contemporary issues in the study of early Jewish prayer and, more importantly, the ancient texts that fuel such study.

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The volume consists of twenty-eight articles by Emanuel Tov originally published elsewhere between 1990 and 2008. The essays are to a certain extent revised for this edition, taking new studies into consideration and updating the bibliography. The contents are divided into three sections: (A) Hebrew Bible (twenty essays), (B) Greek Bible (six essays), and (C) Qumran (two essays). You can easily be misled by this division, if you suppose that Qumran is only dealt with in the final two articles. In fact, Qumran and the biblical manuscripts from Qumran are constantly present in all sections. It is the very strength of the whole book. The last section is only marked with a larger overview of the Qumran materials, biblical or not, and the total number of Qumran compositions. In this section special characteristics of the texts found in Cave 11 are also highlighted.

The first essay is an extensive review of James Barr’s monograph The Variable Spellings of the Hebrew Bible (1989). Tov is one of the few scholars who are able to discuss the spellings of the Hebrew Bible. He highly appreciates Barr’s work as a basic study of the Masoretic spelling, even though he has several open questions and refers to several minor deficiencies and shortcomings, in statistics for instance (see pp. 13–14). He is critical of the textual basis of Barr’s study and of his general approach, because Barr does not inform the reader exactly what Hebrew texts he has utilised. As strengths of the study Tov mentions two facts: First, Barr has demonstrated remarkable variation between books and groups of books, the Pentateuch and Exodus in particular having more short spellings than the other (later) books. Second, not all words and forms are similar in respect to variation. There appear a few words that are always spelled defectively, whereas some words/forms are mostly written plene, but occasionally defective, or vice versa. In the final analysis, the phenomenon seems to be inconsistent and remains so in Tov’s view, although Barr often prefers linguistic-historical explanations.

The essay ‘Excerpted and Abbreviated Biblical Texts from Qumran’ highlights the importance of their existence not as early fragments of later compositions, but later excerpts and abbreviations of earlier compositions e.g. 4Q175, 4QExod⁴, 4QDeut⁴, 4QDeut⁵, etc. Tov discusses the textual character of those excerpted and abbreviated texts and concludes that none of those texts (excluding tefillin and mezuzot) are close to the Masoretic text. Instead, they show freedom in regard to the biblical texts.

Chapter seven is dedicated to ‘The Rewritten Book of Joshua as Found at Qumran and Masada’. It is a description of six manuscripts, namely 4Q378, 4Q379, 4Q522, 5Q9, MasParaJosh and 4QPaleoParaJosh (4Q123). They are all considered by Tov to be part of a rewritten book of Joshua. Because the term ‘Apocryphon of Joshua’ has already been used for these manuscripts in the literature, he does not want to change it, even though he remarks that the name ‘Paraphrase of Joshua’ would be more appropriate. He renames the manuscripts 4QapocrJosh⁴,⁵, 5QapocrJosh?, Mas apocrJosh?, and 4Qpaleo apocrJosh⁴,⁵. With scholarly caution, which is very typical of him, he puts a question mark after the three last-mentioned names because he is not absolutely sure that they belong to the same Apocryphon of Joshua as 4QapocrJosh⁴,⁵. He sheds special light on the debated manuscript 4Q522 (4QapocrJosh⁵) and adopts
Qimron’s view, earlier presented by R. H. Eisenman and M. Wise, that this manuscript deals with the Joshua cycle. He also discusses the possible Qumran authorship of the Apocryphon of Joshua and suggests that the text as a whole had a Qumran origin.

Article number 10 is a very important contribution to the textual character of the biblical texts from the Judean Desert. Tov divides the biblical scrolls into four textual families: (1) proto-Masoretic texts, (2) pre-Samaritan texts, (3) texts close to the presumed source of the LXX, and (4) non-aligned texts. This is a revised classification, because he earlier (2000) distinguished five different groups, in that he took the texts written in the Qumran scribal practice as a distinct category. In the Pentateuch the texts that reflect the MT form the majority (52%), while in the other books the non-aligned texts have the majority (53%), but still 44% follow the MT. Thus, the MT and non-aligned texts predominate in the Qumran corpus.

Chapter 11 is a balanced presentation of ‘The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences between the LXX and MT S T V, Compared with Similar Evidence in Other Sources’. He considers the MT or proto-MT to be very early, existing already before the Maccabean era. The LXX represents in general an old text-form when it differs from the MT.

In ‘The Text of the Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek Bible Used in the Ancient Synagogues’ Tov presents his famous theory about a master copy of the MT preserved in the Jerusalem Temple already at the end of the Second Temple period. This is for him the only way in which he is capable of accounting for the textual similarity of the Hebrew texts read in the earliest synagogues, such as at Masada, and used by Bar Kochba rebels whose leaders had close contact with temple circles. The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll (8HevXII gr) also supports this theory, because it has been corrected towards the MT in the first century BCE.

The volume is so rich that I have difficulties in dealing with even the most important essays in this short review. Still, I refer to some very significant contributions. Three articles, namely ‘The Biblia Hebraica Quinta—An Important Step Forward’, ‘Recording the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Text Editions of Hebrew Scripture’, and ‘Hebrew Scripture Editions: Philosophy and Praxis’, form an outstanding introduction to modern editions of the Hebrew Bible. In ‘Three Strange Books of the LXX: 1 Kings, Esther, and Daniel Compared with Similar Rewritten Compositions from Qumran and Elsewhere’ Tov in his general conclusions qualifies his earlier view of 4QReworked Pentateuch as a non-biblical composition, in that he now considers it to be a Bible manuscript. To the group of important contributions also belong all the Septuagint articles, ‘The Greek Biblical Texts from the Judean Desert’ in particular.

The volume is a magnificent contribution to scholarship. I recommend it to every scholar and especially to doctoral students in the fields of Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Qumran.

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The Pericope group started in 2000 to call attention to the necessity of the study of unit delimitation in biblical and related manuscripts, both for the exegesis of biblical texts, and for research into the tradition of divisions in the text throughout the transmission of biblical texts. The volume under review, the sixth one in the series