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## **SAMARITAN DECALOGUE INSCRIPTIONS**

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**SOMETIME** about 1863 and inscription in Samaritan characters was presented to the Leeds Philosophical Society by the Rev. Joseph Hammond. The donor had received this inscription from the Samaritan High Priest in Nablus to keep it for preservation in a safe place.<sup>[1]</sup> We may assume that this stone had been found in the vicinity of Nablus, the ancient center of the Samaritan community.<sup>[2]</sup>

An impression of the stone was furnished to Wright who published a short note on it in P.S.B.A. 1883.<sup>1</sup> His investigation proved that the inscription contained an abbreviation of the Ten Commandments, based on the Decalogue of the Samaritan Pentateuch, a version which differs in some respects from the Jewish reading as well as from the Greek. The extant slab of stone proved to be the lower right part of the inscription. This evidenced by the fact that the remaining fragment contains part of the 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> Commandments.<sup>3</sup> Wright attempted a restoration of the inscription which has been slightly improved in the version given below.

When the writers of this article, bent on making a closer investigation of the inscription, looked for it in Leeds City Museum, where it had been deposited, the stone could not (Page 212) be found. It was, eventually, "rediscovered" amongst other monumental slabs which had been removed from the Museum precincts during the war.

The fragment is, roughly, of quadrangular shape, measuring 16.5 inches at its maximum height and 14.4 inches at its width. The upper right-hand corner is missing. There is a further dent in the, otherwise, nearly straight line of the break. This dent accounts for four full letters and parts of two more which are now missing at the beginning of lines 5 & 8. The left hand side of the stone presents a

more which are now missing at the beginnings of lines 5-6. The left-hand side of the stone presents at first the impression of completeness, having been chiseled rather neatly by the mason, especially so at the lower corner. This fact induced the present writers to advance tentatively a theory that this stone is but one of a double-tablet containing an abbreviation of the Ten Commandments, a form which is commonly found in Jewish Synagogues.<sup>1</sup> But, bearing in mind that no proof for a similar Samaritan practice could be provided, this theory had to be abandoned. A more detailed study of the characters at the end of the lines showed, moreover, that the chiseling of the left-hand side is of secondary origin. The extreme left parts of these letters in lines 9-10 were lost in the process. This inscription has met the fate of many others, particularly in the Middle East.<sup>2</sup> After having been broken, presumably, in wake of the destruction of the building in which it was kept,<sup>3</sup> later generations made use of it. The unknown mason who wanted to avail himself of the neatly hewn slab (or slabs) straightened the uneven edge in order to fit the stone into its new surroundings. It seems, therefore, that the breakage of the upper right-hand corner has occurred in a third period, after the stone had been taken out of its "adopted environment."

The smoothness of the base and the considerably smaller (An additional Page not numbered was inserted between with four photos of inscriptions) (Page 213) characters in the last line<sup>1</sup> which resulted from a lack of space, indicate that nothing is missing at the lower part.

The material used by the scribe is rather soft, some sort of limestone which is very common in the geological layer stretching from the south of Hebron to the vicinity of Beisan in the north.<sup>2</sup> The surface betrays traces of crumbling which resulted in certain letters being nearly obliterated though engraved into the depth of the stone.

The stone, as found to-day, contains the remnants of ten lines. Nine of these are complete in height. Of the top line only the bases of the letters **777** are preserved. The lines are marked throughout by an incision into the surface. This incision is broader and deeper between lines 9-10 than between the others where they are generally of similar shape.

In accordance with otherwise substantiated practice the letters on this inscription are not placed above the line but depend from its lower side.<sup>3</sup> The upper strokes of certain letters, especially **7**, **7** (see lines 3, 4, 7, 8), protrude sometimes above the incision. A point as word-divider is employed throughout.<sup>4</sup> In each of lines 3, 4, 5, 6 one case of a colon is to be found; this indicates in line 3 the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment, but comes in lines 4 and 5 in the middle of Commandments 8 and 9, parting the verbal clause from the rest of the sentence. This suggests that the scribe carried on, in a mechanical fashion, or out of a craving for harmony<sup>5</sup>, the system employed in Commandments (page 214) 5, 6, 7.

Similarly to **אל: הנעת אל: דמחת אל:** he read **אל: הנעת אל: דמחת אל:** in lines 4 and 5 respectively.

