – Talk no more with lofty pride, Let no arrogance cross your lips! For the LORD is an all-knowing God; By Him actions are measured. 

**TLV** – Boast no more so proudly— insolence comes out of your mouth. For Adonai is the all-knowing God, and by Him deeds are weighed.
2Samuel 16:18

<table>
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<tr>
<td>יָלֹם אֶל־אַבְשֹׁלֹם לאֱכַר אָשֵׁר בָּהֹוה וְהָעָם הַזֶּה וְכָל־אִי אֶהְיֶה</td>
<td>καὶ εἶπεν Χουσι πρὸς Αβεσσαλώμ Οὐχὶ ἀλλὰ κατόπισθεν οὗ ἐξελέξατο κύριος καὶ ὁ λαὸς οὗτος καὶ πᾶς ἀνὴρ Ἰσραηλ, αὐτῷ ἔσομαι καὶ μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ καθήσομαι</td>
<td>responditque Husai ad Absalom nequaquam quia illius ero quem elegit Dominus et omnis hic populus et universus Israel et cum eo manebo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then Hushai said to Absalom, “No! For whom the LORD, this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, [his I will be] will I not be, and with him I will remain[].”

All versions follow the Qere. The text which includes the Q/K is missing in the DSS.

NASB – Then Hushai said to Absalom, “No! For whom the LORD, this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. Q

NRSV – Then Hushai said to Absalom, “No! For whom the LORD, this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. Q

REB – Hushai answered, ‘Because I mean to attach myself to the man chosen by the Lord and by this people and by all the men of Israel, and with him I shall stay. Q

NIV – Hushai said to Absalom, “No, the one chosen by the LORD, by these people, and by all the men of Israel—his I will be, and I will remain with him. Q

ESV – And Hushai said to Absalom, “No, for whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. Q

NET – Hushai replied to Absalom, “No, I will be loyal to the one whom the LORD, these people, and all the men of Israel have chosen. Q

HCSB – Not at all,” Hushai answered Absalom. “I am on the side of the one that the LORD, the people, and all the men of Israel have chosen. I will stay with him. Q

TNKS – Hushai said to Absalom, “No! Rather, he whom HaShem—as well as this people and every man of Israel—has chosen, his shall I be and with him I shall stay!” Q

JPS – “Not at all!” Hushai replied. “I am for the one whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, and I will stay with him. Q

TLV – “No!” said Hushai to Absalom. “For the one whom Adonai has chosen—as well as these people, all the men of Israel—his I will be and with him I will stay. Q
Then Elisha said to him, “Go, say [to him], ‘You will surely not live,’ [You will surely live] for [but] the LORD has shown me that he will certainly die.”

All versions follow the Qere. The text is not found at Qumran.

The impetus for the Ketiv may have been to spare Elisha from ordering Hazael to deliver a false prophecy.

However, the Ketiv is possible if the following vav conjunction is taken as pleonastic.

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<tr>
<td>רָאָם אֵלִיוֹ אָלִישָׁע תִּקְרֵּי וֹ לְגָדָה (לָּ) תְלוֹא תַּתָּה</td>
<td>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִיוֹ אֱלִי חָיֹה תִּחְיֶה</td>
<td>καὶ εἶπεν Ελισαιε Δεύρο εἶπόν αὐτῷ Ζωή ζῆσῃ καὶ ἔδειξέν μοι κύριος ὅτι θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ.</td>
<td>dixitque ei Heliseus vade dic ei sanaberis porro ostendit mihi Dominus quia morte morietur</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>And Elisha said, “Go, say, you will certainly live; yet the Lord has shown me that you will surely die.”</td>
<td>And Elisha said, “Go, say to him, ‘You will surely die,’ but the Lord has shown me that you will surely die.”</td>
<td>Elisha said to him, “Go, say ‘You will be healed,’ but God has shown to me that he will surely die.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NASB – Then Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him, ‘You will surely recover,’ but the LORD has shown me that he will certainly die.”

NRSV – Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him, ‘You shall certainly recover’; but the LORD has shown me that he shall certainly die.”

REB – ‘Go and tell him that he will recover,’ he answered; ‘but the Lord has revealed to me that in fact he will die.’

NIV – Elisha answered, “Go and say to him, ‘You will certainly recover’; but the LORD has revealed to me that he will in fact die.”

ESV – Elisha answered, “Go and say to him, ‘You will certainly recover’; but the LORD has revealed to me that he will in fact die.”

NET – Elisha said to him, “Go and tell him, ‘You will surely recover,’ but the LORD has revealed to me that he will surely die.”

HCSB – Elisha told him, “Go say to him, ‘You are sure to recover.’ But the LORD has shown me that he is sure to die.”

TNKS – Elisha said to him, “Go say to him, ‘You should indeed recover’; but in fact HaShem has shown me that he will indeed die [from another cause.] [Note: “Elisha meant that under normal circumstances Ben-hadad would recover from this illness. However, he will die of other causes before he recovers.”]

