

## SYRIAC VARIANTS IN ISAIAH 26

LEONA G. RUNNING

Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan

### *Introduction*

In a three-part article concluded in the previous issue of this journal, a report was given concerning an investigation of the Syriac version of Isaiah. In the present article one chapter of Isaiah is selected for study in greater detail of a limited area.<sup>1</sup> Ch. 26 has been chosen because, containing the Prayer of Isaiah in vss. 9-19, it involves 59 MSS, or 12 more than the 47 which are usually concerned in the rest of the study. Only the Song of Isaiah (a very small section, 42: 10-13 plus 45: 8, and hence not representative) involved more MSS—35 beyond the usual 47, out of the total of 94 Biblical MSS used in the investigation (six early, nine Massora, nine Lectionary, six fragmentary and rather old, 23 late, and 41 liturgical, containing the Psalter and Canticles or Biblical Odes). Ch. 26 is also exactly average in length among the chapters of the book, containing 21 verses.

From the original collection of variants in ch. 26, ten were discarded as obviously merely orthographic differences, and 12 as clearly scribal errors. This left 124 variant readings at 81 places in the text of the chapter, some being multiple. Whereas throughout the book the variants averaged two places to a verse, in ch. 26 they average four to a verse, though it must be conceded that some, which elsewhere would have been discarded for the above two reasons, were included

<sup>1</sup> For keys to abbreviations, symbols, sigla, and bibliographic references, see Part I in *AUSS*, III (1965), 138-157.

because of our special interest in this section that is found in the additional liturgical MSS.




















All the variant readings of ch. 26 are exhibited below, each followed by a brief comment as to its type and sometimes an evaluation. The seven variants occurring only in patristic quotations are listed afterward, with brief comments. No variant from the Prayer of Isaiah is involved in NT quotations from this book. The concluding section draws some comparisons and expresses conclusions.

*The Variants in Is 26 in Biblical MSS*

- vs. 1<sup>a</sup> ܐܘܢܝܢܐ] ܐܘܢܝܢܐ L<sup>1</sup> M<sup>1</sup> P<sup>1</sup>/ (T G S) (change of verb from passive to active; scribal error?)
- 1<sup>b</sup> ܘܢܘܢܘܢܐ] ܘܢܘܢܘܢܐ F<sup>1</sup>/ H T (omission of suffix; scribal error?)
- 2<sup>a</sup> ܘܘܢܘܢܐ] pr ܐ O<sup>2</sup> (completely non-significant addition of conjunction)
- 2<sup>b</sup> ܘܢܘܢܐ] (1) + sey. R<sup>2(t)</sup>/ (2) om ܘ P<sup>7-m</sup>/ (G) S (change to plural; omission of preposition)
- 3<sup>a</sup> ܘܢܘܢܐ] ܘܢܘܢܐ F<sup>1</sup> P<sup>3</sup> R<sup>2, 3, 5</sup>/ (H T) G (S) (addition of conjunction; omission of preposition and object)
- 3<sup>b</sup> ܘܢܘܢܐ] ܘܢܐ P<sup>3</sup> R<sup>2, 3, 5</sup> (change of verb from first plural to third person singular)
- 3<sup>c</sup> ܘܢܘܢܐ] ܘܢܘܢܐ M<sup>2</sup> (substitution of synonym)
- 5 ܘܢܘܢܐ] (1) ܘܢܘܢܐ L<sup>9-m</sup> R<sup>6-1</sup> R<sup>7, 8, 9-m</sup>/ (2) + ܘܢܘܢܐ P<sup>7-m</sup> R<sup>8, 9-m</sup> (substitution; addition of a word)
- 8<sup>a</sup> ܘܢܘܢܐ] om ܐ P<sup>6</sup>/ H T (G S) (completely non-significant omission of conjunction)
- 8<sup>b</sup> ܘܢܘܢܐ] (1) + ܘܢܘܢܐ P<sup>4</sup>/ (2) ܘܢܘܢܐ P<sup>3</sup> R<sup>2, 3, 5</sup> (addition; substitution)
- 9<sup>a</sup> ܘܢܘܢܐ] (1) om O<sup>2</sup>/ G S/ (2) pr ܘܢܘܢܐ L<sup>27-c</sup> P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>8-m</sup> R<sup>10, 11, 12, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup>/ (3) pr ܘܢܘܢܐ

