

## An Old Manuscript with Babylonian Vocalization of the Hagiographa Yosef Ofer

This article describes a manuscript with the ancient Babylonian vocalization, preserved to an amazing degree for over a thousand years. This manuscript – which is in private possession and was examined in July 2006 – contains 45 whole parchment pages, and the books of Job and Proverbs appear in it in almost complete form.

The manuscript was probably written in Tunis in the beginning of the tenth century. It preserves many textual versions different from the *textus receptus*: there are more than two hundred letter differences between the manuscript and the *textus receptus*. Some of them are *Ketiv* and *Qere* instances, and some are entire words that differ from the *textus receptus*. Some differences are documented in the list of differences between Medinha'ei (eastern readers) and Ma'arva'ei (western readers).

The manuscript preserves many comments of the Babylonian *Masora*. In this respect it is far superior to Ms Berlin Or. Qu. 680, in which only some of the Masoretic notes survived.

This unique manuscript is of great value, and it supplements and provides a firm basis for what has been known concerning the ancient Masoretic traditions of Babylonian Jewry. Their Hebrew linguistic tradition, the Biblical texts that were available to them, the cantillation system used in Babylonia, the unique *Masora* that prevailed there – in all these fields this manuscript contributes a great deal of significant evidence.