JPS – Elisha said to him, “Go and say to him, ‘You will recover.’ However, the LORD has revealed to me that he will die.”

TLV – Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him: ‘You will surely recover.’ However, Adonai has also shown me that he will surely die.”
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<tr>
<td>וֹּֽלַּ֑֔יתָ הַגּוֹי לֹא הִרְּלַ֖ת הַגּוֹיּ לֹא הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הַגּוֹיּ לֹא הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הַגּוֹיּ לֹא הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הַגּוֹיּ</td>
<td>תֹּֽלָּֽכְּתִּ֣֔לְת הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣ הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣ הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣</td>
<td>اصْطَدَمَّا حَمَّمَ مَعَ أَنْحَىٰ َسَهَٰلَ. ْسِيَّةَ مُهَسَٰمَ أَمْ ْسْبَمْ بِمَسْحَرَا. ُدِيَّ مَه مَبُسْكَرَا. ُدِيَّ مَه مَبُسْكَرَا.</td>
<td>multiplicasti gentem non magnificasti laetitiam laetabuntur coram te sicut laetantur in messe sicut exultant quando dividunt spolia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>נִלְּדוּֽהּ בּֽקָּצִ֣יר לְפָּנֶ֑יךָ כְּשִׂמְחַת בּֽרְאֹֽהְלִיתֶֽךְ ָֽכָּאֵֽרָה בּֽרְאֹֽהְלִיתֶֽךְ ָֽכָּאֵֽרָה בּֽרְאֹֽהְלִיתֶֽךְ ָֽכָּאֵֽרָה</td>
<td>תֹּֽלָּֽכְּתִּ֣֔לְת הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣ הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣ הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣</td>
<td>اصْطَدَمَّا حَمَّمَ مَعَ أَنْحَىٰ َسَهَٰلَ. ْسِيَّةَ مُهَسَٰمَ أَمْ ْسْبَمْ بِمَسْحَرَا. ُدِيَّ مَه مَبُسْكَرَا. ُدِيَّ مَه مَبُسْكَرَا.</td>
<td>multiplicasti gentem non magnificasti laetitiam laetabuntur coram te sicut laetantur in messe sicut exultant quando dividunt spolia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>נַעֲלֵֽהּ יְגַֽלְּוּ שֶׁחַлְּקָֽם בּֽרְאֹֽהְלִיתֶֽךְ ָֽכָּאֵֽרָה בּֽרְאֹֽהְלִיתֶֽךְ ָֽכָּאֵֽרָה בּֽרְאֹֽהְלִיתֶֽךְ ָֽכָּאֵֽרָה</td>
<td>תֹּֽלָּֽכְּתִּ֣֔לְת הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣ הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣ הָגֹּֽלִַתָּ הָֽשָּׂמְחָ֣ה שָׂמְחוּ֣</td>
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<td>multiplicasti gentem non magnificasti laetitiam laetabuntur coram te sicut laetantur in messe sicut exultant quando dividunt spolia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You multiplied the nation, You have not increase gladness; [You have increase their gladness] They will be glad in Your presence as with the gladness of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Qumran 1QIs4 and the Vulgate translate the Ketiv while the Lxx and Syriac translate the Qere.

**NASB** – You shall multiply the nation, You shall increase their gladness; They will be glad in Your presence as with the gladness of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. Q

**NRSV** – You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. Q

**REB** – You have increased their joy and given them great gladness; they rejoice in your presence as those who rejoice at harvest, as warriors exult when dividing spoil. Q

**NIV** – You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. Q

**ESV** – You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. Q

**NET** – You have enlarged the nation; you give them great joy. They rejoice in your presence as harvesters rejoice; as warriors celebrate when they divide up the plunder. Q

**HCSB** – You have enlarged the nation and increased its joy. The people have rejoiced before You as they rejoice at harvest time and as they rejoice when dividing spoils. Q

**TNKS** – You exalted the nation; You increased its joy. They rejoiced before You like the joy of harvest time, as the would exult when they divide spoils. Q

**JPS** – You have magnified that nation, have given it great joy; They have rejoiced before You as they rejoice at reaping time, as they exult when dividing spoil. Q