- ብ ለገላዴያ ህዳር ለገላዴያ R<sup>10-c</sup> (omission; addition of word; addition of clause)
- 9<sup>b</sup> ህገ] om R<sup>4</sup> (omission of preposition and object)
- 9<sup>c</sup> ጠባቢ] om L<sup>27-c</sup> P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>8-m</sup> R<sup>10, 11, 12, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> (omission of word)
- 9<sup>d</sup> ደግ] pr ለ F<sup>1</sup> L<sup>4, 5</sup> L<sup>13-1</sup> M<sup>1</sup> P<sup>3, 6</sup> R<sup>2, 3, 5</sup> R<sup>6-1</sup> S<sup>7, 9, 10-c</sup> / *Livre P* II, 38 (addition of conjunction)
- 9<sup>e</sup> ,ህግ] ለገላዴያ P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>11, 13-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> (addition)
- 9<sup>f</sup> ህዳር] ለገላዴያ R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6, 8, 9-c</sup> (substitution)
- 9<sup>g</sup> ገላዴያ] (I) pr ለ P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>11, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 10-c</sup> / (2) ህዳር] R<sup>8-m</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>8-c</sup> (om ለ Eph *Op Om* II, 62) (addition of conjunction; addition of suffix and conjunction; Ephraim adds suffix only)
- 9<sup>h</sup> ለገላዴያ] ለገላዴያ S<sup>8-c</sup> (verb changed to singular)
- 9<sup>i</sup> ለገላዴያ] (I) ገላዴያ L<sup>13-1</sup> / (S) / (2) + ገላዴያ ገላዴያ P<sup>7-m</sup> (substitution; addition)
- 10<sup>a</sup> ለገላዴያ] ለገላዴያ P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 9-c</sup> (verb changed to plural)
- 10<sup>b</sup> ገላዴያ] + sey. R<sup>13-c</sup> S<sup>7, 9-c</sup> / (T) (change to plural, with Targum)
- 10<sup>c</sup> ገላዴያ] (I) pr ለ F<sup>1</sup> L<sup>27-c</sup> P<sup>1, 3</sup> P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>2, 3, 5</sup> R<sup>10, 11, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> / (2) + ገላዴያ ገላዴያ S<sup>6, 7, 10-c</sup> / (3) + ገላዴያ ገላዴያ S<sup>8-c</sup> (addition of conjunction; two additions)
- 10<sup>d</sup> ገላዴያ] (I) om ለ W<sup>2-c</sup> / (2) ገላዴያ L<sup>27-c</sup> R<sup>10, 11, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> / G S / (3) pr ገላዴያ ገላዴያ L<sup>27-c</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> / G S (conjunction omitted or substituted by preposition; addition)
- 10<sup>e</sup> ገላዴያ] ገላዴያ L<sup>27-c</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> / G S (verb changed to singular)
- 10<sup>f</sup> ገላዴያ] ገላዴያ L<sup>27-c</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8-c</sup> / (T G) S (substitution)

