

ABBREVIATIONS IN THE MASSORETIC TEXT.

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The use of abbreviations in the Massoretic text, as in Rabbinic writings, has long been suspected and many isolated remarks have been made on the subject¹; but no attempt seems yet to have been made to classify them and establish the limits within which they may be postulated in the interpretation of the Old Testament.

I.

Abbreviations are an obvious method of enabling a text to be written in a space which is too small for it (*e.g.* in the legend on a seal, a coin or a weight) and of lightening the burden of copying long works in which, for example, recurring words or phrases may be written in a shortened form easily understood by the reader. They seem to have been a fairly early invention, since they apparently have been found on inscriptions of the 8th century B.C. In the East, they occur in Aramaic endorsements on Assyrian contracts of the 8th–7th centuries and Babylonian contracts of the 5th century, an Aramaean weight of the 6th century, and also in the Aramaic letters from the Persian chancery dated *c.* 411–408 B.C. and found in Egypt. In the West, possibly only one occurs in the pre-Exilic Israelite period, but they are not infrequent in the Jewish Aramaic documents of the 5th century from Egypt; one or two appear also in a few Phoenician (Punic) inscriptions of uncertain date, and others are found on Sabaean inscriptions and Himyaritic coins of equally uncertain date. The use of the initial cuneiform sign for a word as a kind of shorthand in late texts of the Neo-Babylonian or Seleucid periods may also be counted as a method of abbreviation.²

In the earliest period abbreviations are restricted almost exclusively to weights and measures and a very few common nouns, mostly commercial terms.

1. Graetz, *Psalmen* I, 139–140; Perles, *Analekten*, 4–35 (s. pp. 14–15 for a bibliography of the subject); Ginsburg, *Introduction to . . . the Hebrew Bible*, 167–170; S.R. Driver, *Notes on the . . . Books of Samuel*, lxxviii–lxxix; Torczyner, *משלי שלמה*, 73–80; G.R. Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 234–236; also Maisler in *Leshonenu* 4 (1931–2) 166–181.
2. Perles, *op. cit.* 10–11, and G. R. Driver, *op. cit.* 235.

These are indicated mostly by the initial of the words denoting them; these are

(i) FOR WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

א (ארדב) a dry measure, ג (Aramaic word unknown) half an 'rdb, ט (אה) a dry measure;

ש (קל) 'shekel' and מ (עה) 'tenth of a shekel'³;

ח (לר) a weight of uncertain value;

כ (רש) a Persian weight equivalent to 10 Babylonian shekels⁴;

כ (Aramaic word unknown) a linear measure;

ש (קל) 'shekel'^{4a};

(ii) FOR FRACTIONS

פ (לג) 'half' and ר (בע) 'quarter';

(iii) FOR COMMODITIES

ש (ערן) 'barley' and כ (סף) 'silver'.

The only other abbreviation of a common noun is ב for בית 'house' (Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri* no. 81, lines 106, 113-4).

A solitary Israelite weight from Tell ed-Duweir has ב for בקע 'half-shekel' engraved on it.⁵

Consequently בַּיִת־רָשָׁע may be confidently corrected, on the assumption of an original בִּי רָשָׁע, to בַּת־רָשָׁע 'an unjust bath measure', as the parallel אִיפַת רוּחַ suggests (Mic. vi, 10; Duhm).

Two endorsements of Assyrian contracts on cuneiform tablets have the final letter of the proper name omitted; these are סראש for Šarrat-Ištar and ארבלסר for 'Arbel-šarrat, where the cuneiform text confirms the true forms of the names.⁶ These abbreviations are due to the scantiness of the available space.

Two Punic inscriptions of uncertain date have ר, standing apparently for רבי 'my lord(s)' or רבי(נו) 'our lord(s)', before the names of certain officers of state⁷; and weights of the same period inscribed with ק and פ, of which the import is uncertain, come from Carthage.⁸

3. Driver in JRAS 59 (1937) 84-86.

4. Driver, *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B. C.*, 97.

4a. Diring, *Iscrizioni* etc, 269-70.

5. Torrey, in JAOS. 24 (1903) 206-208; Diring in PEQ 74 (1942) 89-91; Reifenberg *ibid.* 74 (1942) 111, and 75 (1943) 100-104.

6. Delaporte, *Épigraphes. Araméens*, 24/2, 30/9.

7. C. I. S., I, 161/132, 4; 260/170, 1.

8. RES. I, 107-110/124 (see Harris, *Grammar of the Phoenician Language*, 136, 142).

John Hyrcanus I (135–106 B.C.) seems to have introduced abbreviations on his coins, which have once הגד for הגדול 'the high (priest)' and once חב for חבר 'community' and often היה, היהו, היהד, היהדי for היה(ו)דים 'the Jews'; Alexander Jannaeus (105–78 B.C.) too has חב for חבר 'community', and John Hyrcanus II (69 B.C. and 63–57 B.C.) has perhaps המ for המלך 'the king' (*v. infr.*) and certainly הכה for הכ(ו)הן 'the priest'.⁹

On coins of the First Revolt (A.D. 66–70) 'year two' and 'year three' are sometimes written out, while א 'one' and sometimes ד 'four' are used alone for respectively 'year one' and 'year four'; but the commonest form is שב, שג, שד, שה for 'year two, three, four, five', where ש stands for שנה 'year'. The coins of the Second Revolt (A.D. 132–135) have 'year one' written out but שב for 'year two'; they also have once ה and often חר for חרות 'liberation', שמ and שמעו for שמעון 'Simeon, Simon' and once ישר for ישראל 'Israel'.¹⁰

Abbreviations, therefore, were a device which may well have been known to Jews from possibly the 8th and certainly the 5th century B.C., when Jewish scribes used them in Egypt in official documents written in the Aramaic language; they might then be expected *a priori* in the pre-Septuagintal Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Their use greatly increased during and immediately after the Second Commonwealth on coins; and a few are found in the Scrolls from Qumran. In the earliest period they were limited, with very rare exceptions, to weights and measures and other terms employed in business, on deeds and contracts and such-like documents; but it was soon extended on coins to proper names and political terms, which were often abbreviated as a consequence of the exigencies of the available space. Otherwise only a very few common nouns such as בית 'house' and שנה 'year' were normally abridged.

