

THE SPELLING OF THE NAME "DAVID" IN THE HEBREW BIBLE*

by

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The name David occurs 1073 times in the Hebrew Bible.¹ Of these, approximately 788 have the standard three-letter orthography (*dwd*), while the remainder (c. 285) are spelled with four letters (*dwyd*), the internal vowel-letter *yod* being added. While the four-letter spelling is less frequent, it is sufficiently common to warrant the designation of alternate official spelling. The phenomenon of two official or correct spellings side by side

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1. The numbers are provided by Andersen-Forbes from their computer-based analysis of the Hebrew text. Their counts and calculations are derived from the Kittel *Biblia Hebraica* (3rd edition) which represents the text of the Leningrad Manuscript also used for the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*). The distribution of the name and its alternate spellings is as follows:

	dwd	dwyd		
SAMUEL	575	0		
KINGS	93	3		
ISAIAH	10	0		
JEREMIAH	15	0		
EZEKIEL	3	1		
MINOR PROPHETS	1	8		
PSALMS	87	1		
PROVERBS	1	0		
RUTH	2	0		
SONG OF SONGS	0	1		
ECCLESIASTES	1	0		
CHRONICLES—EZRA—NEHEM-	0	271		
IAH				
Totals	788	+	285	= 1073

These figures should now be adopted as normative in place of those listed in Brown, Driver, Briggs (1907, p. 187b), for which only a claim of approximate accuracy was ever

in the Hebrew Scriptures is sufficiently rare and intriguing to warrant further analysis and discussion.²

A similar but essentially different phenomenon is the occurrence of different forms of the same name, in which a phonological distinction is reflected in the spelling, e.g., *yônātān* and *yēhônātān* as alternate forms of the name of the son of Saul.³ In the case of David, however, there is no reason to suppose that the name was pronounced differently depending on the spelling, or that there is any difference at all except in the orthography. Other examples of this phenomenon occur, especially when a medial *yod* or *waw* is omitted or added in the spelling in contrast with the prevailing pattern, but such deviations in defiance of an established spelling are sporadic (e.g., Assyria is regularly spelled *ʿšwr*, but there is a single case of defective spelling in I Chron 5:6);⁴ in certain cases of relatively rare names, tone variant spellings may occur (e.g., Gehazi occurs 12 times: it is spelled with five letters, *gyhzy*, eight times, and with four letters, *ghzy*, the other four times—all of these occurrences are in II Kings, chaps. 4, 5, and 8).

More often, an alternate, generally fuller, spelling is found in biblical and non-biblical texts from Qumran, generally those which lie clearly outside of the Massoretic tradition. Thus the name Moses is always spelled with three letters in the Massoretic Text (*mšh*), but frequently with four letters (*mwšh*) in the Qumran scrolls. Similar variation obtains for the name David, which is spelled with four letters in the extensive (but fragmented) text, 4QSam a, whereas in MT it is always spelled with three let-

made: BDB gives 1066 as the total with c. 790 for the 3-letter spelling, and c. 276 for the 4-letter spelling. Needless to say the general argument in this paper is not affected by the slight discrepancy between the two sets of figures. There are two exceptions in the readings of the Leningrad MS which will be considered at appropriate places in the paper. No count is fool-proof, but *dw(y)d* seems to present special problems. The only previous study of the spelling patterns known to me, that of Hugo Bonk (1891:127-29), reckons with 889 occurrences, by Bonk's own count. I cannot accept Bonk's conclusion that the use of the *dwd*-spelling in Psalms, Proverbs, Qoheleth, and Ruth represents a post-Chronicler revival of the oldest spelling (p. 129), but it is interesting to note that some contemporaries would. The total of 790 occurrences given in Botterweck and Ringgren (1978, p. 157) seems to be an error based on a misreading of Brown, Driver, and Briggs.

2. For references to recent discussions of the name David, see Baumgartner et al. (1967, p. 207) and Botterweck and Ringgren (1978).