The characters are somewhat unequal in size. The average height in lines 2-5 is decidedly larger than in lines 7-9. Line 6 contains the largest samples. This seems to indicate that the scribe did not measure out his tablet beforehand. When coming near the bottom of the stone he recognized his miscalculation and started crowding the lines. The bottom line, no. 10, is presumably a latter addition. As stated above, it is divided from the main body of the inscription not only in content, but by a specially deep and course incision. The letters are, moreover, considerably smaller and slightly different in shape. The upper stroke of the **7** in this line is bent backwards towards the left, whilst in the remaining lines this stroke is practically perpendicular (line 3) or has a certain inclination towards the right (line 7). The surface appearance of this stroke is wedge-like in line 10, while in the remaining lines it is more rectangular. The letters were apparently engraved by the aid of a triangular stylus, which produced an incision similar to an inverted prism, broad on the stone-surface and running into one line in the depth of the engraving. The dividers and colons were made by a pointed stylus leaving an inverted cone-like impression on the stone.

Attention shall be drawn to the additional strokes at the bottom lines of letters **7 7 7** which seem to

... be peculiar to our scribe(s) and which we could find only in the Nablus Decalogue inscription, to be discussed below.

Transcription of the text:<sup>2</sup>

- [1 ת אדבכ:ו] השד [קל תבשה]
- [2 חצרה אל : ד]מא תאו [ דיבא]
- [3 א ל : בבנגת אל : האנת אל]
- [4 א ל : רקש דע ] דערב : הנעת]
- [5 א לו : דער ] תיב : דמה[ ח]
- [6 Deut. xxvii. 5 ת ינבו : דע]ר תשא דמה[ת]
- [7 ד יהלא הוה]יל חבזמ [ם ש]
- [8 Deut. xxvii. 8 לכ תא מי]נבאה לע תבת כו
- [9 ב טיה ר]א ב תא[ז]ה ה הרותה]
- [10 Deut. xxxiii. 4 בקעי : תליהק : השרומ : השמ : ונל : ה]וצ : הרות]

The restoration is based on the traditional text of the Samaritan version of the Decalogue and concurrent comparison with the Nablus Inscription.

The possibility remains open that the lines were “closed” by two letters or even whole words. In the last case we would not need to divide דיהלא (line 7), the division of which is often avoided. This would result, moreover, in a more pronounced structural harmony. Lines 3, 4, 5 would end with the same word -אל- in addition to the similarity at the beginning of lines 4, 5, 6 the letter ת and 5, 6- דמה. The word דער in these two lines is put as well in an identical position.

The average number of letters in lines 1-9 is fifteen.<sup>1</sup> (The case of line 10 is different, as indicated above.) In line 8 we count seventeen letters if the reading, proposed here, is correct. This suggestion differs from the text found in Sam. Pent. MSS. where “תאזה הרותה ירבד לכ תא” is read, which, if accepted, would require a line containing twenty-one letters and, therefore, a considerably broader stone. There is no possibility of comparison with other Decalogue inscriptions as this passage is quoted only in the Leeds stone. The departure from the official Samaritan text is justified on grounds of other deviations to be found in this inscription as specified below.

Presuming that the missing top lines of our inscription showed the same abbreviated text as the Nablus inscription,<sup>2</sup> (page 216) we would require fifty-four letters to be added, i.e. four lines on the average of thirteen to fourteen to a line, or three on the average of eighteen letters. The first possibility is adopted here.<sup>1</sup>

- A [ם יהלא דל היהי אל]
- B [אשת אל : ינפ לע מירחא]
- C [ד יהלא הוהי מש תא]
- D [ם וי תא רומש אושל]

We suppose, therefore, that the full inscription contained fourteen lines on a slab measuring c. 20 inches in width and c. 20.6 inches in height.

The quotation of Bible passages in extremely shortened forms seems to have been a rather common practice. This is easily explained in the case of stone inscriptions where the unwieldy material imposed a “laconic” style. In the Leeds and in other Decalogue inscriptions the sentences and passages are indicated by similar catch-words, which enable even the average, non-scholarly reader to fill up the gaps without difficulties, especially in well-known texts, such as the Ten Commandments, which were part and parcel of the traditional instruction to which every Jew was submitted. But this tendency was carried even further in other Samaritan inscriptions, apparently some sort of amulets, where only the initial letter of the word was given and the restoration left to the reader.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore the more astonishing that the Samaritans see fit to deny any connection with these abbreviated versions of the Ten Commandments. The new acting High Priest denounced the Leeds inscription as a Jewish hoax