II

The simplest type of abbreviation, to which Lagarde has drawn attention¹¹, in the Massoretic text is the omission of terminations¹², such as the sing. fem. -t or -ah and the plur. masc. -(i)m and -e and fem. -oth, which can be readily

9. Madden, *Coins of the Jews*, 78–80, 89, 93, 98.

10. Madden, *op. cit.*, 233–45, and Reifenberg *op. cit.*, 60–66.

11. In *Anmerkungen zur griechischen Uebersetzung der Proverbien* (1863), 4.

12. A mark of abbreviation is hereafter put after abbreviated forms for the assistance of the reader without prejudging the case for or against their use in the archaic Hebrew text.

supplied by the reader, as in שְׁבִי for $\text{שְׁבִי} = \text{קוּמִי שְׁבִיָּה}$ (Is. lii, 2; Oort); טוֹב for $\text{טוֹב} = \text{טוֹבָה}$ (Gen. xlix, 15; Sam.); תְּכוּנֵי צְדִיק for $\text{צְדִיק} = \text{צְדָקָה}$ (Ps. vii, 10; Gressmann w. Jerome);

פְּחִים אֵשׁ for $\text{פַּחַם} = \text{פְּחָמִי}$ (Ps. xi, 6; Lowth w. Symm.);

רְמָס for $\text{רְמָסִים} = \text{רְמָסִים}$ (Is. xvi, 4; Graetz w. Targ.);

כָּל־הַדּוֹלָג for $\text{כָּל־הַדּוֹלָגִים} = \text{כָּל־הַדּוֹלָגִים}$ (Zeph. i, 9; Graetz w. Symm., Pesh., Targ.);

רְעִי for $\text{רְעִי} = \text{רְעִים}$ (Is. xxxviii, 12; Lowth w. Symm., Vulg., Targ.);

לְאֹמְנֵי for $\text{לְאֹמְנֵי} = \text{לְאֹמְנֵי}$ (Is. li, 4; Lowth w. Pesh., Heb. MSS.);

מְנֵי for $\text{מְנֵי} = \text{מְנֵים}$ (Ps. xlv, 9; Olshausen; see also Sir. xxxix, 15);

הִידְעֵנִי for $\text{הִידְעֵנִי} = \text{הִידְעֵנִים}$ (I Sam. xxviii, 9; Thenius w. LXX, Pesh., Vulg.);

אֶת־הַחֲצִי for $\text{אֶת־הַחֲצִי} = \text{אֶת־הַחֲצִים}$ (I Sam. xx, 38, Q);

יָמֵי for יָמֵי or $\text{יָמֵי} = \text{יָמִים}$ (Ps. cii, 24; Driver);

יָדֵי for יָדֵי or $\text{יָדֵי} = \text{יָדִים}$ (Ezek. xiii, 18; Smend w. Pesh., Targ., Heb. MSS.);

וְהַטּוֹב for $\text{וְהַטּוֹב} = \text{וְהַטּוֹבֹת}$ (Lam. iii, 38; Budde w. Vulg., Pesh., Heb. MSS.);

אֲשֵׁי misread as $\text{אֲשֵׁי} = \text{אֲשֵׁי יְהוָה}$ (Lev. vi, 10; Ginsburg w. LXX, Vulg., Heb. MSS.)

Some such instances occur several times, *e.g.*

צְדִיק for $\text{צְדִיק} = \text{צְדִיקִים}$ (Is. iii, 10; Graetz w. Targ.; Ps. lxxv, 11; Graetz w. Theod., Targ., Eth.);

עָמִי for $\text{עָמִי} = \text{עָמִים}$ (Is. li, 4; Lowth w. Pesh., Heb. MSS.; Ps. cxliv, 2; Mudge w. Aq., Jerome, Pesh., Targ.).

Further, parallel passages may show different abbreviations of the same word, *e.g.* עָמִי and עָם for עָמִי or $\text{עָמִי} = \text{עָמִים}$ (LXX and Targ. at II Sam. xxii, 44 and LXX^A at Ps. xviii, 44); such divergence corroborates the abbreviations.

Sometimes an ancient translator has failed to recognize an abbreviated form, as in אֲחֻזֹּת צַחֲרוֹת misread as אֲחֻזֹּת צַחֲרוֹת instead of אֲחֻזֹּת צַחֲרוֹת (LXX at Jud. v, 10; Burney), which is valuable as showing that such forms were not normally indicated by marks of abbreviation in the archetypes used by the LXX.

Not infrequently, alternative explanations of such apparent grammatical irregularities are possible: so for example רְמֵנִי may be an adjective in עָסִים רְמֵנִי (*sic*), but $\text{רְמֵנִי} = \text{רְמֵנִים}$ (Ct. viii, 2; Bickell w. LXX, Heb. MSS.) ought perhaps to be read (as also the construct pointing of the noun seems

intended to suggest); and the masc. חֹזֶק in רוּחַ גְּדוּלָה וְחֹזֶק may be explained as due to failure to read an abridged 'חֹזֶק = חֹזְקָה correctly or to a lapse of congruence due to the distance of the predicative term from the noun which it qualifies (I Kings xix, 11; Burney). This last explanation may also account for the lapse of congruence in תְּמַכִּיָּה מְאֹשֵׁר (and similar expressions), where however 'מְאֹשֵׁר = מְאֹשְׁרִים = תְּמַכִּיָּה מְאֹשְׁרִים may originally have been intended (Prov. iii, 18; Graetz w. Pesh., Targ.).¹³ So too the normally fem. הַחֲצִיר 'court' may be treated as a masc. noun in accordance with its form¹⁴ in הַחֲצִיר הַפְּנִימִי; but this is perhaps rather a misreading of הַחֲצִיר הַפְּנִימִית = הַפְּנִימִי (Ezek. xl, 19, 32, xliii, 5; cp. xlv, 19, xlvi, 1). Or again the suggestion that בְּקִדְשׁ is a misreading of an original בְּקִדְשִׁים = בְּקִדְשִׁים (Exod. xv, 11; Haupt. w. LXX; cp. parallel בְּאֵלִים) is not necessarily correct: for *qodes̄* may here be a 'broken' or 'inner' plural form¹⁵ used with collective force.

At the same time the theory that such forms as עֲמִי = עֲמִים have an apocopated *-i* instead of *-im* as the plur. termination¹⁶ is improbable since it does not also explain עַם = עַמ' for עַמִּים, and analogous forms are very rare in the West-Semitic dialects¹⁷; they are therefore best explained as due to scribal abbreviation¹⁸, if they are not regarded as mere errors of transmission.

The recognition of the fact that terminations may have been omitted gets rid not only of various supposed anomalies in the M.T., but also of some solecisms which have been imported into the transcriptions of the Scrolls. They show that the supposed plur. masc. constr. form in רוּחֵי גּוּרְלוֹ and רוּחֵי אֵמֶת is nothing but a misreading of an original רוּחוֹ גּוּרְלוֹ or רוּחוֹת = רוּחוֹת (DSD iii, 24; iv, 23; cp. DST iii, 18; DSW fragm. i, 4) and that the strange אֲשִׁמּוֹרֵי stands for אֲשִׁמּוֹרֵי = אֲשִׁמּוֹרוֹת (DSD x, 2).¹⁹ Like the Septuagint, modern scholars have been misled by the absence of marks of abbreviation.

Care, however, must be taken not unduly to assume abbreviations; for example דֶּל is not an error for דֶּלֶת = דֶּל' 'door' (Ps. cxli, 3; Perles), for the

13. Cp. Driver in JRAS 75 (1948), 167-173.

14. The Heb. מֵאָה and the Fr. *mode* and other words may sometimes similarly take their gender from their form, regardless of their grammatical gender.