- II<sup>a</sup> ܐܘܨܘܒܐ] tr after ܕܥܘܒܐ P<sup>8-c</sup> (transposition, scribal)
- II<sup>b</sup> ܡܘܨܦ] (I) ܡܘܨܦܝܢ R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>7, 9-c</sup> / (2) ܡܘܨܦ S<sup>8-c</sup> / S (verb changed to plural; suffix omitted)
- II<sup>c</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] (I) ܕܥܘܒܐ S<sup>8-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> / (2) + ܐܘܨܘܒܐ P<sup>8-c</sup> (addition of suffix; addition)
- II<sup>d</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] + ܕܥܘܒܐ O<sup>2</sup> P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>11, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 9-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> (addition)
- 12<sup>a</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] (I) pr ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ S<sup>6-c</sup> / (S) / (2) + ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>11, 13-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> (additions)
- 12<sup>b</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>11, 13-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> (change of verb to imperative; scribal error?)
- 12<sup>c</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>2(mg)</sup> (different suffix pronoun; scribal error?)
- 12<sup>d</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ S<sup>6, 8, 10-c</sup> (addition of negative)
- 12<sup>e</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>10-c</sup> (different suffix; scribal error?)
- 13<sup>a</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] (I) ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>7, 9-c</sup> / (2) ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ S<sup>6, 8, 10-c</sup> (omission of suffix pronoun; addition)
- 13<sup>b</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] (I) pr ܕܥܘܒܐ P<sup>8-c</sup> / (2) ܕܥܘܒܐ S<sup>10-c</sup> / (3) ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>10-c</sup> / (4) pr ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ L<sup>27-c</sup> P<sup>8-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> / (5) ܕܥܘܒܐ ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>11, 13-c</sup> (addition of a preposition; change to singular verb; sg. plus negative; additions)
- 13<sup>c</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] ܕܥܘܒܐ C<sup>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</sup> F<sup>1</sup> J<sup>1</sup> L<sup>3, 4, 5, 6</sup> L<sup>12-1</sup> L<sup>27-c</sup> M<sup>1, 2</sup> O<sup>1</sup> P<sup>1, 2, 3, 5, 6</sup> R<sup>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</sup> R<sup>6-1</sup> R<sup>10, 12-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> / (T) / Eph *Op Om* II, 63 (substitution)
- 13<sup>d</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] ܕܥܘܒܐ W<sup>2-c</sup> (substitution)
- 13<sup>e</sup> ܕܥܘܒܐ] ܕܥܘܒܐ R<sup>10, 11, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9-c</sup> (omission of suffix)

- 13<sup>f</sup>  R<sup>12-c</sup> (change of verb to first person or to perfect; scribal error?)
- 14<sup>a</sup>  R<sup>10-c</sup>/ (H T G S) / (2) om sey. R<sup>11-c</sup> (omission of conjunction; change to singular)
- 14<sup>b</sup>  R<sup>4</sup>/ (2)  W<sup>2-c</sup> (omission of negative; change of participle from Pa'el to Pe'al; scribal error?)
- 14<sup>c</sup>  F<sup>1</sup> P<sup>3</sup> R<sup>5</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup>/ (H T G S)/ Eph *Op Om* II, 63 / (2)  W<sup>2-c</sup> (scribal errors, probably; the first is probably correct, an error being in the Urmia text)
- 14<sup>d</sup>  P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>10, 11, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 8, 10-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> (substitution)
- 15<sup>a</sup> vs om R<sup>11, 13-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> (scribal error, but not homoioteleuton)
- 15<sup>b</sup>  P<sup>8-c</sup> S<sup>9-c</sup>/ (2)  L<sup>27-c</sup> S<sup>6, 10-c</sup>/ (3)  S<sup>8-c</sup> (suffix added; suffix added, and transposition; conflation)
- 15<sup>c</sup>  P<sup>8-c</sup>/ (2) om  R<sup>6-1</sup>; (3)  R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6, 8, 9-c</sup> (addition of conjunction; omission of preposition; addition of suffix pronoun)
- 15<sup>d</sup>  P<sup>8-c</sup> (omission by homoioteleuton)
- 15<sup>e</sup>  O<sup>2</sup> (addition in a MS full of scribal errors)
- 15<sup>f</sup>  P<sup>1</sup> (scribal error, *r* instead of *d*)
- 15<sup>g</sup>  L<sup>27-c</sup> M<sup>1</sup> P<sup>6</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> (preposition added)
- 15<sup>h</sup>  C<sup>5</sup>/ H / (2)  L<sup>27-c</sup> S<sup>6, 9, 10-c</sup>/ (T) (omission of suffix; substitution, similar to the Targum)