**TLV** – You will multiply the nation. You will increase the joy. They will rejoice before You like the joy in the harvest, as they revel when they divide spoil. Q
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Vulgate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>וְעַתָּה אָמַר יְהוָה יֹצְרִי בּוֹבֵב שֶׁטֶן לְעֶבֶד לוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב אֵלָיו וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא עֵינֵי בּי יֵאָסֵף וְאֶכָּבֵד לְיהוָה וֵאלֹהַי הָיָה עֻזִּי׃</td>
<td>καὶ νῦν οὕτως λέγει κύριος ὁ πλάσας με ἐκ κοιλίας δοῦλον ἐαυτῷ τοῦ συναγαγεῖν τὸν Ἰακώβ καὶ Ἰσραηλ πρὸς αὐτὸν συναχθῆσαι καὶ δοξάσθησαι ἑναντίον κυρίου, καὶ ὁ θεός μου ἔσται μου ἰσχύς.</td>
<td>et nunc dicit Dominus formans me ex utero servum sibi ut reducam Iacob ad eum et Israhel non congregate et glorificatus sum in oculis Domini et Deus meus factus est fortitudo mea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>וְוָסַלְתִּי בְּפָנָיו וְאָכְלוּ בָּרוּךְ לְעַתָּה אָמַר יְהוָה לְפֶסְדֹּיהוּ שֶׁאֵלָהוֹ לְעֹלָם הָיוּשָּׁבָע</td>
<td>Now, thus says the LORD, who formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to him; I am glorified before the Lord, and my God has become my strength.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Qumran** IQIs, the Lxx and Syriac all translate the Qere. Only the Vulgate translates the Ketiv.

- **NASB** — And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the LORD, And My God is My strength), Q
- **NRSV** — And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and my God has become my strength— Q
- **REB** — The Lord had formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him that Israel should be gathered to him, so that I might rise to honour in the Lord's sight and my God might be my strength. Q
- **NIV** — And now the LORD says—he who formed me in the womb to be his servant—to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD and my God has been my strength— Q
- **ESV** — And now the LORD says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him—for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength— Q
- **NET** — So now the LORD says, the one who formed me from birth to be his servant— he did this to restore Jacob to himself, so that Israel might be gathered to him; and I will be honored in the LORD's sight, for my God is my source of strength— Q
- **HCSB** — And now, says the LORD, who formed me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him so that Israel might be gathered to Him; for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and my God is my strength— Q
- **TNKS** — And now Hashem, Who formed me from the belly to be a servant to Him, said [I should] return Jacob to Him, so that Israel would be gathered to Him; so I was honored in God’s eyes and my God was my strength. Q
- **JPS** — And now the LORD has resolved — He who formed me in the womb to be His servant — to bring back Jacob to Himself, that Israel may be restored to Him. And I have been honored in the sight of the LORD, My God has been my strength. Q
- **TLV** — So now says Adonai, who formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, to gather Israel back to Him. For I am honored in the eyes of Adonai and My God has become my strength. Q
**Isaiah 63:9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Qumran</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>בְּכִלּוּ לָאו רָע</td>
<td>בְּכִלּוּ לָאו רָע</td>
<td>εκ πάσης θλίψεως, οὐ πρέσβυ</td>
<td>ḫmwx ʾmrš</td>
<td>in omni tribulatione eor-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>וּמַלְאַךְ פָּנָיו הוֹ</td>
<td>מַלְאַךְ פָּנָיו הוֹ</td>
<td>οὐδὲ ἄγγελος, ἀλλ᾿ αὐτὸς</td>
<td>ṭmš</td>
<td>rum non est tribulatus et</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>הוֹיָם וַיְנַטְּלֵם וַיְנַשְּׂאֵם</td>
<td>הוֹיָם וַיְנַטְּלֵם וַיְנַשְּׂאֵם</td>
<td>ισωσεν αὐτοὺς διὰ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν</td>
<td>ṭmš</td>
<td>angelus faciei eius sal-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>כָּל־יְמֵי עוֹלָם</td>
<td>כָּל־יְמֵי עוֹלָם</td>
<td>αὐτοὺς καὶ φείδεσθαι αὐτῶν· αὐτὸς</td>
<td>ṭmš</td>
<td>vavit eos in dilectione sua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>הוא</td>
<td>הוא</td>
<td>ἐλυτρώσατο αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀνέλαβεν</td>
<td>ṭmš</td>
<td>et in indulgentia sua ipse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>כָּל־יְמֵי עוֹלָם׃</td>
<td>כָּל־יְמֵי עוֹלָם׃</td>
<td>αὐτοὺς καὶ ὕψωσεν αὐτοὺς πάσας</td>
<td>ṭmš</td>
<td>reedemit eos et portavit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>יְמֵי עוֹלָם׃</td>
<td>יְמֵי עוֹלָם׃</td>
<td>τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ αἰῶνος.</td>
<td>ṭmš</td>
<td>eos cunctis diebus saeculi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qumran, as well as all of the versions, translate the Ketiv. As to the Lxx: while it includes the negative (οὐ) corresponding to the Ketiv, its translation of the line containing the Qere/Ketiv is clearly not what is found in the Hebrew text.

**NASB** – In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the angel of His presence saved them; In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, And He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. Q

**NRSV** – 8 and he became their savior in all their distress. 9 It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. K (?)

**REB** – 8 and he became their deliverer 9 in all their troubles. No envoy, no angel, but he himself delivered them, redeemed them in his love and pity; he lifted them up and carried them through all the days of old. K (?)