15. Like Arab. *fu'lu* (Wright, *Arabic Grammar*³, I, 200).

16. Ewald, *Ausführliches Lehrbuch der hebräischen Sprache*, § 177a.

17. Cp. Cooke, *North-Semitic Inscriptions*, 61, 2; 62, 2, 23.

18. Cheyne, *Prophecies of Isaiah II*, 138-139.

19. Driver in JTS, N. S. 4 (1953), 307. The plur. absolute form is always רוּחוֹת which confirms

Phoen. לִרְדִי confirms it. So too לִרְדִי is not necessarily a misreading of לִרְדִי = לְרִדוֹת (Graetz), since it can be read לִרְדִי (Is. xlv, 1; Hitzig); and לִהֲנִי is not to be treated as לִהֲנִי = לְהִנּוֹת (Perles w. Midr. R.), since it is confirmed by the LXX and the cognate Arabic noun (Eccl. xii, 12).

III

Confirmation of the theory of abbreviations may be found in the misunderstanding which the ancient translators or copyists now and then show of them, as in

הַנְּעָרִי misread as הַנְּעָרִים instead of הַנְּעָרוֹת (Ruth ii, 21; Houbigant with LXX^{MSS}, Eth. Nyss.);

חַפְּצֵיךָ misread as חַפְּצֵיךָ instead of חַפְּצֵיךָ (Prov. iii, 15; Bickell w. LXX, Vulg., 1 Heb. MS)²⁰;

נִתְחַיֶּה misread as נִתְחַיֶּה instead of נִתְחַיֶּה (Ezek. xxiv, 4; Kraetzschmar w. LXX, Pesh.).

The absence of the pronominal suffixes where they may be naturally expected often suggests that they have been omitted by way of abbreviation, as in

בְּהוֹת misread as בְּהוֹת instead of בְּהוֹתֶם (Prov. xi, 6; Lagarde w. Vss.);

בְּקִרְבִי misread as בְּקִרְבִי instead of בְּקִרְבוֹ or בְּקִרְבָּם (II Sam. xvii, 11; Ginsburg w. LXX, Vulg., Pesh.);

בְּאֱלֹהִים misread as בְּאֱלֹהִים instead of בְּאֱלֹהֵיו (Ps. iii, 3; Wellhausen w. LXX, Vulg.);

לְפָנַי misread as לְפָנַי instead of לְפָנֶיהֶם (Jb. xvii, 6; Siegfried w. LXX, Pesh., Vulg.).

The same error may be made in the case of verbs; so אֹדֶה has been read אֹדָה instead of אֹדְדָה (Ps. ix, 2; Houbigant w. LXX, Vulg.).

Not infrequently the wrong suffix has been supplied, as in

מִלְכוּתוֹ read as מִלְכוּתוֹ instead of מִלְכוּתָהּ (Ps. cxlv, 12; Graetz w. LXX, Jerome, Pesh.);

גְּבוּרָתִי read as גְּבוּרָתִי instead of גְּבוּרָתֶיהָ (*do*).

Similar abbreviated forms of verbs may be found, as in

this suggestion. The only exception is רוּחִיךָ, which may be an error for רוּחִי <רוח> (DST xiii, 8); but רוּחִיךָ 'spirits' occurs in Mishnaic Hebrew.

20. Or חַפְּצֵיךָ with one Heb. MS. (Kennicott.).

נִסְעַי misread as נִסְעַי instead of נִסְעָה (Num. xi, 31; Driver);
 יִצְאֵי misread as יִצְאֵי instead of יִצְאָה (Jer. xlvi, 45; Duhm w. Heb. MSS., cp. Num. xxi, 28).

In the first of these passages the *paseq* after the verb indicates a copyist's doubt, and in the second the parallel reading establishes the true text, so that אֵשׁ ought not to be treated here as a masculine noun.

The same practice will explain the numerous cases of the omission of the plur. -u from perfect and imperfect as well as imperative forms²¹, except when the verb precedes the subject.

It will also explain a number of unwanted or incorrect apocopated forms of the defective verbs²² which appear when a jussive sense or preterite sense is inadmissible, as in

בָּנִי צִיִּין misread as בָּנִי צִיִּין for בָּנִי צִיִּין (Mic. iii, 10; Graetz w. LXX, Pesh., Targ.);
 אֶחָיו misread as אֶחָיו for אֶחָיו (Jb. xxiii, 9);
 אֶטִי misread as אֶטִי for אֶטִי (Jb. xxiii, 11);
 יִכְלֵי misread as יִכְלֵי for יִכְלֵי (Jb. xxxiii, 21; Bickell w. Vulg.);
 הָאֵשׁ misread as הָאֵשׁ for הָאֵשׁ (Mic. vi, 10; Wellhausen).

So אֵשׁ לֹא נִפְחָה 'an unfanned fire' (Jb. xx, 26; LXX^B *ἄφαντος*; cp. Num. xxi, 30) may be read also as אֵשׁ לֹא נִפְחָה = אֵשׁ לֹא נִפְחָה 'a fire with none to quench it' (LXX; cp. Sir. li, 4²³); both make equally good sense.

In the same way אֲבִי has been misread אֲבִי (an otherwise unknown name) instead of אֲבִי (II Kings xviii, 2; Ginsburg; cp. II Chr. xxix, 1).

The suggestion has also been made that verbs with final א may once have been written in abridged form without it, e.g. אֲבִי for אֲבִיא (Mic. i, 15) and הִחֲטִיא for הִחֲטִיא (Jer. xxxii, 35); in these cases the Kethiv is often corrected by Qere or in other manuscripts. Some of the examples cited, however, are demonstrably wrong, e.g. יִנִּיא for יִנִּיא (Ps. cxli, 5; Perles); for the verb here intended is not נִיא 'to repel' but an otherwise unknown Hebr. נִיא = Arab. *nawā* 'grew fat'.²⁴

21. The corresponding plur. fem. -y with Syriac verbs is silent and therefore often not written (Nöldeke, *Syriac Grammar*, § 159).

22. Cp. Friedrich, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*, 75-77.

23. See note 12.

24. Briggs w. LXX and Vulg.; see Driver in *Harvard Theological Review* 29 (1936), 193.

IV

That the divine names must once have been abbreviated by the copyists has long been recognized and can easily be proved from the ancient Versions.

The commonest abbreviation for the *tetragrammaton* seems to have been a single yodh, as in

עָלִי for י' על = עַל-יְהוָה (Ps. cxxxi, 2; Schulz);

חֲמַתִּי for י' חמת = חֲמַת-יְהוָה (LXX at Jer. vi, 11)²⁵;

מִפְּנֵי for י' מפני = מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה (LXX at Ezek. xxxviii, 20);

עֲבָדִי for י' עבד = עֲבָד יְהוָה (LXX at Jon. i, 9)²⁵.