- 16<sup>a</sup> כרלך ] כרלך R<sup>8-m</sup> (change of preposition)
- 16<sup>b</sup> כרלך ] om א P<sup>4</sup>/ (H T G S) (omission of conjunction, agreeing with all four texts, but non-significant)
- 16<sup>c</sup> כרלך ] כרל R<sup>10-c</sup>/ H (T) (change of verb to singular)
- 16<sup>d</sup> כרלך ] (1) כרלך P<sup>1</sup>/ (2) כרלך S<sup>8-c</sup> (scribal misspelling; omission of suffix pronoun)
- 17<sup>a</sup> כרלך ] pr א R<sup>11, 13-c</sup>/ G S (non-significant addition of conjunction, agreeing with Greek and Syrohexapla)
- 17<sup>b</sup> כרלך ] כרלך L<sup>27-c</sup> (scribal error)
- 17<sup>c</sup> כרלך ] כרלך P<sup>8-c</sup> (addition of silent letter, a misspelling)
- 17<sup>d</sup> כרלך ] כרלך L<sup>27-c</sup> P<sup>7-m</sup> R<sup>9-m</sup> (scribal error)
- 17<sup>e</sup> כרלך ] (1) כרלך C<sup>5</sup>/ G (S) / (2) כרלך R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>7, 9-c</sup> change to singular; omission of suffix)
- 17<sup>f</sup> כרלך ] כרלך S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> (common variant spelling)
- 17<sup>g</sup> כרלך ] (1) כרלך L<sup>3(2)</sup> L<sup>11-m</sup>/ (2) כרלך C<sup>5</sup> P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup> H T G S / (3) om R<sup>13-c</sup> (addition of suffix pronoun; addition of suffix and transposition of letters, making the first person plural verb form, which is doubtless the correct and original form, the first variant actually being a transposition from this; omission)
- 17<sup>h</sup> כרלך ] om P<sup>8-c</sup>/ (G S) (omission)
- 18<sup>a</sup> כרלך . . . כרלך ] om L<sup>27-c</sup> (omission of probably one line, doubtless a homoioteleuton)
- 18<sup>b</sup> כרלך ] (1) כרלך P<sup>3</sup> R<sup>2, 3, 5</sup>/ (2) כרלך L<sup>6(2)</sup> L<sup>9(mg)-m</sup> P<sup>7-m</sup> R<sup>7, 9(t)-m</sup> R<sup>10, 11, 13-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10-c</sup>/ (3) pr כרלך כרלך S<sup>6, 8, 10-c</sup>/ (G S) (scribal spelling variations; addition)
- 18<sup>c</sup> כרלך ] (1) כרלך L<sup>5</sup> R<sup>9-m</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6, 7, 9, 10-c</sup> W<sup>2-c</sup>/ (2) כרלך S<sup>8-c</sup>/ (3) כרלך P<sup>8-c</sup> (three substitutions)

- 18<sup>d</sup> כּוּרִי] om sey. S<sup>7</sup>, 9-c/ H (T) G S (change to singular)
- 18<sup>e</sup> כּוּרִי מִי כּוּרִי C<sup>5\*</sup> F<sup>1</sup> R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>7</sup>, 9-c (addition of silent letter to first plural suffix, a misspelling)
- 18<sup>f</sup> כּוּרִי כּוּרִי W<sup>2-c</sup> (substitution)
- 19<sup>a</sup> כּוּרִי] (I) כּוּרִי L<sup>27-c</sup> S<sup>7-c</sup>/ (T) G S / (2) + כּוּרִי P<sup>8-c</sup> R<sup>11</sup>, 13-c W<sup>2-c</sup>/ Aph I, 381; (Eph *Op Om* III, 316) (omission of suffix; addition, agreeing with Aphrahat and substantially with Ephraim; perhaps an Old Syriac trace)
- 19<sup>b</sup> כּוּרִי] כּוּרִי O<sup>2</sup> R<sup>10</sup>, 13-c S<sup>6</sup>, 7, 8, 9, 10-c/ H G S (change of verb in plural to masculine)
- 19<sup>c</sup> כּוּרִי] om א L<sup>27-c</sup> S<sup>8-c</sup> (omission of conjunction)
- 19<sup>d</sup> כּוּרִי] (I) + כּוּרִי P<sup>8-c</sup>/ (2) כּוּרִי F<sup>1</sup> P<sup>3</sup> R<sup>2</sup>, 3, 5 S<sup>8-c</sup>/ (T) / (3) כּוּרִי S<sup>7-c</sup>/ (4) כּוּרִי S<sup>9-c</sup> (addition of a preposition and object; additions of various suffix pronouns)
- 19<sup>e</sup> כּוּרִי] (I) pr חַל R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6</sup>, 7, 8, 9-c/ (T) / (2) חַל S<sup>10-c</sup>/ (3) חַל R<sup>11-c</sup> (addition; addition with different form; different form without addition)
- 19<sup>f</sup> כּוּרִי] + כּוּרִי R<sup>6-1</sup> (addition)
- 19<sup>g</sup> כּוּרִי] (I) כּוּרִי R<sup>10-c</sup> S<sup>6</sup>, 7, 9-c/ (T) G S / (2) כּוּרִי L<sup>27-c</sup> (substitutions)
- 19<sup>h</sup> כּוּרִי] כּוּרִי C<sup>2</sup> L<sup>5</sup> M<sup>1</sup> R<sup>5</sup> R<sup>10</sup>, 12-c S<sup>6</sup>, 7, 8, 9, 10-c/ (G S) / Eph *Op Om* II, 64 (change to passive form)
- 21<sup>a</sup> כּוּרִי] + כּוּרִי S<sup>1</sup>, 2, 3, 4, 5-1/ (T G) S (addition)
- 21<sup>b</sup> כּוּרִי] + sey. S<sup>1</sup>, 2, 4-1/ (G S) (change to plural)
- 21<sup>c</sup> כּוּרִי] (I) om F<sup>1</sup> R<sup>2(t)</sup> S<sup>3-1</sup>/ (2) כּוּרִי S<sup>4-1</sup> (omission; substitution)