3. For discussion, see Freedman and O'Connor (1980).

4. Though others may be suggested, given that *ʿr* is such a common combination in the Bible, F. I. Andersen and I have proposed to recognize such an instance of *ʿr* 'Assur' in Hos 7:12 (1980:469-70, cf. 463).

ters in the Books of Samuel.⁵ The defective spelling is also found in the Qumran text, 4QSam b, which has the distinction of being among the oldest of all manuscripts preserved there (dating from about 250 BCE, and in any case from the 3rd century BCE, much earlier than 4QSam a).⁶

In the case of the name David, we are dealing with a remarkable set of circumstances and data, which should enable us to pose questions, propose hypotheses, make inferences, and even draw conclusions about a set of issues, all of which are of interest, and some of which may have important bearing on matters of canon, the dating of various compositions, and the evolution of official orthography. In the first place, the name is well known, occurs frequently, and is widely distributed in the biblical text. Secondly, both spellings are well represented and hence can be regarded as correct or acceptable to editors and scribes. It is reasonable to ask how such a development took place, why there are two acceptable spellings, why they occur where they do, and what the relation of one group is to the other. In attempting to provide an answer to these questions, we will also endeavor to sketch a picture of orthographic development in Biblical Hebrew which will account for the divergence or evolution in spelling and correlate that with the compilation of the different biblical books and their incorporation into the Hebrew canon.

Let us consider first the distribution of the name in the Bible. The three-letter spelling (i.e., the so-called defective spelling, which is also the older and original spelling of the name in an alphabetic script using only consonants—*dwd*) is predominant in the narrative of the so-called Deuteronomic History (= Former Prophets): all the hundreds of occurrences in Samuel are defectively written, as are the vast majority of cases in Kings (about 79 in all, of which three are written plene: I Kings 3:14, 11:4, 36).

The defective spelling also predominates in the Latter Prophets: this is true of all instances of the name in Isaiah (including the occurrence in Isa

5. The text remains unpublished, though most of the material readings can be found in McCarter's commentary on First Samuel (1980) and the forthcoming companion volume. 4QSam c (Ulrich 1979) probably showed the same pattern, though no instances of the name are preserved. The full spelling is attested in some IQ texts: IQ7:3 (2 Sam 21), and IQ7:4 (2 Sam 23) both are published in Barthélemy 1955:65.

Among the non-biblical cases of the plene form, we may cite these cases: 1. 6Q9 (=6Qap Sam/Kgs). 22.4 (Bartlett 1962:119), 2. 4Qp 161 (=Isa a). 7 10.iii 22 (reedited in Hoyan 1979:1, 18, 11, 76, 85); the passage treats Isa 11:15 and so does not reflect a MT occurrence of David, 3. 4QP Bless 2.4 (discussed in Fitzmeyer 1971), 4. 4QFlor 1-2:11 (discussed *ibid.*), 5. 4Q504 (= DibHam a). 1-2.iv.6 (Baillet, 1982, p. 143).

6. The treatment in Freedman 1962 has not yet been superseded by the *editio princeps*.

55:3) and Jeremiah, as well as in three of the four examples in Ezekiel (the exception is Ezek 34:23; the spelling is defective in Ezek 34:24 and 37:24, 25). The three-letter spelling also occurs, without exception, in Psalms, Proverbs, Ruth, and Ecclesiastes.⁷

The four-letter spelling is used regularly in the Chronicler's Work: I and II Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah.⁸ It is stated in Brown, Driver, Briggs that the defective spelling is found at I Chron 13:6, and doubtless such a reading occurs in the printed text used by the editors, and possibly in the manuscripts on which it was based. But it is to be noted that *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, which is based on the Leningrad MS, gives the full spelling at I Chron 13:6, and the same is true of the Aleppo Codex. So we must conclude that the defective spelling in I Chron claimed in BDB is not derived from the best and oldest manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible, but is based on an aberrant text arising probably from a scribal slip easily induced by the fact that scribes were trained to spell the name both ways and may from time to time have substituted one spelling for the other unintentionally. What is surprising is how consistently the spelling, whether of three or four letters, is maintained throughout single books. With only the two exceptions already noted (in Ezekiel and Kings), the spelling, whether plene or defective, is the same throughout individual books.

In addition to the Chronicler's Work, the full spelling is found throughout the Minor Prophets, including instances in Amos (twice) and Hosea (once),⁹ as well as Zechariah (six cases). In addition, the Song of Songs has a single example of the name (it is spelled in full: 4:4).