Inversely יהוה written י' is sometimes (mis)taken for the suffix of the sing. 1st. person as in

בֵּית יְהוָה written י' בית and misread בֵּיתִי (LXX at Jud. xix, 18);

אֶף יְהוָה written י' אף or י' אפ and misread אֶפֶי (LXX at Jer. xxv, 37).

Occasionally perhaps יי may have been used for יהוה, as when מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה, as when מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה is translated βασιλεύσει κύριος (LXX^A), which represents an original מֶלֶךְ יי = מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה (Zeph. iii, 15; Marti w. LXX^A).²⁶

The mistakes of the LXX, as in their impossible reading of עֵינֵי גְבוּהוֹת אָדָם שָׁפֵל as עֵינֵי יְהוָה גְבוּהוֹת, אָדָם שָׁפֵל (Is. ii, 11), are especially instructive; for they could not have made them if the translators had not been familiar with the use of abbreviations in the manuscripts on which they were working.

The admission of the use of י' for יהוה may enable a missing subject to be restored, as in יֵאמֵר, for which אָמַר י' may be read (Exod. viii, 23; Ginsburg w. LXX), and בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר-יֵיטִיב אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל, for which י' (=יהוה) יֵטִיב אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל may be read (I Sam. ii, 32; Kennicott; cp. Num. x, 32); or a mistake to be corrected, as in שָׁנְאֵתִי הַשְּׂמֵרִים הַגְּבִלִי שׁוֹא where שָׁנְאֵת יְהוָה must be read (Ps. xxxi, 7; Kennicott w. Vss. and Heb. MSS.).

Clearly, too, the *tetragrammaton* must occasionally have been represented by ה, as in יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ rightly read as ה' אֵל יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ (Perles at Ps. lxxviii, 20; cp. lxxxvii, 2);

וְנִדְדָה שְׁנַת הַמֶּלֶךְ read as וְנִדְדָה ה' שְׁנַת הַמֶּלֶךְ (LXX at Esth. vi. 1).

Once again the recognition of this device enables a corrupt passage to be corrected, as in וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה מִשְׁמַיִם: עֵינֵי עוֹלָלָה לְנַפְשִׁי which is a misreading of

25. Cp. Podechard, *L'Éclésiastique*, 401.

26. Cp. Ezek. iv, 14 and xliii, 18 (see Thackeray, *Septuagint and Jewish Worship*, 122).

... עולל ה'...; hence read עולל יהוה לנפשי (Lam. iii, 51; Perles), as both the rhythmical structure of the verse and the sense show.

The origin of this ה' is disputed, whether it derives from the use of הַשֵּׁם as a substitute for the 'name' of God (Luzzatto²⁷), which is very improbable, or is the initial radical of the root (Perles) or its last letter, which is often used in Arabic abbreviations (Delitzsch).

The exact abbreviation to which the LXX's rendering of פִּיהוּ as פִּי יְהוָה (Prov. xxiv, 7; Perles) is due is not clear.

In the same way אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהֶיךָ may have been written א, as possibly in יִמְלֹט אֱלֹהֶיךָ (Job xxii, 30), which seems to be required by the sense, where the error may have been helped by a sign of abbreviation.²⁸ So א seems to be used occasionally in the Scrolls for אלהים (DSD x,1).

The omission of the initial letter of a word is a curious form of abbreviation which occurs only in לף for אלף 'thousand' in the Jewish-Aramaic documents from Egypt²⁹; it was perhaps due to the fact that א might stand for ארבע(ין) 'four, forty' (although ciphers were normally employed for numbers in these texts). Such an abbreviation would in any case be intelligible only with a very few common words. Elsewhere להם for אלהים, misread להם as תקון סופרים to avoid blasphemy³⁰ (I Sam. iii, 13, LXX), may represent the same device. It has been detected also in פִּי-גִמְלוֹ לָהֶם רָעָה, where לָהֶם has been thought to be a misreading of לֵיהֶם for לְאֱלֹהִים (Is. iii, 9); here too it may have been adopted for a like reason, to avoid a charge of ingratitude to God (Perles; cp. Deut. xxxii, 6). In the same way לְפָנֶיהֶם in אֶת-עַמִּי יִנְאַצּוּן מִהָיוֹת עוֹד גּוֹי לְפָנֶיהֶם may be a misreading of an original לְפָנֶי הָאֱלֹהִים = לפני הים (Perles)^{30a} or of לְפָנֶי אֱלֹהֵיהֶם = לפני הים (Jer. xxxiii, 24), as suggested by the two ancient Vss. which imply לְפָנֶי *scil.* before God (Theod., Pesh.).

That the names of God were then abbreviated is proved by the prohibition in the Scrolls of swearing ודלת באלף ולמד וגם באלף 'by 'el[ohim] or by 'ad[onay]' (CDC xv, 1).

27. Cp. Geiger, *Urschrift u. Uebersetzungen*, 273-274.

28. S. p. xxx *infra*.

29. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, 295.

30. Geiger, *op. cit.*, 271-272.

30a. Cp. ש(ק)ל *supra* ch. I.

V

Proper names of persons and places, especially those which occur often, seem to have been commonly abbreviated, as in

אָחִי read as אָחִי (M.T.) or אָחִי יוֹסֵף (Gen. xlvii, 3; Ginsburg w. LXX, Sam.)

אָחִי read as אָחִי (M.T.) or אָחִי יוֹאָב (II Sam. iii, 27; Ginsburg w. LXX);

אֵל = אֱלִי misread אֶל-יִרְמְיָהוּ (Jer. xxxii, 26; Volz w. LXX; cp. xxviii, 1);

יָד = יְהוּדָה misread יָדִי (Ezek. xxxvii, 19; Cornill w. LXX);

יָ = יִשְׂרָאֵל misread יִשְׂרָאֵל (Jer. xxxiii, 7; xxxvi, 2; Volz w. LXX);

נְשִׂאֵי read as נְשִׂאֵי or נְשִׂאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (Ezek. xlv, 8; Ginsburg w. LXX, Heb. MSS.);

עִם = עִם יְהוּדָה misread עִם יְהוּדָה (II Sam. i, 12; LXX)^{30b};

אֵל misread אֶל-יִרְמְיָהוּ, for אֱלִי (Jer. xxxv, 12; Cornill w. LXX);

בָּא read בָּאֲשֶׁר in M. T. but בָּאֲשֶׁר by the LXX (Am. iii, 9);

עָרֵי יְהוּדָה = עָרֵי יְהוּדָה (LXX, cp. verse 6), misread עָרֵי (Jer. xxxiv, 1; Cornill);

הָרִי בְּתַרְבִּים = הָרִי בְּתַר misread הָרִי בְּתַר (Ct. ii, 17, Perles; cp. vii, 5);

בְּאֶרֶץ צוֹבָה = בְּאֶרֶץ צוֹבָה misread בְּאֶרֶץ (I Kings ix, 18; Eichhorn; cp. II Chr. viii, 3-4).³¹

That proper names may be thus abbreviated accounts also for the frequent confusion between 'Israel' and 'Jacob' in the M.T. and the versions. For example, the LXX have $\iota\alpha\alpha\omega\beta$ for יִשְׂרָאֵל in eleven places and $\text{I}\sigma\sigma\alpha\eta\lambda$ for יַעֲקֹב in six places³²; and they have $\text{I}\alpha\alpha\omega\beta$ once for יִשְׂרָאֵל for the same reason (Deut. xxxii, 15). Does this account for some of the confusion between "Israel" and "Judah" (e.g. II Chron. xxi, 19, 27).

