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Masoretic Comments on Grammar in MS 100
(A Manuscript from St. Petersburg Containing
the *Tafsir* of Saadia Gaon)

Samuel ben Jacob, the 11th century Masorete, who copied the famous biblical manuscript Firkovitch B19a now housed in St. Petersburg (Leningrad), also copied many additional biblical manuscripts. One of the most interesting is ms. 100 (Firkovitch Ebr II C1 paper), which contains the Arabic translation (*tafsir*) of Saadia Gaon. The Masoretic material found in the manuscript is unique and contains some grammatical comments. These comments are discussed in this article along with an analysis of their language, terminology, and contents.

This Masoretic material teaches us that Samuel ben Jacob was influenced by the first Hebrew grammarians and by the first grammatical works they wrote. These sources led him to reinvestigate the Masoretic material he worked on. He experimented to a limited extent with explaining the different linguistic forms appearing in the Bible and the relationships between the forms.

Two Masoretic comments from ms. 100 dealing with the Masoretic system and principles of counting are also discussed in this article. Both comments constitute the first step in investigating the Masora and in defining its methods. Additional Masoretic comments containing homilies based on letters or exceptional words in the Bible are also taken up in this paper.