7. There is an exception in the spelling of the name in Ps 122:5 in BH¹ and BHS, where we find *dwvd* instead of the expected *dwd*. Comparison, however, with the spelling in the Aleppo Codex, which must be regarded as the best of all the Medieval MSS, shows the 3-letter spelling. It is more likely, in my judgment, that the Aleppo Codex preserves the correct spelling for the Psalter, consistent with all other examples in that book, than that the Leningrad MS, which is generally not as reliable as the Aleppo, has the original spelling, which was modified inadvertently in the Aleppo Codex. It is possible, of course, that the original edition of the complete Psalter as we have it, contained 4-letter examples of the name, since publication of the whole Psalter could not have been earlier than the Exile, and might well have been later. If the Psalter should be regarded as containing both spellings it would then be grouped with Kings and Ezekiel in the transition period. But one doubtful exception should be viewed skeptically.

8. Brown, Driver and Briggs (1907:187b). Furthermore, Mandelkern's *Concordance* (1947) and Baumgartner et al. (1967, p. 207) support the full reading of the name in the passage mentioned in the text (I Chron 13:6).

9. The Leningrad MS has the 3-letter spelling at Hosea 3:5, and that might be taken as a reflection of the original spelling in some pre-exilic form of the book or partial collection of prophetic works. However, the Aleppo Codex has the 4-letter spelling here, so we must treat

Now what is to be made of this bundle of data? The first, most obvious, and yet important point is that there is a correlation between the older spelling and the earlier books of the Bible, and a similar correspondence between the later spelling and the later books of the Bible. Just as we know that the defective three-letter spelling is the original alphabetic spelling of the name David, and that it preceded the four-letter fuller spelling in time, so we also know that the books of Samuel and Kings are older than the Chronicler's work; and in a general way the data correspond to this elementary observation about the spelling of the name David in the books of the Bible. With certain equally obvious exceptions, it is clear that the older books (not just in content but in composition, compilation, and publication) have the earlier spelling and the later books have the more developed spelling.

This commonplace can now be coordinated with a theory of date of composition and implied canonization, as follows: The form of spelling of the name David reflects the period in which the book in question reached substantially present form or was published under the aegis of some significant authority.¹⁰ Thus the occurrence of the three-letter name in a book would point to an earlier date of composition in its present form, while the presence of the four-letter spelling of the name would point to a later date. The value for relative dating or for helping to confirm a dating already arrived at on other grounds can hardly be questioned. Thus Samuel-Kings is the older work and has the defective earlier spelling of the name David, while the Chronicler's work is admittedly later (postexilic), and correspondingly has the fuller spelling of the name David.

the Leningrad reading with caution. The latter may reflect an older spelling in the transmission of the Book of Hosea, but it seems more likely to have been a deliberate or inadvertent alteration by a medieval scribe. The Hosea passage in question is often treated as a later Judahite insertion in the prophetic text, and the spelling might be adduced to support this view. I shall propose another explanation for the spelling below; I continue to recognize the passage as proper to the text (cf. Andersen and Freedman 1980, p. 307).

In the case of the Book of the Twelve Prophets and of the Psalter the Aleppo Codex reflects the consistency of spelling within books which we have pointed out as characteristic of the scribal tradition. It is always possible to regard such consistency as artificial and to see in the variations of the Leningrad MS evidence for diverse spellings preserved by very careful and attentive scribes. Perhaps it is best to leave the question open in these cases. The general argument would be modified only to the extent of recognizing that the Book of the Twelve might contain an older spelling in the Book of Hosea, which would be quite in keeping with the date of the prophet and an early edition of this book. In the case of the Psalter, the example of 4-letter spelling would support the inevitable and necessary conclusion that the Psalter is a product of the transition period (the Exile) at the earliest.

10. I have discussed the basic theory often (Freedman 1962, 1963, 1975, 1976, 1983).

We plan to examine the situation in other books of the Bible, but before doing so we must make or concede two points:

1) In other books, with the exception of the Psalter, the name does not occur very often, and we should exercise caution in making inferences or drawing conclusions on the basis of one or two instances, especially when these are restricted largely to titles (as, e.g., in the case of Proverbs or Ecclesiastes, where the name occurs only once, or in the Psalter, where most of the approximately 88 occurrences are in the titles).