VI

Certain common nouns, too, seem to have been very often abbreviated, notably בֵּית 'house', בֶּן 'son' and בַּת 'daughter'³³ as in

בֵּית read as בֵּיתָה but translated בְּנֵי (I Kings xvii, 15, LXX);

בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל read as בֵּיתָה but translated בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל (Ezek. xii, 23, LXX)^{33a};

30b. Cp. Zeph. ii, 4 (אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה; LXX אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה).

31. Cp. Burney, *Book of Kings*, 138.

32. Hatch & Redpath, *Concordance to the Septuagint, Supplement*, 74, 88.

33. Cp. Schwally in ZAW 10 (1900) 171. The LXX have 'house' for 'sons' in some 11 places and 'sons' for 'house' in some 15 places (Hatch & Redpath, *Concordance*, 973-982, 1384-1404).

33a. Ch. Rabin, *Zadokite Documents* 17, line 4.

ב' יהודה read as בֵּית יְהוּדָה but translated בני יהודה (Hos. i, 7, LXX);
ב' ישראל read as בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל but translated בית ישראל (Ezek. xliii, 7; xliv, 9,
15, LXX);

ב' אדניכם read as בְּנֵי אֲדֹנֵיכֶם in M.T., but as בית אדניהם in Heb. MSS.
(II Kings x, 6);

ב' אדניך read as בֵּית אֲדֹנֶיךָ but translated בְּנוֹת אֲדֹנֶיךָ (II Sam. xii, 8; Pesh.).

These abbreviations suggest that several names of places and peoples, which have unusual forms, perhaps owe them to a failure on the part of the scribes to recognize the practice, *e.g.*

בְּעֶשְׂתָּרָה for בֵּית עֶשְׂתָּרָה (Josh. xxi, 27; Gesenius);

בְּעֵנָא for בֶּן-עֵנָא (cp. *Bin-A-na* at T.-A.)³⁴;

בְּדִקָּר for בֶּן-דִּקָּר (cp. Pesh.'s *Bar-dqar*).

This explanation has been conjectured for a number of personal names of this type (בְּעֵלִים, בְּשָׁלֵם, בְּלִשָּׁן, בְּמַהֲלָל, and so on), and it is perhaps confirmed by a certain number of Thamudean names of the same form.³⁵ In the same way the strange בְּרַע and בְּרִשָּׁע have been plausibly explained as representing respectively בֶּן-רַע and בֶּן-רִשָּׁע (Gen. xiv, 2; Tuch).

Other common nouns which may be similarly abbreviated are אָדָם 'man', אֲדָן 'lord' and מֶלֶךְ 'king', מְקוֹם 'place', יוֹם 'day' and עַתָּה 'time', and the names of the months as in

אָדָם or אֲדָן = אֲדוֹנֵי = אֲדָם (I Sam. xvii, 32; Wellhausen w. LXX);

הָמָּה = הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה = הַמ' ה' (Jer. vii, 4; Rudolph; cp. vii, 3)^{35a};

וְעַל-כֵּן-הִמְעַשָּׂה = וְעַתָּה לְכֹל הַמְעַשָּׂה = וְעַל לְכֹל הַמְעַשָּׂה (Eccl. iii, 17; Houbigant);

לִי נִקְּם = לְיוֹם נִקְּם = לִי נִקְּם (Deut. xxxii, 35; Perles w. LXX, Sam., Targ. O.);

אֲחֵרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ = אַחֲרֵי (י) הַמ' = אַחֲרֵי / אַחֲרֵי (Jer. xxxix, 5 = II Kings xxv, 5; Jer. lii, 8).³⁶

VII

So too pronouns and particles, for example הוּא 'that' and זֶה 'this',

34. Knudtzon, *Amarna-Tafeln*, 170, 37.

35. Winnett, *A Study of the Lihyanite and Thamudic Inscriptions*, 20-22.

35a. Cp. II Chron. viii, 11.

36. Zuckerbram in *Melilah* 3/4 (1950), 13.

מי 'who?' and אשר 'who', which', אי and איפה 'where?', אם 'if', לו 'would that' and לא³⁷ 'not' must often have been abbreviated, as in
 הו' ידע ועד = הו' ידע ועד misread הו' ידע ועד³⁸ (Jer. xxix, 23 Q; Michaelis w. Kethiv);
 מ' ספר = מ' ספר misread מ' ספר (*sic*) (Num. xxiii, 10; Ginsburg w. LXX, Sam^{MSS});
 א' שפתו = א' שפתו misread א' שפתו (Jer. v, 16; Rudolph; cp. Pesh.);
 א' ו' יותר = א' ו' יותר misread א' ו' יותר (Eccl. ii, 15; Zapletal);
 ו' בעמקך = ו' בעמקך misread ו' בעמקך (Jer. xlix, 4, gloss; Driver);
 א' הוא = א' הוא misread א' הוא (II Kings ii, 14; Graetz);
 א' לכהנים = א' לכהנים misread א' לכהנים (Ezek. xlvi, 19; Cornill w. LXX, Pesh., Targ.);
 רב הוא ונורא = רב הוא ונורא misread רב הוא ונורא (Ps. lxxxix, 8; Graetz w. Sryohex.);
 א' ו' אשיב = א' ו' אשיב misread א' ו' אשיב (Ps. lxxix, 5; Driver);
 א' כזה = א' כזה misread א' כזה (Jer. x, 19; Driver);
 א' ל' = א' ל' misread א' ל' (II Kings vi, 27; Perles);
 א' ל' הגוים = א' ל' הגוים misread א' ל' הגוים (Ezek. xxxvi, 7; Thackeray w. LXX, Pesh.);
 ל' אחו = ל' אחו misread ל' אחו (Eccl. ii, 3; Galling);
 ל' הכת read as ל' הכת (LXX, Vulg.) or ל' הכת (M.T. w. Pesh., Targ.) (II Kings xiii, 19; Klostermann).

VIII

Occasionally the last letter of a word is not found in the M.T. as in
 אבי (otherwise unknown) for אבי = אבי (II Kings viii, 2; Ginsburg with II Chr. xxix, 1)³⁹;
 מגבעון = מגבעון (II Sam. v, 25; Thenius w. LXX and I Chr. xiv, 16);
 בחלק יורעאל = בחלק יורעאל⁴⁰ (I Kings xxi, 23; Castalio w. Vulg., Pesh., Targ., Heb. MSS., and II Kings ix, 36);
 מימן = מימן (Ps. cvii, 3; Clericus w. Targ.);
 למות = למות (Is. liii, 8; Houbigant w. LXX);

37. The negative *la'* is written without ' and united with the following word often in the Ugaritic and occasionally in Old-Aramaic texts.