**NIV** – In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. Q

**ESV** – In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

**NET** – Through all that they suffered, he suffered too. The messenger sent from his very presence delivered them. In his love and mercy he protected them; he lifted them up and carried them throughout ancient times.

**HCSB** – In all their suffering, He suffered, and the Angel of His Presence saved them. He redeemed them because of His love and compassion; He lifted them up and bore all the days of the world.

**TNKS** – In all their troubles He was troubled, so an angel from before Him saved them. With His love and with His compassion He redeemed them; He lifted them up and bore all the days of the world.

**JPS** – In all their troubles He was troubled, and the angel of His Presence delivered them. In His love and pity He Himself redeemed them, raised them, and exalted them all the days of old.

**TLV** – In all their affliction He was afflicted. So the angel of His presence saved them. In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, then He lifted them and carried them all the days of old.
**Psalm 100:3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Qumran</th>
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<th>Syriac</th>
<th>Vulgate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>יִתְנַהֲﬠֵרָיוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים</td>
<td>γνώτε ὅτι κύριος, αὐτὸς ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς, αὐτὸς ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς καὶ οὐχ ἡμεῖς, λαὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ πρόβατα τῆς νομής αὐτοῦ.</td>
<td>ἀναγνώστε καί ποιήσατε τοὺς υἱοὺς τὸν ἐμὸν κρύπταις;</td>
<td>scitote quoniam Dominus ipse est Deus ipse fecit nos et ipsius sumus populus eius et grex pastuae eius</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know that the LORD, He is God. He made us and not we ourselves [and we are His]. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.</td>
<td>Know that the Lord, He is God. He made us and not we ourselves—we are His people and the flock of His pasture.</td>
<td>Know that He is the Lord our God. He made us and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.</td>
<td>Know that the Lord he is God: he made us, and not we ourselves. We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the versions (Lxx, Syriac, Vulgate) follow the *Ketiv*. Psalm 100:3 is not found in the DSS.

**NASB** – Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

**NRSV** – Know that the LORD is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

**REB** – Acknowledge that the Lord is God; he made us and we are his, his own people, the flock which he shepherds.

**NIV** – Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**ESV** – Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his, his own people, the flock which he shepherds.

**NET** – Acknowledge that the LORD is God! He made us and we belong to him; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**HCSB** – Acknowledge that Yahweh is God. He made us, and we are His — His people, the sheep of His pasture.

**TNKS** – Know that HaShem, He is God; He made us and we are His, His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

**JPS** – Acknowledge that the LORD is God; He made us and we are His, His people, the flock He tends.

**TLV** – Know that Adonai, He is God. It is He who has made us, and we are His. We are His people, the sheep of His pasture.
Psalm 139:16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ךָגָּלְמִי רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וְעַל־סִפְרְךָ כֻּלָּם יִכָּתֵבוּ יָמִים יֻצָּרוּ וְלֹא</td>
<td>τὸ ἀκατέργαστόν μου εἴδοσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ σου, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ βιβλίον σου πάντες γραφήσονται· ἡμέρας πλασθήσονται, και οὐθεὶς ἐν αὐτοῖς.</td>
<td>Your eyes saw my unfinished parts and upon Your scroll every-thing was written, days to be formed and nothing in them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your eyes saw my unformed substance and upon Your book all were written, the days to be formed and not one of them was yet. [and to Him it is one among them] [?] Qumran (11Q5) has ℨ, though this might represent ʼא. Lxx, Syriac, and Vulgate all translate the Ketiv.

NASB – Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them. K
NRSV – Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. K
REB – Your eyes foresaw my deeds, and they were all recorded in your book; my life was fashioned before it had come into being. K
NIV – 8 When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, 9 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. K
ESV – Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. K
NET – Your eyes saw me when I was inside the womb. All the days ordained for me were recorded in your scroll before one of them came into existence. K
HCSB – Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in Your book and planned before a single one of them began. K
TNKS – Your eyes saw my unshaped form, and in Your book all were recorded; though they will be fashioned through many days, to Him they are one. Q
JPS – Your eyes saw my unformed limbs; they were all recorded in Your book; in due time they were formed, to the very last one of them. Q (?)
TLV – Your eyes saw me when I was unformed, and in Your book were written the days that were formed— when not one of them had come to be. K

1 Elisha Qimron, The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Scholars Press, 1986), p. 21, §100.51. For instances where ℨ = נ, cf. Deut 29:4 (4Q39 f4_5:3); Is 8:23 (1Q1sa 8:16); Hosea 2:1 (4Q79 f1_2:6); Hosea 2:4 (4Q79 f1–2:10).
### Job 6:21