2) As already noted, there must have been a tendency to normalize the spelling throughout individual books. The dominant spelling in a book would tend to spread over the book, and possible instances of the other spelling would tend to disappear under the pressure toward conformity. Such a process is typical and to be expected. What is surprising is that this tendency has developed in opposite directions, so that the defective spelling is consistent in some books and the plene spelling predominant in others. In only two books is there any overlap, and it is in them perhaps that we should look for clues to the transition from one official spelling to the other. What is clear thus far is that the early spelling is dominant in the Former Prophets and the later spelling exclusive in the Chronicler's work. A transitional phase (if these mixed spellings are not the result of inadvertence or inattention on the part of scribes) may be observed toward the end of the Primary History (three occurrences of plene spelling in Kings) and in the Book of Ezekiel (one instance of plene spelling). Since on other grounds it can be argued that the completion of these major works occurred in the same period or generation, we may be able to pinpoint the transition from one spelling to the other in the period between the initial compilation of Samuel-Kings on the one hand and that of the Chronicler's work on the other.

Speaking in terms of relative dating, we can examine the distribution of the name David in other books of the Bible: among the Latter Prophets, both Isaiah and Jeremiah have the three-letter spelling consistently. That evidence would argue for an early date of compilation. I think this conclusion is entirely satisfactory for Jeremiah, but less so for Isaiah, since the latter part of the book is considerably later than the time of Isaiah, or Jeremiah for that matter. The occurrence of the three-letter form of the name in Isa 55:3 is a particular problem, but we may appeal to the consistent use of that form in the earlier part of Isaiah to explain its occurrence in the later chapter. An earlier version of Isaiah (including chaps. 1-33, 36-39) would have had the older spelling and that spelling would have prevailed even after the consolidated edition (including chaps. 34-35, 40-66) was made. We have already discussed the Book of Ezekiel and its mixed

spelling. The defective spelling ought to have prevailed, and the occurrence of a plene form may be the result of scribal inadvertence.¹¹ Nevertheless the spelling in Ezekiel may be transitional. When we come to the Book of the Twelve, the situation is reversed. Here the spelling is plene throughout, although presumably the name David was originally spelled with three letters instead of four in early books such as Amos and Hosea. To explain the occurrence of the four-letter spelling throughout the collection of Minor Prophets, we must appeal again to the principle of consistency, only this time the late spelling was dominant and it displaced any examples of early spelling. The source of the late spelling is to be found inside the group, specifically in the Book of Zechariah, where the name occurs six times in chaps. 12–13. In every case the spelling is full and doubtless it was this preponderance that determined the spelling in the remaining cases (2 in Amos, 1 in Hosea). It is also inviting to suggest that the full spelling was predominant at the time that Zechariah (II or III) was put together and published. The date of this work might provide us with a terminus for the completion of the transition from the three-letter to the four-letter form of the name.

We can now state the case in terms of relative chronology:

1) The early three-letter spelling predominates in the basic narrative that stretches from Genesis to Kings (Primary History) and in the Major Prophets. It is also found in a variety of other books such as Ruth (several examples) and Proverbs and Ecclesiastes (only in the title and hence less persuasive). The old spelling is found throughout the Psalter as well and while most of the occurrences are in titles and headings, there are a number of cases in the body of the Psalms. While most scholarship supports a late date for the compilation of the Psalter, it is nevertheless true that the Hebrew of the Psalms is good classical Hebrew for the most part, and an early date for earlier editions of the Psalms would be quite plausible. Here again we must appeal to the force of the system in regularizing the spelling, although it is surprising that the older spelling prevailed in this case (as probably also in the case of Ecclesiastes). The prevalence of the old spelling in the Book of Ruth is not surprising, however, since it is being recognized increasingly that Ruth belongs to the literary tradition of classical Hebrew and is more likely a product of the First Temple period than the Second.¹²

2) The transitional phase between older and newer spellings is re-

11. Or does the pattern recognized by Andersen 1970 obtain here, as O'Connor suggests to me?

12. See, e.g., Campbell 1975, pp. 23–28. Sasson suggests a date in the time of Josiah but ends with a more agnostic view (1979:249–51). Robert Gordis has well stated the arguments for a late date (1976, pp. 243–46).

lected in the Book of Ezekiel, where both spellings occur, and in Kings, where a few instances of the longer later spelling are to be found. In both cases the preponderance is in favor of the old spelling, so these books in their original form probably belong to the last period of the old spelling and the early part of the transition (i.e., the early part of the Exile).

3) The period of late spelling dominance is reflected especially in the Chronicler's work (I and II Chronicles—Ezra-Nehemiah).¹³ Every example has the new spelling: the transition is now complete, and the longer spelling has displaced the older one. The longer spelling is also found in the Song of Songs. While we might have expected the older spelling in view of the association with Solomon, the newer spelling does not surprise us particularly, since it is widely believed that in its present form the book is a late postexilic compilation (perhaps from the Persian period).¹⁴ Had the name occurred in the title or heading we might have expected the older spelling as a conscious archaism, but its presence in the text itself shows that it reflects the same time as the completion of the book.