38. Cp. König, *Syntax der Hebräischen Sprache*, p. 283 n. 1 (one article with two nouns).

39. So also Josephus, *Ant.* IX, xiii, 1, § 260.

40. So also in LXX (*προτείχισμα*), implying that the abbreviated form appeared in their archetype but had been filled out in those on which the other Versions were based.

אֲשֶׁף for אוֹר חֶשֶׁף = אֲשֶׁף = אֲשֶׁף (Jb. xxii, 11; Eichhorn w. LXX);
 שׂוֹא גִלְיוֹ for שׂוֹא גִלְיוֹ = שׂוֹא גִלְיוֹ (Ps. lxxxix, 10; Olshausen w. Pesh.; cp. lxxv 8);
 לְמַסְרִי לְמַסְרִי מִרְעוּהוּ חֶסֶד for לְמַסְרִי מִרְעוּהוּ חֶסֶד (Jb. vi, 14; Tur-Sinai w. Targ.);
 לֹא יִצְעַק וְלֹא יִשְׁאֵג = יִשְׁאֵג for לֹא יִצְעַק וְלֹא יִשְׁאֵג (Is. xlii, 2; Perles w. Targ.);
 יִשְׁמַע = יִשְׁמַע for בִּי יִשְׁמַע (Jb. xxiii, 6; Graetz);
 לֹא-יִשְׁמַע = לֹא יִשְׁמַע תְּפִלָּה for לֹא-יִשְׁמַע תְּפִלָּה (Jb. xxiv, 12; Geiger);
 וַיִּשְׁמַר עַד-בֹּשׁ for וַיִּשְׁמַר עַד-בֹּשׁ = וַיִּשְׁמַר (II Kings viii, 11; Graetz).

Not all these instances are equally convincing as illustrations of abbreviations; for most if not all can be explained as due to the failure of the copyist to reproduce the end of the word. In any case, such abbreviations are likely only when the word in question is extremely common or the sense clear; and the sense thus won must not violate Hebrew usage.⁴¹

IX

The LXX postulate abbreviations even when they are demonstrably wrong. So they interpret וְעָשָׂה אֵת מֵאֲחֵד מֵאֲלֵה (Ezek. xviii, 10), which is a conflation of מֵאֲלֵה and מֵאֲחֵד (sic) וְעָשָׂה 'and he turns aside from (going after) these (precepts)', as בִּי אֲבִי לֹא הֵלֵךְ (for) = בָּאֵרַח אֲבִי לֹא הֵלֵךְ 'in the way of his father he has not walked' (Bewer), which cannot be fitted into the sentence; their error is due to having mistaken עָשָׂה 'turned aside'⁴² for 'did', which has thrown the whole sentence out of gear. Then אַחֵד = אַחֵד is a marginal note indicating that מֵאֲלֵה must be corrected to מֵאֲחֵד אֵת, when the sense will be 'and he turned aside from following these'.

Abbreviations indicating glosses seem here and there to have made their way into the M. T., as in אֲבָחַת חֶרֶב אֵת עֲשׂוּיָהּ לְבָרֶק, where אֲבָחַת חֶרֶב = אֲבָחַת חֶרֶב אֲבָחַת חֶרֶב is a gloss explaining that אֲבָחַת חֶרֶב in the text means a weapon 'made for a lightning glance' (Ezek. xxi, 20; Reifmann). In the same way קִשָּׁת in קִשָּׁת בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה קִשָּׁת must be taken for קִשָּׁת = קִשָּׁת הַיְהוּדָה, being intended to supply an object for the verb from the immediately preceding וַיִּקְנֶן דָּוִד אֶת-הַקִּינָה הַזֹּאת עַל-שְׂאוּל וְעַל-יְהוֹנָתָן (II Sam. i, 18, Perles and Driver; cp. Deut. xxii, 44). So too הִנֵּה לְפָנֶיךָ מֵהָרַח is a misreading of הִנֵּה לְפָנֶיךָ הָרַח, where the superfluous הָרַח is an abbreviated gloss intended to indicate הָרַח.

41. So וַיִּשְׁמַר (II Kings viii, 11) cannot be translated *er wartete* (Perles, *Analekten*, 30).

42. Cp. Lev. iv, 2 (?); Ru. ii, 19; I Sam. xiv, 32 (?); I Kings xx, 40; I Chr. iv, 10; Jb. xxiii, 9 (Eitan, *Contributions to Biblical Lexicography*, 56-57, and Driver in *Studies . . . presented to T.H. Robinson*, 54-55).

as the subject as named in the previous verse (I Sam. ix, 12; Perles and Wellhausen w. LXX).

Once an early grammatical note has crept into the text; for מן יִנְצְרֶהוּ in מן is best explained as standing for מ'ן = מלא נון, being a gloss indicating that the verb is written *plene* with its radical *nun* and is not, as usually elsewhere, contracted (Ps. lxi, 8; Perles).

X

Scaliger⁴³ long ago hinted that the numerous mistakes in numbers in the M.T. may often be due to the use of abbreviations.

The earliest method of abbreviating numbers in the O.T. seems to have been by using the initial letter of the word for that required. This is amply illustrated by the confusing use of ש for שנים 'two', שלוש 'three', שש 'six', שבע 'seven', שמונה 'eight', and for the twenties formed from the last four^{43a}, as in שנים ש' misread as שבע שנים for שלוש שנים (II Sam. xxiv, 13; Ewald w. LXX and I Chr. xxi, 12);

ש' misread as שלשים for שלשה (II Sam. xxiii, 13; Vss., Q. and Heb. MSS.)⁴⁴;

ש' אלפים misread as ששים אלף for שבעה אלפים⁴⁵ (I Kings xx, 15; LXX);

מ' = מאת 'hundred (shekels)' misread as מנים 'manehs' (I Kings x, 17; Kittel w. II Chr. ix, 16).

The omission of sing. fem. and plur. masc. terminations will have been a contributory cause of the not infrequent confusion between units and tens⁴⁶, as in א' or ארבע = ארבע ארבע misread as ארבע = ארבעים (II Sam. xv, 7; Cappell w. LXX^{Luc}, Pesh.);

ע' or עשר = עשר עשר misread as עשרים = עשרים (Gen. vii, 11; LXX)^{46a};

ש' or שלש = שלשה ש' misread as שלשים (I Sam. xiii, 5; Keil w. LXX^{Luc}, Pesh.);

ש' or השלש = השלשה ש' misread as השלשי (Q. השלשה) (II Sam. xxiii, 18; Graetz w. Heb. MSS., Pesh. and Arab.)