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>로ֹאֲתָהּ יַחְיָהּ לֶא [לָא] תָּרָאוּ</td>
<td>ἀτὰρ δὲ καὶ ύμείς ἐπέβητέ μοι ἁνελεημόνως, ὡστε ἰδόντες τὸ ἐμὸν τραῦμα φοβήθητε.</td>
<td>ܘܐܦ ܐܢܬܘܢ ܗܘܝܬܘܢ ܥܠܝ ܛܥܢܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܥܕܠܐ ܚܙܝܬܘܢ ܙܘܥܐ ܕܚܠܬܘܢ.</td>
<td>nunc venistis et modo videntes plagam meam timetis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For now you have become nothing to me [to him/it]. You see terror and are afraid.</td>
<td>But you also have come to me without pity; so that seeing my wound you are afraid.</td>
<td>You also have become a burden upon me, because before you saw my shuddering, you feared.</td>
<td>Now you have come: and now, seeing my affliction, you are afraid.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both the Lxx and the Syriac could be translating the Ketiv. The Vulgate gives evidence of neither the Ketiv or Qere.

**NASB** – Indeed, you have now become such. You see a terror and are afraid. Q

**NRSV** – Such you have now become to me; you see my calamity, and are afraid. Q ? [ִ֫]  [א]  ק

**REB** – Just so unreliable have you now been to me: you felt dismay and took fright. Q ? [ש]  ק

**NIV** – Now you too have proved to be of no help; you see something dreadful and are afraid. K

**ESV** – For you have now become nothing; you see my calamity and are afraid. K

**NET** – For now you have become like these streams that are no help; you see a terror, and are afraid. K

**HCSB** – So this is what you have now become to me. When you see something dreadful, you are afraid. Q ? [ש]  ק

**TNKS** – And now, that is how you have been — you saw disaster and became frightened. Q ?

**JPS** – So you are as nothing: At the sight of misfortune, you take fright. K

**TLV** – Indeed, now you have become nothing; you see a terror and are afraid. K
### Job 13:15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>אֲיַחֵל לֹא לְךָ אֱלֹהִי</td>
<td>אֲיַחֵל לֹא לְךָ אֱלֹהִי</td>
<td>εάν με χειρώσηται ὁ δυνάστης, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἤρχται, ἢ μὴν λαλήσω καὶ ἐλέγξω ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ</td>
<td>אֲיַחֵל לֹא לְךָ אֱלֹהִי</td>
<td>ετιαὶ σι ὀκκίδηται ἐπὶ πόσῳ σκότησα αὐτῷ, ἢ καὶ μὴν λαλήσω καὶ ἐλέγξω εἰς προσώπον αὐτοῦ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>아ֲיַחֵל לֹא לְךָ אֱלֹהִי</td>
<td>아ֲיַחֵל לֹא לְךָ אֱלֹהִי</td>
<td>εάν με χειρώσηται ὁ δυνάστης, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἤρχται, ἢ μὴν λαλήσω καὶ ἐλέγξω ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ</td>
<td>아ֲיַחֵל לֹא לְךָ אֱלֹהִי</td>
<td>ετιαὶ σι ὀκκίδηται ἐπὶ πόσῳ σκότησα αὐτῷ, ἢ καὶ μὴν λαλήσω καὶ ἐλέγξω εἰς προσώπον αὐτοῦ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though He may slay me, I will not despair [to Him I will hope]. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him.

Even though the Almighty should overpower me, since He also has begun, most surely I will speak and plead my case before Him.

Even if He should slay me, I will wait for Him, because my ways are before Him.

Although he should kill me, I will trust in him: but yet I will reprove my ways in his sight.

---

It seems possible that the Lxx read ἢ rather than ἢ with inclusion of δυνάστης. Both the Syriac and Vulgate translate the Qere.

**NASB** – Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him. **Q**

**NRSV** – See, he will kill me; I have no hope; but I will defend my ways to his face. **K**

**REB** – If he wishes to slay me, I have nothing to lose; I shall still defend my conduct to his face. **K**

**NIV** – Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face. **Q**

**ESV** – Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face. **Q**

**NET** – Even if he slays me, I will hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face! **Q**

**HCSB** – Even if He kills me, I will hope in Him. I will still defend my ways before Him. **Q**

**TNKS** – Were He to kill me, I would still yearn for Him, but I will justify my ways before Him. **Q**

**JPS** – He may well slay me; I may have no hope; Yet I will argue my case before Him. **K**

**TLV** – Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him; But I will argue my ways before Him. **Q**
### Job 41:4 [English 41:12]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Qumran</th>
<th>Lxx</th>
<th>Syriac</th>
<th>Vulgate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>לאֵ-אלֵהוּ אֵחָרִי וּדְבַר-גְּבוּרוֹת וְחִין עֶרְכּוֹ׃</td>
<td>οὐ σιωπήσομαι δι᾿ αὐτόν, καὶ λόγον δυνάμεως ἐλεήσει τὸν ἴσον αὐτοῦ.</td>
<td>ܐܠܗܐ ܚܫܬܘܩ. ܒܚܘܣܢܗܓܝܕܐ ܕܓܢܒܪܘܬܗ.</td>
<td>non parcam ei et verbis potentibus et ad deprecandum compositis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will not keep silence [To him I will keep silence] concerning his limbs, or his mighty strength, or his orderly frame.