Now we come to the question of absolute (or relatively absolute) dating. If the relative sequence in the chronological order of the books in their canonical form can be established or at least indicated by the orthographic criterion (as illustrated by the name David), is it possible to tie the sequence to objective data from external sources, to dates that can be fixed, at least within certain limits?

We wish to make two preliminary observations, and then proceed to the formulation of a specific theory of dating of the books of the Hebrew Bible:

1) It is to be noted and emphasized that the orthographic shift is developmental or evolutionary, and that the progression is from the shorter defective spelling to the longer fuller spelling. Regardless of other factors (and there are many), in principle the shorter spelling reflects the older tradition, while the longer spelling reflects a development in the system. Broadly speaking then, the three-letter spelling should point to earlier composition and four-letter spelling should reflect later composition and publication. It is important to point out that at Qumran the later spelling predominates not only in the books of the Bible where the long spelling occurs but in non-biblical documents, showing that the long spelling was the standard spelling of that period. Furthermore many of the books of

13. See Freedman 1961.

14. See the cautious formulation of Gordis (1971b, pp. 368-69), as well as the more agnostic report of Pope (1977, pp. 22-33, esp. 27). This is not to deny the antiquity of much of the material—cf. Sekine (1982, p. 9).

the Bible in which the short spelling predominates in MT have the long spelling at Qumran. This is true of the great Isaiah scroll, where in every instance in which MT has *dwd* IQIs a has *dwyd* (Burrows 1950). The shift is especially striking in the case of 4QSam a, in which the long spelling is found, although in MT the short spelling is ubiquitous. It is all the more important to observe that the short spelling prevails in 4QSam b, one of the few Qumran biblical scrolls to preserve the older and original spelling of the name. The general principle established earlier is confirmed by the observation that 4QSam b is one of the oldest manuscripts at Qumrân (around 250 BCE), while 4QSam a is at least a century later.

We can also explain the survival or preservation of the old spelling in such books in MT. Clearly the proto-Massoretes (or scribes or rabbis) made a choice and preferred, where possible, to select older and better manuscripts to establish their text, including orthography. Where the older and shorter spelling could be found, presumably in old manuscripts, it was adopted and the spelling along with the text preserved. The occurrence of the short spelling in various books of the Hebrew Bible can thus be explained and justified. Regarding books of MT in which only the long spelling is found, the conclusion must be that there were no manuscripts of those available or accessible with the shorter spelling. That could result from accident, but it is much more likely that such manuscripts never existed, because when the books were written the longer spelling was official or dominant and had displaced the older shorter spelling.

2) The development of Hebrew orthography can be traced in the available inscriptional evidence and in the Bible.¹⁵ In general preexilic or First Temple orthography is characterized by a paucity of medial vowel letters, although their use is attested as early as the 8th century (final vowel letters were introduced in the 9th century and were used regularly from that time on). Typically *waw* was used for medial long *û* (e.g., 'ārûr spelled 'rwr), while *yod* was used for medial long *î* (e.g., zîp spelled zyp, or 'šî spelled 'yš; in the Arad ostraca Hiphil forms occasionally include *yod* to indicate the characteristic long *î* of that conjugation, e.g., *hbqyd* for *hibqîd*, an unusual

15. The basic pattern was first worked out in Cross and Freedman 1952, which is to be supplemented with the material in Cross and Freedman 1975; Sarfatti (1982, pp. 58-65) has brought the discussion up to date. The linguistic basis of the development of Hebrew orthography is treated in O'Connor 1983. The major new source of data was the work of the late Y. Aharoni at Arad. My preliminary treatment of the first Arad texts published (Freedman 1969) has been overtaken by the full edition (Aharoni 1975, cf. Rainey 1977, and, in English, Aharoni et al. 1981); there are rough surveys of the orthographic patterns in Aharoni et al. (1981, p. 142) and Parunak (1978); cf. also Sarfatti's essay.

form but there is no question about the use of *yod* as a vowel letter for long *ā*). The use is sporadic, and becomes more frequent in the later preexilic inscriptions. We can say that medial vowel letters were introduced in Hebrew inscriptions probably in the 8th century, and that their use increased but was still sporadic at the end of the 7th century.