Once this principle is admitted, the correction of ש' לחיה 'thy shoots' into

43. Cp. Kennicott, *Dissertatio Generalis*, 50.

43a. Cp. B.J. VII, x, 4, § 436, where '343 years' is an error for '243'.

44. The correction is confirmed by the total number.

45. The construction of אלף or אלפים, as the case may be, has been adapted to that required by the number. The error is certainly not due to writing the final ל of the preceding ישראל twice and reading it as the symbol for 30, as Thenius supposes (Wellhausen).

46. Wellhausen, *Bücher Samuelis*, 20.

46a. Cp. II Kings xviii, 13 (Montgomery).

ש' לְחֵיךְ = שְׁנֵי 'thy two cheeks' is admissible and greatly improves the sense (Ct. iv, 12; Perles).

Obviously a system which could have such results could not last, and another based on the order of the letters in the alphabet came into use; the letters from א to ט were used serially for one to nine, from י to צ for ten to ninety, and from ק to ת for one hundred to four hundred. The earliest examples of this method, which was that used long afterwards in dating the coins of the First Revolt, as already said, is in two or three examples of *gematria* which have been discovered in the M.T.

Thus the sum of the numerical values of the letters in the name of Eliezer, the steward of Abraham's household, is the basis of the number of men in his trained bands; for א = 1 plus ל = 30 plus י = 10 plus ע = 70 plus ז = 7 plus ר = 200 yields 318, which is the number of Abraham's men (Gen. xiv, 14).⁴⁷ In the same way, the incorrect 390 days (M.T., Aq., Symm., Theod.), for which Ezekiel is bidden to lie on his side, seems to have been substituted for the apparently original 190 days (LXX) to fit the numerical value of the letters in ימי מצור (ר) 'days of siege', which is י = 10 plus מ = 40 plus י = 10 plus מ = 40 plus צ = 90 plus ר = 200, namely 390 (Ezek. iv, 5, 8).⁴⁸ The first of these figures is pre-Septuagintal, the other seems to have been introduced between the LXX and the late Greek translators.

That *gematria* can be pushed so far back raises the question whether it may not have been preceded by some other system of the same sort, but not so elaborate. For example, the choice of the number of the children who had mocked Elisha and were torn by the two she-bears who arrived in response to his curse may be based on the numerical value of the letters; for their number was 'forty and two', which can be extracted from דב 'bear' read as ד = ארבע (ארבע) read as ארבעים (= ארבע) 'forty' plus ב = שנים 'two', while the odd 'two' was further taken for the number of the she-bears themselves (II Kings ii, 24).

Occasionally the LXX have followed the system of initial letters where the M.T. reflects that of the numerical value of the letters, as in בשנה הח' interpreted by the LXX as בשנה השמינית and read in the M.T. as בשנה החמשה, because ח is the eighth letter of the alphabet while ה as the initial letter of חמש 'five'

47. Nestle, *Expository Times* 17 (1906), 44-45.

48. Bertholet, *Hesekiel*, 26.

may be read also as an abbreviation for that word (Jer. xxxvi, 9). This use of both systems is further illustrated by *בחדש ט'* interpreted by the LXX as *בחדש התשיעי* and in the M.T. as *בחדש העשירי* because ט is the ninth letter of the alphabet and ט' = טבת is the name of the tenth month of the year (Jer. lii, 4).⁴⁹ In both cases the divergent readings reflect the same archetype.

When therefore both *ששים* and *שמונים* are translated 'forty' by the LXX, the error may be ascribed to their having confused an archaic ש used as the initial letter for ששים or שמונים with an equally archaic untailed מ whose numerical value is 'forty' (I Kings vi, 1-2).⁵⁰

What then was Saul's age when he came to the throne as *בן-שנה*, as said in the M.T.; for he certainly was not only 'a year old' (I Sam. xiii, 1)? The LXX read *בן יש שנה* 'a son of 30 years', suggesting that ש = שלשים has fallen out by haplography (Scaliger); but this makes him too young, since he is unlikely to have had a grandson when only 32 years old (II Sam. iv, 4). Alternatively, the phrase may be read *בן ג שנה* 'a son of 50 years', which would make him about 70 when he died fighting at Gilboa (Driver); or it might be read *בן ש' נה* = *בן שנים נה* 'a son of 55 years' (Caspari), which postulates a doubtful construction in so early a book⁵¹ and perhaps makes him too old for an Oriental warrior when he died.⁵² The same verse goes on to say that he reigned *שתי שנים* 'two years'; not only is the expression ungrammatical but the figure also is equally impossible. The best solution is to suppose that the original text read *כ' שנה* = *עשרים שנה* '20 years' and that this was misread as or corrupted into *ב שנים* = *שתיים שנים*⁵³ (where the number of שנה is adapted to the idiom), agreeing tolerably well with Saul's age as suggested above (Keil); for the arguments here adduced have shown that it is incorrect to say that 'there is no ground for supposing (as is sometimes done) that in ancient times numerals were represented in Hebrew MSS by the letters of the alphabet'. Further, no evidence has been found to support the contention that 'the ancient Hebrews, it is reasonable to suppose, would have adopted a system similar to that in use amongst their neighbours' and have employed ciphers

49. Zuckerbram in *Melilah* 3/4 (1950), 6.

50. Cp. Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 193 (fig. 97, col. 2-6).

51. Gesenius - Kautzsch & Cowley, *Hebrew Grammar*, §134 h.

52. Driver, *op. cit.*, 235-6; cp. Montgomery, *Daniel*, 344-5.

53. Cp. II Sam. ii, 10; II Kings xxi, 19; II Chr. xxxii, 21 for this expression.

like those found on Phoenician and Aramaic, Nabataean and Palmyrene inscriptions⁵⁴, although the Jews in Egypt used them in non-literary documents in the 5th century B.C. The scribes may have used them in Biblical texts; but the only practice that can be proved for such texts is the two alphabetic systems.

XI

Whole phrases can be shown to have been written in abbreviation. So, for example, an original בְּבִי אֵה has been read as בְּבִי אֵה (LXX, M.T.) and also as $\text{בְּבִי אֵה אֶסְתֵּר הַמִּלְכָּה}$ (Vulg., Pesh., Targ.); the abbreviation was possible because it could be easily understood from the context (Esth. ix, 25). Or again the meaningless אֶפֶסָא in $\text{עֲשֵׂה זֹאת אֶפֶסָא}$ ⁵⁵ (where it is followed by *paseq* indicating a doubt about the text) is an incorrect filling in of an original $\text{אֲשֶׁר פָּקַדְתִּי = אִפְּא}$ (עֲלֶיךָ) 'which I enjoin upon thee', as the LXX translate it; the verse may now be rendered 'do this that I enjoin upon thee, my son, and save thyself: when thou fallest into another's power, go, exert thyself and pester thy friends', which restores the rhythmical balance of the clauses.⁵⁶ The abbreviation here is possible because the expression is a near-quotation (Prov. vi, 3; cp. Zeph. iii, 7).