*The Variants in Is 26 in Patristic Quotations*

- vs. 8 כּוּרִי] כּוּרִי Eph *Op Om* II, 62 (change of first person suffix from plural to singular)

- 9<sup>(g)</sup> ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ] ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ Eph Op Om II, 62 (addition of suffix)
- 11<sup>(d)</sup> ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ] ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢ Eph Op Om II, 62 / H T G S (change from "furnace" to "fire," with the four texts—probably a scribal error in the Urmia text)
- 13<sup>(f)</sup> ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ] ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ Eph Op Om II, 63 (change from imperfect to perfect verb, reflexive, first person plural)
- 18 ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ] ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ Eph Op Om II, 64 / G S (substitution of a synonym)
- 19<sup>(d)</sup> ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ] om Eph Op Om II, 64 (omission by homoioteleuton)
- 21 ܐܘܢܘܠܘܢܘܢ] om Eph Op Om II, 64 / G S (omission)

### Conclusion

It is interesting to note that while the 124 variants (+ five, because five pertained to two categories at the same time, making 129) of the MSS fell into 23 of the 35 categories of kinds of variation found in our study, the seven variants of the patristic quotations fell into five of the categories. While Ephraim, of the fourth century, alone is the source for the seven variants found only in patristic quotations, both he (five times) and Aphrahat, earlier in the fourth century (once) as well as the seventh-century *Livre de la Perfection* (once) give support to MS variants, but no other patristic sources do this in ch. 26.

The most common variant consisted of the addition of one or more words (27 of the 129; see above); next came substitutions (16), scribal errors such as those of spelling (12), and omission of one or more words (11). Such scribal errors as omission by homoioteleuton or transposition were classified under omissions and transpositions rather than as scribal errors; otherwise the majority of variants could be classified as scribal errors, and distinctions would be blurred.



The chapter gives a fair sampling of the variants found in our whole study. Only five of those in ch. 26 were included in those considered worth evaluating as possible traces of Old Syriac, since those to be evaluated were limited to substitutions, scribal errors, omissions, additions, instances of a different form of the same word, transpositions, and clauses worded entirely differently. The last-named did not occur in ch. 26; the others provided 75, or 58 per cent, of the variants of ch. 26, yet their number was further reduced before the evaluation by their lack of support from the Aramaic Targum and/or a patristic quotation. We consider it extremely hazardous to say that a variant represents the oldest text type unless it does have the support of the Targum and/or one of the most ancient patristic sources, and even then it may be a coincidence of scribal errors.<sup>2</sup> Only 47 of the screened