Developments in Hebrew during and after the Exile are a little harder to trace, but it is reasonable to argue that the use of internal vowels increased so that by the 3rd century BCE there was consistent and regular use of such *matres lectionis* for all so-called pure long medial vowels. By analysis of the few Hebrew inscriptions we have along with judicious use of the more extensive repertoire of other West Semitic inscriptions, including Aramaic and Ammonite materials for the 6th and 5th centuries, we conclude that the process in Hebrew was probably complete by the beginning of the 5th century (i.e., around 500 BCE), even though decisive evidence (from the earliest Dead Sea Scrolls) is not available in substantial quantity until the 3rd century BCE. The conclusion would be that the general and regular use of medial vowel letters was firmly established by the end of the 6th century, i.e., with the advent of the Second Temple Period. The transition period during which internal vowel letters were used irregularly but with increasing frequency, occupies most of the 6th century, roughly the period of the Exile or the period between the destruction of the First Temple and the building or dedication of the Second Temple (587/6–516/5).

Summarizing we may now describe the development in the spelling of the name David as reflected in the Bible as follows:

- 1) From earliest times until the end of the 7th century BCE the original three-letter spelling (*dwd*) was used consistently and probably without exception.

- 2) Occasional use of the four-letter spelling occurs in the transition period (6th century), and this phenomenon is reflected in the mixed spelling of the name in books such as Kings and Ezekiel.

- 3) Consistent use of the four-letter spelling is characteristic of the Second Temple period. Beginning with the Book of Zechariah and continuing with the Chronicler's work, the evidence is both uniform and unanimous in support of the longer spelling.

Then, if we may be so bold, we may suggest how the history and distribution of the two spellings of the name David point toward or offer support for a proposal (already presented on other grounds) about the composition, publication, and authorization of various books of the Hebrew Bible.

The viewpoint propounded here is that the books of the Hebrew Bible which contain the name of David reflect, in the predominant spelling of each book, the period during which they were compiled and formally published. Thus the books containing the three-letter spelling would be assigned to the First Temple period, the books with the four-letter spelling to the Second Temple period, and those with mixed spelling to the transitional period between the two others. Inevitably this is a rather crude division made with an imprecise tool, and we must reckon with other factors which could and probably did affect the outcome. But allowing for all possible sources and elements of contamination there remains a remarkable correlation between the spelling practice involved and the generally accepted dating of the books of the Bible, which provides support both for the methods used and for the principles proposed in this paper.

Thus we would say that the Primary History (Genesis-Second Kings) is predominantly a product of the First Temple period, a contention made first on other grounds and now supported by the overwhelming preponderance of the three-letter spelling of the name David. Since, however, it is certain that the whole work in its present form could not have been produced before the 37th year of the Exile of King Jehoiachin (ca. 561/60 BCE) we are not surprised at the occurrence of a few instances of the longer spelling; out of many hundreds of instances of the name, there are three with the longer spelling. In its final and present form the work is a product of the exilic transitional period.

Correspondingly, the Chronicler's work, in which the four-letter spelling is uniform and without exception, must be, as it undoubtedly is, a product of the Second Temple period (earliest possible date toward the end of the 5th century).

Turning to the Latter Prophets, we note that the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah have the older spelling of the name throughout. With respect to Jeremiah we might have expected a few examples of the four-letter spelling, since the book is a product of the 6th century at the earliest and may in some parts be somewhat later (although I fail to find anything in it that brings us past the Neo-Babylonian era). Since we posit that during the latter part of the 7th century and early part of the 6th the older spelling predominated, we conclude that that spelling was preserved throughout the book by design. The same would be true of the Book of Isaiah; that the three-letter spelling would be preserved in First Isaiah seems reasonable, since some such book, ending with chaps. 36-39 (attached to chaps. 1-33), seems to have been compiled about the same time as Jeremiah. The extension of the same spelling to Second Isaiah (55:3), when the normative spell-

ing had already shifted to the four-letter variant, can be explained as a result of the desire for uniformity in single books, and possibly the effect of traditional patterns on writing which was deliberately designed to be part of a canonical anthology.

The Book of Ezekiel, as already noted, exhibits the mixed orthography that should be characteristic of the middle exilic period. The proposed date of publication of Ezekiel (ca. 570–567 BCE, on the basis of the content and dates in the book itself) would fit well with the mixed picture of spelling: even the ratio of three to one in favor of the older spelling would reflect the period before the return from Exile and compare well with the roughly contemporary work, the Primary History.