Elsewhere abbreviation may be conjectured even where no ancient Vs. corroborates it. For example, the mysterious $\text{בְּנֵי אִם-יִפְתִּיחַ חֲטָאִים אֶל-תְּבִיא}$ in אֶל-תְּבִיא is an incorrect restitution of an original $\text{אֶל תְּבִיא בִּי אֶל-תְּבִיא}$ wrongly imported from below, where it is in place; it had presumably been accidentally omitted in copying the archetype and was added in abridged form in the margin, whence it was subsequently and erroneously transferred to its present place in the M.T. The verse may now be translated

'my son, if sinners entice thee
if they speak <unto thee, saying>⁵⁷:
come with us; let us lie in wait for blood,
set an ambush⁵⁸ for one who is innocent to no purpose',

54. S. R. Driver, *Books of Samuel* (1913), 97; cp. Burney, *Books of Kings*, 61.

55. So BH³; other edd. (1) אֶפֶסָא | עֲשֵׂה-זֹאת

56. G. R. Driver in *Biblica* 32 (1951), 196-197.

57. Beer with LXX; cp. Jer. xxvii, 9, 14 (אֲמַרְיִם אֵלֵיכֶם לֵאמֹר) and Is, xxxv, 4 (אֲמַר rendered by παρακαλεῖν).

58. Namely נִצְפֵּה-נָא (Sa'adyah).

whereby the rhythmical balance of the clauses is restored (Prov. i, 10-11).⁵⁹

Or again, the rhythmically inadequate יהוה בְּיָרְאֵת יְהוָה has been ingeniously taken as having originally been יהוה [עליו] רוח יהוה [רוח] = והי' [x] ר' י' [x] ח' ובי' 'and the spirit of the Lord, (a spirit of) wisdom and understanding shall rest (upon him)', incorrectly filled out to make the present M.T. (Is. xi, 3; Perles).

Occasionally an abbreviation underlying an ancient translation is demonstrably wrong, but is not for that reason of no interest. For example, the M.T.'s אֵיךְ אֲשִׁיתְךָ בְּבָנִים (or rather בְּבָנִים) makes good sense when it is translated 'how shall I treat thee as a son?'; but the LXX's אמן יהוה כי (= אֵיךְ) אֲשִׁיתְךָ בְּבָנִים makes no sense, since the Lord is the speaker (Jer. iii, 19; Duhm). The interest of the LXX's misinterpretation is that it proves their familiarity with abbreviations, since they would not have had recourse to them if they had not commonly found them in their archetypes; further, it suggests that . . . אמן יהוה כי must have been a well-known formula of affirmation (though not found elsewhere), since it is not otherwise likely to have been abbreviated.

XII

That an unwanted י, a *paseq*, or a *maqef* sometimes represent a lost mark of abbreviation has been suggested (Perles), as in
 לח written לח and read as לחי instead of לחנם (Ps. iii, 8; LXX);
 את written את and read as את instead of אתה in עֲנֵי תוֹשִׁיעַ in וְאֶת-עַזְרָתְךָ (II Sam. xxii, 28 = Ps. xviii, 28);
 גַּמְלֵךְ read as גַּמְלֵךְ instead of גַּמְלֵךְ in גַּמְלֵךְ-מִעֲשֵׂינִי for גַּמְלֵךְ-מִעֲשֵׂינִי (Is. xxvi, 12; LXX, Pesh.).

Not all of these examples are entirely convincing. In the first the text makes perfectly good sense as it stands, since לחי 'cheek' balances שִׁנַּי 'teeth', and the LXX's reading, though in itself plausible (cp. Ps. xxxv, 19; lxix, 5), may rest on a faulty archetype; further, the preposition before חֲנֹם is against Hebrew usage. In the second אתה may have been written אַתְּ (cp. Ps. vi, 4), so that an original את = אַתְּ is not a necessary postulate. In the third the *maqef* is found only in some (Van der Hooght) but not in other (Kittel) editions; and elsewhere the verb used in this idiom is not פָּעַל but עָשָׂה (Is. iii, 11), which however is not a serious objection to the proposed emendation.

59. Müller, *Komposition u. Strophenbau*, 70-71.

The theory, however, can here hardly bear the weight put upon it.⁶⁰

XIII

This study will have served a useful purpose if it has proved that abbreviation must have played a considerable part already in the pre-Septuagintal text of the O.T., although not nearly to the same extent as it does in medieval manuscripts. The recognition of this device, which may be ascribed to the influence of Greek copyists, may be an important key for unlocking some of the secrets of an obscure or apparently corrupt text; but it must be used with caution, or it may open the door to a flood of wild conjecture.

It may be expected mainly in the case of terminations and suffixes which can be easily supplied from the context, well-known pronouns and particles, a few nouns in daily use (e.g. *אֵל, מֶלֶךְ, בֵּן, בַּיִת, מְקוֹם, עֵת, יוֹם, שָׁנָה*), the names of the months, proper names which recur frequently, and especially the names of God, standardized expressions and quotations; it will also be found in catch-words connecting marginal notes with the text. Even so, it may be used only if the resulting text conforms to Hebrew usage and makes sense; this is by no means so in all the instances in which it has been invoked.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Other abbreviations for common nouns seem to be ימ' for ימין 'south' (Ps. cvii, 3; Clericus — cf. Engl. *S.* for *south*) and ר' for ראש or רגל as in לא-עשה רגליו (II Sam. xix, 25), which surely must be read לא-עשה ראשו (Josephus, *Ant.* VII. xi. 3, § 267). Either word may precede (cp. Dt. xxviii, 35; II Sam. xiv, 25; Lev. xiii, 12); but here Mephibosheth's purpose is to show respect to and so to win the favour of the king, which he would hardly obtain if he left his whole head unkempt and only trimmed his moustache.

Yet other abbreviations for nouns are א = איש, as when אדני is mistranslated ἀνὴρ by the LXX (Am. vii, 7), and ש = שמים and שמש, as when the M. T.'s תחת השמים is given as תחת השמש in one MS. (de Rossi) and is so rendered by the LXX, Vulg. and Pesh. (Qoh. ii,3).

60. S. p. xxx.

Once perhaps אָ - אֱלֹהֵי has been wrongly taken for אַתּ by a late copyist (Zech. vii, 7; Graetz w. LXX and Pesh.). Further, is לֹא an error for לֹא־ = לֹא־דְנִי in 'unto the Lord from East and West, unto the Lord from the wilderness is there uplifting (of voices)' (Ps lxx, 7)?

Another example is שׁ misread שְׁבִיעִי instead שְׁשִׁי (Gen. ii, 2; Samar. — Heb., LXX, Pesh.).

Lastly, the LXX translate the mysterious שְׁפִי (Num. xxiii, 3) doubly: as *εὐθεῖαν* (cp. Arab. *safā* 'was swift') and as *ἐπερωτῆσαι τὸν θεόν*, i. e. שִׁפִּי - שְׁפִי יְהוָה (von Gall; cp. Josh. ix, 14).