I will not keep silence about him, and in the matter of his power, one will pity his equal.

I will not keep silence about his fortification [power?] and the might of his sinews.

I will not spare him, nor his mighty words, even though framed to make supplication.

All of the versions appear to translate the *Ketiv*.

**NASB** – I will **not keep silence** concerning his limbs, Or his mighty strength, or his orderly frame. 

**NRSV** – I will **not keep silence** concerning its limbs, or its mighty strength, or its splendid frame. 

**REB** – I will **not keep silence** concerning its limbs, or its mighty strength, or its splendid frame. 

**NIV** – I will **not fail to speak** of his limbs, his strength and his graceful form. 

**ESV** – I will **not keep silence** concerning his limbs, or his mighty strength, or his goodly frame. 

**NET** – I will **not keep silent** about its limbs, and the extent of its might, and the grace of its arrangement. 

**HCSB** – I **cannot be silent** about his limbs, his power, and his graceful proportions. 

**TNKS** – I **would not suppress** his boastings, the story of his might, nor the stateliness of his standing! 

**JPS** – I will **not be silent** concerning him Or the praise of his martial exploits. 

**TLV** – I will **not keep silent** about his limbs, or his might or the grace of his arrangement. 

---

**Transliteration:**

- לאֵ-אלֵהוּ אֵחָרִי וּדְבַר-גְּבוּרוֹת וְחִין עֶרְכּוֹ׃
- οὐ σιωπήσομαι δι᾿ αὐτόν, καὶ λόγον δυνάμεως ἐλεήσει τὸν ἴσον αὐτοῦ.
- ܐܠܗܐ ܚܫܬܘܩ. ܒܚܘܣܢܗܓܝܕܐ ܕܓܢܒܪܘܬܗ.
- non parcam ei et verbis potentibus et ad deprecandum compositis

**Translation:**

- I will not keep silence [To him I will keep silence] concerning his limbs, or his mighty strength, or his orderly frame.
- I will not keep silence about him, and in the matter of his power, one will pity his equal.
- I will not keep silence about his fortification [power?] and the might of his sinews.
- I will not spare him, nor his mighty words, even though framed to make supplication.

---

**All of the versions appear to translate the *Ketiv***.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Qumran</th>
<th>Lxx</th>
<th>Syriac</th>
<th>Vulgate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>הַלְּאָחָיֶרֶשׁ שְׁנֵאָוָה אַף־כִּי</td>
<td>πᾶς, ὃς ἀδελφὸν πτωχὸν μισεῖ, καὶ φιλίας μακρὰν ἔσται, ἔννοια ἀγαθὴ τοῖς εἰδόσιν αὐτὴν ἐγγεί, ἀνὴρ δὲ φρόνιμος εὑρήσει αὐτὴν, ὅ πολλὰ κακοποιῶν τελεσιουργεῖ κακίαν ὃς δὲ ἑρεβίζει λόγους, οὐ σωθήσεται.</td>
<td>מְרֵעֵהוּ רָחֲקוּ מְרַהֶם׃</td>
<td>fratres hominis pauperis oderunt eum insuper et amici procul recesserunt ab eo qui tantum verba sectatur nihil habebit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the versions appear to translate the *Ketiv*.

**NASB** – All the brothers of a poor man hate him; How much more do his friends abandon him! He pursues them with words, but they are not. [which are his (?)].

**NRSV** – If the poor are hated even by their kin, how much more are they shunned by their friends! When they call after them, they are not there. 

**REB** – A pauper’s brothers all dislike him; how much more is he shunned by his friends! The man who picks his words keeps to the point. Q (?)

**NIV** – A poor man is shunned by all his relatives—how much more do his friends avoid him! ¶ Though he pursues them with pleading, they are nowhere to be found. K

**ESV** – All a poor man’s brothers hate him; how much more do his friends go far from him! He pursues them with words, but does not have them. K

**NET** – All the relatives of a poor person hate him; how much more do his friends avoid him—he pursues them with words, but they do not respond. K

**HCSB** – All the brothers of a poor man hate him; how much more do his friends keep their distance from him! He may pursue them with words, but they are not there. K

**TNKS** – All a pauper’s brothers hate him, surely his friends withdraw from him. Though he pursues [them] with words, [the words] remain his. Q

**JPS** – All the brothers of a poor man despise him; How much more is he shunned by his friends! He who pursues words — they are of no avail. K