When we come to the Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets, the picture changes dramatically, but understandably. Since the book as a whole could not have been compiled before the latest individual prophetic works were written, it has to be assigned to the Second Temple period (not earlier than 518 BCE and perhaps "as much as half a century later").¹⁶ Such an analysis is supported by the uniform four-letter spelling of the name David throughout the whole work. The bulk of the instances occur in Second (or Third) Zechariah, and the correlation of date and spelling is exact and exactly what we have come to expect. In fact, the data in the Book of Zechariah provide us with compelling evidence for the official adoption of the four-letter spelling in authoritative religious works. The examples of the longer spelling in Amos and Hosea, while technically anachronistic (although we have no external evidence for the publication of these prophetic works before the Exile), nevertheless reflect the date of publication of the composite work. No doubt the principle of spelling consistency within a given scroll is at work here as well, if we assume that in earlier editions of Hosea and Amos the older spelling of the name David was used.

Turning to other books of the Bible in which the name David occurs (the *Ketubim*) we may comment briefly.

1) *Psalms*. The name occurs frequently, mostly in titles and extended headings, but also in the body of various psalms. The spelling is consistently with three letters. Even if we apply the principle of consistency, it is clear that the prevailing orthography of the name derives from manuscripts in which that spelling was used, and which therefore reflects a preexilic or early exilic setting. By contrast, the Psalms scroll from Cave 11 of Qumran uses the four-letter spelling regularly (Sanders 1965). We

16. The hypothesis of earlier editions of the "Minor Prophets" is discussed in Andersen and Freedman (1980, pp. 40–52, 143–49).

would therefore assign the Psalter, with its conservative spelling in MT, in its essential content and orientation to the First Temple period.

2) *Proverbs*. The name occurs only once, in the heading, with the three-letter spelling. If the latter points in any direction, it suggests that the Book of Proverbs was compiled in the First Temple period. Certainly that is not the majority view among scholars, but it is not an impossible notion. The origins of the book are rooted in the royal court (just as the Psalms come from First Temple practice) and much of the contents must go back to the same source. An association with the "men of Hezekiah" is not unlikely, so the spelling may accurately reflect an authentic tradition. Since it is in the heading only, we must exercise some reserve, especially in view of the fact that all the headings with the name of David use the same spelling. Since the books in question are attributed to David or Solomon we might expect the older traditional spelling to be used, regardless of the actual date of composition. Such an argument, however, should not be pressed unduly because in later periods scribes had no hesitation in using the longer spelling for many prominent biblical names, whether they were copying biblical manuscripts or others.

3) *Ruth*. The name occurs several times toward the end of the book and in every case the name is spelled with three letters. The spelling supports the view, mentioned earlier, that *Ruth* is a product of the classical period of Hebrew literature, i.e., the time of the First Temple.

4) *Song of Songs*. There is a single instance of the name David in this book. It is spelled with four letters, which points us to the Second Temple period for compilation and publication. Since the name occurs in the body of the poem (4:4) rather than the heading, we can regard it as a reliable indicator of the date of the book in its present form. It is possible that in a more original form, or in terms of various components, it should be dated to the First Temple period, and that the spelling of the name was revised in the course of transmission. We would argue, however, that if the scribes had known of or could gain access to a manuscript with the older spelling they would have preserved that spelling in their copies. We conclude that no such manuscript existed.

5) *Ecclesiastes*. Here, as in the case of *Proverbs*, the name David occurs only once, and that is in the heading. As is true of all headings and titles, the spelling here is with three letters. If it points in any direction, it suggests a First Temple date for the book. Here we should probably demur, since most scholars hold firmly to a postexilic date for the work. We can explain the archaizing spelling of the title in terms of the general practice in all the books with such headings, as well as the possible influence of

the attribution of the book to Solomon the son of David. It must be admitted however that the evidence, a single example in a given book, is hardly sufficient to form a basis for judgment.

The books of the Bible, broadly speaking with respect to their compilation and publication (in the form in which they have been preserved), can be dated according to the spelling of the name David which is preserved in the Massoretic Text. Again, generally speaking, those with the three-letter spelling belong to the First Temple period (or not later than the first part of the 6th century), while those with the four-letter spelling may be assigned to the Second Temple period. Those which have a mixed spelling may be assigned to the transitional period between the other two, or roughly the middle part of the 6th century.

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