<sup>2</sup> The addition or dropping of the conjunction, which is involved in 15 of the 129 variants of this chapter, or 12 per cent, once with support of the *Livre de la Perfection*, is completely non-significant; a scribe somewhere will be found to have added or dropped it in the Syriac, and the same scribal tendency was at work in the four basic texts, the Hebrew, Targum, Greek, and Syrohexapla. M. H. Goshen-Gottstein correctly pointed this out in "Prolegomena to a Critical Edition of the Peshitta," in *Text and Language in Bible and Qumran* (Jerusalem, 1960), p. 174: "Especially vexing is the problem of the *Waw* copulative. One feels tempted to state that, provided a sufficiently large number of manuscripts is compared, there is hardly any case in which the addition (or omission) of a *Waw* would be syntactically or exegetically possible without at least one manuscript exhibiting such a deviation." In the note on that page he adds: ". . . by now I feel convinced more than ever that the systematic noting of *waws* in the apparatuses to MT would lead us nowhere. No foreseeable result would justify the amount of work and the trebling (at least) of the size of the apparatus, which would be flooded by *waw*-readings."

Yet an analysis of the variants that Arthur Vööbus exhibits as genuine traces of Old Syriac in *Peschitta und Targumim des Pentateuchs* (Stockholm, 1958) shows that 12 per cent of them consist of just this—addition or omission of the *waw* conjunction, with support of one or more Targum MSS.

Bruce M. Metzger discusses the problem of methodology in evaluating variants in connection with the "Caesarean text" of the Greek New Testament, coming to the same conclusion—that some variants are worthless: ". . . is it really legitimate to utilize all variants, large

101 variants evaluated were judged to be probably genuine traces of Old Syriac, 24 of these being Targum traces, as shown in the preceding three-part article.

Glancing through the variants that have been presented here, one receives an overwhelming impression of scribal fallibility at work. Some examples are 3<sup>b</sup>; 9<sup>h</sup>; 10<sup>a</sup> and 10<sup>b</sup>, which should go together, but the MSS for each are not the same ones except for two liturgical MSS from Sinai. In 10<sup>c</sup> and 10<sup>d</sup>, the fact that the same added words appear in two locations in the text adds further suspicion to them. 11<sup>d</sup> is a patent dittography, made still easier by the good sense it made, "furnace of fire." The same long addition appears in 12<sup>a</sup> and 9<sup>a</sup>, widely separated, each time found in one (not the same) liturgical MS. The second occurrence shows its source—the Syrohexapla, for the first half of the addition minus pronominal suffix.

12<sup>b</sup> is dropping of a letter; the change of pronominal suffix in 12<sup>c</sup> is especially easily made if a scribe is writing a different script than his *Vorlage* contains, or if the MS has a break or

and small, to determine the relation between manuscripts? Manifestly a spectacular variant, such as the presence of the *pericope de adultera* after Luke 21.38 in the manuscripts of family 13, has real significance in disclosing the textual affinities of a given manuscript. But it seems to the present writer that the possibility of mere chance coincidence among manuscripts in agreeing in small variations (involving *inter alia*, word order, common synonyms, the presence or absence of the article, the aorist for the imperfect or historical present) has not been sufficiently taken into account. . . . If one hundred people today were to transcribe independently from a common text, how often would they agree fortuitously in their errors? The point is that in many instances it is exceedingly difficult to decide with finality whether a given variant present in four or five manuscripts is significant or insignificant in determining genealogy. The conclusion which one must draw is that some of the variants which are commonly utilized . . . are not really capable of turning the scales in either direction." *Chapters in the History of New Testament Criticism* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1963), p. 72.

In the present article and the preceding three-part report of the investigation of the Syriac text of Isaiah we have laid bare our methodology at every step, and will welcome scholarly discussion of the problems involved.

a smudge at the spot. The variety of changes at 13<sup>b</sup> evidences scribal corruption; 13<sup>f</sup> and 14<sup>b, 1, 2</sup> are doubtless scribal errors. In 14<sup>c</sup>, the first variant, with agreement of all four basic texts and Ephraim, is probably the original, from which the Urmia text form occurred by a misreading, and the other variant by a different misreading. 15<sup>a</sup>, a verse omission in three liturgical texts, is not due to similar forms but just to carelessness; 15<sup>d</sup> is a homoioteleuton. 15<sup>b</sup>'s transpositions and conflation are obviously to be credited to the scribes.