**TLV** – All a poor man’s relatives despise him—how much more his friends avoid him. He pursues them with words, but they are not there. K
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
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<th>Lxx</th>
<th>Syriac</th>
<th>Vulgate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>כָּפָרָא לִגְדוּ בָּכוּרָה לְעֹשֵׁה בַּנֶּקֶף</td>
<td>ὀσπερ ὄρνεα πέταται καὶ στρουθόν, οὕτως ἀρὰ ματαία οὐχ ἐπελεύσεται οὐδενί.</td>
<td>ܐܝܟ ܨܦܪܐ ܘܚܝܘܬ ܟܢܦܐ ܕܦܪ̈ܚܢ ܒܐܐܪ. ܗܟܢܐ ܠܘܛܬܐ ܣܪܝܩܬܐ ܦܗܝܐ.</td>
<td>sicut avis ad alia transvolans et passer quolibet vadens sic male-dictum frustra prolatum in quem-piam superveniet</td>
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<tr>
<td>חָנָם לֹא</td>
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</table>

\[K\] - As a bird is to flitting, and a sparrow is to flying, so a curse is useless unless it arrives.

\[Q\] - [As a bird is to flitting, and a sparrow is to flying, so an unwarranted curse comes back to him who uttered it.]

The Lxx, Syriac, and Vulgate all translate the Ketiv.

**NASB** – Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, so a curse without cause does not alight. K

**NRSV** – Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, an undeserved curse goes nowhere. K

**REB** – Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, groundless abuse gets nowhere. K

**NIV** – Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest. K

**ESV** – Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, a curse that is causeless does not alight. K

**NET** – Like a fluttering bird or like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause does not come to rest. K

**HCSB** – Like a flitting sparrow or a fluttering swallow, an undeserved curse goes nowhere. K

**TNKS** – Like a bird that wanders off, like a swallow that flies off, so an unwarranted curse comes [back] to he [who utters it]. Q

**JPS** – As a sparrow must flit and a swallow fly, So a gratuitous curse must backfire. Q

**TLV** – Like a fluttering sparrow or a flying swallow, so an undeserved curse does not land. K
### Ezra 4:2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Qumran</th>
<th>Lxx</th>
<th>Syriac</th>
<th>Vulgate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>וַיִּהְיוּ אֶלְיוֹרְבָּל אָבֹתֶךְ לְהַבָּל</td>
<td>καὶ ἤγγισαν πρὸς Ζοροβαβελ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχοντας τῶν πατριῶν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτοῖς Οἴκοδομήσωμεν μεθ᾿ ὑμῶν, ὃτι ὡς ὑμεῖς ἐκζητοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ ὑμῶν, καὶ αὐτῷ ἡμεῖς θυσιάζομεν ἀπὸ ἡμερῶν Ασαραδδαν βασιλέως Ασσουρ τοῦ ἐνέγκαντος ἡμᾶς ὧδε.</td>
<td>καὶ ἤγγισαν πρὸς Ζοροβαβελ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχοντας τῶν πατριῶν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτοῖς Οἴκοδομήσωμεν μεθ᾿ ὑμῶν, ὃτι ὡς ὑμεῖς ἐκζητοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ ὑμῶν, καὶ αὐτῷ ἡμεῖς θυσιάζομεν ἀπὸ ἡμερῶν Ασαραδδαν βασιλέως Ασσουρ τοῦ ἐνέγκαντος ἡμᾶς ὧδε.</td>
<td>et accedentes ad Zorobabel et ad principes patrum dixerunt eis aedificemus vobiscum quia ita ut vos quaerimus Deum vestrum ecce nos immolamus victimas ex diebus Asoraddan regis Assur qui adduxit nos hoc</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

And they approached Zorubbabel and the heads of fathers’ households, and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have not been sacrificing [have been sacrificing to Him] since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

(4Q117 f1 does not contain the line in question) And they approached Zorobabel, and the heads of families, and said to them, “We will build with you; for as you do, we seek to serve our God, and we have been sacrificing to Him from the days of Asaradan king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

Then they came to Zerubbabel and the chiefs of the fathers and said to them, “Let us also build with you, for we seek your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

And they came to Zerubbabel, and the chief of the fathers, and said to them: “Let us build with you, for we seek your God as you do: behold we have sacrificed to Him, since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

The Lxx, Syriac, and Vulgate all translate the Qere.

**NASB** – they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers’ households, and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

**NRSV** – they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of King Esar-haddon of Assyria who brought us here.”

**REB** – they approached Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the heads of families. ‘Let us build with you,’ they said, ‘for like you we seek your God, and have sacrificed to him ever since the days of King Esar-haddon of Assyria who brought us here.’

**NIV** – they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to Him ever since the days of King Esar-haddon of Assyria who brought us here.”

**ESV** – they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers’ houses and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here.”

**NET** – they came to Zerubbabel and the leaders and said to them, “Let us help you build, for like you we seek your God and we have been sacrificing to him from the time of King Esarhaddon of Assyria, who brought us here.”