The singular reading at 15<sup>e</sup> in the wretchedly copied O<sup>2</sup> cannot command respect. 15<sup>f</sup> is an example of one of the most common scribal errors in MSS involving Semitic languages. 16<sup>d</sup>, 17<sup>b, c, d, e</sup>, and 18<sup>a</sup> are all obviously scribal errors. 17<sup>g</sup> is interesting; the correct form is the second variant, with agreement of all four basic texts, and probably the first variant and the Urmia form developed from it. 18<sup>b</sup> shows misspellings in both directions and Greek influence through the Syrohexapla; the variety of pronouns in 18<sup>e</sup> is interesting.

It is difficult to characterize 18<sup>d</sup>; writing one dot over the *r* instead of two is the only change, yet the result is to make the word singular, agreeing with the four texts. One is tempted to say that the plural form was the Old Syriac, and the two Sinai MSS deviated from it by scribal error, rather than being influenced by one or more of the texts. 18<sup>e</sup> is scribal; also the variety at 19<sup>d</sup>.

To mention several that may be genuine Old Syriac, 13<sup>c</sup>, 15<sup>h2</sup>, 19<sup>e1</sup>, 19<sup>e2</sup>, and 19<sup>g1</sup> were the 5 included in the evaluations of 101 out of 3339 readings in our investigation. 13<sup>c</sup>'s variant reading is found in 34 MSS, in the Targum, and in Ephraim's quotation; it was probably the original, and the Urmia form together with 3 MSS, L<sup>1</sup>, L<sup>2</sup> and P<sup>8-c</sup>, show a scribal error for it. The Hebrew, Greek, and Syrohexapla furnish no help here, reading differently.

15<sup>h2</sup>'s substitution of "wicked ones of the earth" for "ends of the earth" agrees with the word "wicked ones" in the

Targum; it occurs only in the liturgical MSS and may well be a genuine trace of the older text type.

19<sup>e1</sup>, <sup>e2</sup> agree with the Targum in adding the word "all," which may be the original text form, but on the other hand it would be easy for a scribe to bring this in from many parallel passages, such as 18: 3. One dare not be dogmatic on these matters. The other variations here are obviously scribal.

19<sup>g1</sup> is another instance of substitution of "wicked ones," this time with the agreement of the Greek and the Syrohexapla as well as the Targum. The second variant doubtless resulted from it; it may be the ancient form of the text.

Another, not included in the evaluations, is 19<sup>a</sup>. The addition is supported by the two oldest Syrian authors, Aphrahat and Ephraim; it may be genuine. Also 19<sup>h</sup>, where the passive verb form is supported by the Greek and the Syrohexapla as well as found in Ephraim's quotation, may be genuine—or it may be one of the instances of influence upon Ephraim from the Greek text. Dogmatic assertions are not in order.

Concerning the seven variants in the patristic quotations of ch. 26, all of which are found only in Ephraim's writings, 18 and 21 have the agreement of the Greek text and the Syrohexapla, with which Ephraim shows agreement as often as he does with Hebrew and the Targum. In 18, either word would, of course, translate the Greek word, but the Syrohexapla has the variant word, along with Ephraim—the Syrohexapla *following* Ephraim by about two and a half centuries, of course. All four basic texts support Ephraim's variant in 11<sup>(d)</sup>; thus it seems all the clearer that the Old Syriac text-type had "furnace," to which the scribes of eight MSS (see above) added "of fire," the reading of the four texts and of Ephraim being just "fire." (The four references followed by a letter in parentheses also occur, with slight differences, among the variants from Biblical MSS.) 8 and 13<sup>f</sup> may be adaptations Ephraim made in fitting the quotations into his own sentences or in quoting from memory; 19<sup>(d)</sup> is a

scribal error made by Ephraim, or by the scribe of his *Vorlage*, or by a later scribe copying Ephraim's MS.

It is apparent that the great mass of variant readings is worth very little for the recovery of the archaic text (as is true in all text-critical work, of course); it is equally apparent that great caution must be used in pronouncing certain readings Old Syriac. So little evidence is coercive; so many times one can only conclude, "It could be a genuine trace—or, a scribal error!"