**HCSB** – they approached Zerubbabel and the leaders of the families, and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we also worship your God and have been sacrificing to Him since the time King Esar-haddon of Assyria brought us here.”

**TNKS** – They approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families and said to them, “Let us build with you, for, like you, we will seek your God; it is to Him that we have been sacrificing since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

**JPS** – they approached Zerubbabel and the chiefs of the clans and said to them, “Let us build with you, since we too worship your God, having offered sacrifices to Him since the time of King Esarhaddon of Assyria, who brought us here.”

**TLV** – they approached Zerubbabel and the leading patriarchs and said to them, “Let us build with you, for like you we seek your God and have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Qumran</th>
<th>Lxx</th>
<th>Syriac</th>
<th>Vulgate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>אֶבֶשָׂי אֱבָאִישׁ אֲחִי יוֹאָב הוּא הָיָה רֹא</td>
<td>Kαὶ Αβεσα αξελφας Ιωαβ, οὔτος ἐν ἀρχιν τῶν τριῶν, οὔτος ἐσπάσατο τὴν βομβαίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τριακοσίων τραυματιῶν ἐν καὶ ἐν τοῖς τρισίν,</td>
<td>(Customer Name) έξ ιωαβ, ἄρχων τῶν τριῶν, ἄρχων ἑσπάσατο τὴν ῥομφαίαν ἐπὶ τρισίν,</td>
<td>et accedentes ad Zorobabel et ad principes patrum dixerunt eis aedificemus vobiscum quia ita ut vos quaerimus Deum vestrum ecce nos immolamus victimas ex diebus Asoraddan regis Assur qui adduxit nos huc</td>
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</table>

As for Abshai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the thirty, and he swung his spear against three hundred and killed them; but he had no name among the three. [and he had a name among the three.]

The Lxx, Syriac, and Vulgate all translate the Qere.

**NASB** – As for Abshai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the thirty, and he swung his spear against three hundred and killed them; and he had a name as well as the thirty. Q

**NRSV** – Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, was chief of the Thirty. With his spear he fought against three hundred and killed them, and won a name beside the Three. Q

**REB** – Abishai the brother of Joab was chief of the thirty; he it was who brandished his spear over three hundred dead. He was famous among the thirty. Q

**NIV** – Abishai the brother of Joab was chief of the Three. He raised his spear against three hundred men, whom he killed, and so he became as famous as the Three. Q

**ESV** – Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, was chief of the thirty. And he wielded his spear against 300 men and killed them and won a name beside the three. Q

**NET** – Abishai the brother of Joab was head of the three elite warriors. He killed three hundred men with his spear and gained fame along with the three elite warriors. Q

**HCSB** – Abishai, Joab’s brother, was the leader of the Three. He raised his spear against 300 men and killed them, gaining a reputation among the Three. Q

**TNKS** – Abishai, Joab’s brother—he was the head of the three; he wielded his spear over three hundred slain men; he was well known among the three. Q

**JPS** – Abshai, the brother of Joab, was head of another three. He once wielded his spear against three hundred and slew them. He won a name among the three; Q

**TLV** – Abishai, Joab’s brother, was chief of the Three. He once wielded his spear against 300 and slew them. Thus he won a name among the Three. Q
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<td>SP</td>
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<td>Syriac</td>
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### Remarks & Summary

Where the versions (SP, DSS, Lxx, Syriac, Vulgate) favor the Q, this is reflected in the English translations surveyed. In Job 41:4, Prov 19:7; 26:2, the Lxx, Syriac, and Vulgate all translated the K, and the majority of English translations surveyed translate the K as well. This is not the case with Is 63:9, Ps 100:3, and 139:16. In Is 63:9, the DSS, Syriac, and Vulgate all have K, but the English translations surveyed either accept the Lxx (which is not a translation of the MT) or translate the Q. The same may be said about Ps 100:3, in which the Lxx, Syriac, and Vulgate all translate the K, but with the exception of the NASB, all the other English translations accept the Q.

In a number of the texts containing K לֹא and Q וו (Ex 21:8; 1Sam 2:3; 2Kings 8:10; Is 63:9; Ps 100:3), the Ketiv is as acceptable as is the Qere, yet nearly all of the English Bibles surveyed opt for the Qere. This might indicate that the translators are predisposed to give priority to the Qere unless some other factor makes it clearly unusable. But if the Q/K do in some cases signal the presence of variants in the ancient manuscripts, then in the enterprise of textual criticism, both the Q and the K ought to be considered equal possible candidates for the original reading, to be determined on the basis of internal and external evidence, including the text critical canon that the more difficult reading may well be original.

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Black percentages are for Q; Red percentages are for K • A ? indicates the translation is ambiguous and thus it cannot be determined whether it translates Q or K. Adding a question mark (Q? or K?) indicates that the translation favors either Q or K but is somewhat ambiguous.