TEN COMMANDMENTS: THE NOW BEING HIGHLY ESTEEMED THE LEEDS INSCRIPTION AS A JEWISH MONUMENT, when Dr. Bowman showed him a Photostat copy. Rosen, who wrote nearly a hundred years ago, has to relate a similar experience.<sup>3</sup> This might be irrelevant, bearing in mind that Samaritan behaviour in dealing (page 217) with foreigners is influenced, sometimes by very obvious monetary, sometimes by rather obscure reasons. But it might, on the other hand, point to a comparatively early date for this practice, the memory of which has been lost.

The abbreviated text is easily intelligible. In lines 4 to 6 the Ten Commandments are given in the Samaritan fashion which joins Commandments 1 and 2 into one, thus making way for the additional clause which proclaims the holiness of Mount Gerizim. This passage is drawn, mainly, from Deut. xxvii, 2-8, with some variations from the Massoretic text,<sup>1</sup> the most important of which is the reading Gerizim for Ebal in verse 4. This passage is represented on the Leeds tablet by verse 5a: יהלא הוהיל חבזמ מש תינבו (lines 6-7) and verse 8: לע תבתכו בטיה ראב תאזה הרוחה (ירבד) לכ תא מינבאה (lines 8-9).

## II

Besides the Leeds stone three more Decalogue inscriptions are extant. Mention has been made already of the Nablus Decalogue which was found in the wall of a minaret attached to the Chizn Yakub Mosque in Nablus.<sup>2</sup> This inscription is still fixed, upside down, in the wall of this mosque. That building is erected near the place where formerly, according to Samaritan and Arab evidence, A Samaritan Synagogue stood. The inscription hails, apparently, from this Synagogue and was used after the latter's destruction as material for the erection of the Muslim minaret. A close inspection of the stone, by the present writers, produced particularly poignant evidence that the stone has had a "Christian past" as well. Inside the letter ע of ער, the very first word in line 8, the sign of a cross is discernible. This has been completely overlooked by previous writers, though the sign is clearly recognizable even in Montgomery's unsatisfactory reproduction. The letter ע has in the Samaritan alphabet a triangular shape, which is similar (page 218) to certain stages of the Hebrew *ayin* in Jewish inscriptions. A cross put into this letter produces a striking likeness to a crusader's shield. The sign was probably engraved on the stone by a Christian mason, apparently of the Crusader's period. This is the more likely since the minaret reminds one of a Norman church-tower.

The restored text of the Nablus Decalogue runs as follows:

[1 מירחא] · מ · י · הלא [דל · יהי · אל] [1]  
 2 הוהי · מש · תא · א[שת]אל:ינפ · לע [2]  
 3 מוי · תא רומש · אושל · דיהלא  
 4 דיבא · תא · דבכ · והשדקל · תבשה  
 5 פאנת · אל · הצר · ת · אל · דמא תאו  
 6 ד · ערב · הנעת · אל · בנגת · אל  
 7 ת · י · ב · ד[מ]חת · אל · רקש · דע  
 8 דער תשא דמחת אלו] · דער  
 9 דיהלא הוהיל חבזמ · מ · ש · תינבו  
 [10 Num. x.35-36 הוהי · הברוש] · הו · הי · המוק

In order to make possible a comparison with the other two inscriptions, the texts are given below.

The Palestine Museum Decalogue was discovered in 1935 in the vicinity of Nablus, after a heavy rainfall which washed away the covering soil. The stone is a comparatively long slab which served, presumably, as a lintel. It is now broken into two parts.

[ינפ · לע · מירחא · מ · י · הלא · דל · יהי · אל · דיהלא · הוהי · יכנא]  
 [תאו · דייבא · דייבא · תא · דבכ · והשדקל · תבשה · מוי · תא · רומש]  
 [אל · דמא]  
 [אל · רקש · דע · ערב · הנעת · אל · בנגת · אל · פאנת · אל · הצרת]  
 דער · תיב · דמחת

While on a visit to Nablus during the summer of 1950 Dr. Bowman was shown a stone at bar Yakub (Sychar) which he identified as still another Samaritan Decalogue inscription, which had not been recorded until now. It is a rough limestone, measuring approximately 1 ft. by 1 ft. and is of about the same thickness. The inscription reads:(page 219)

- 1] ך יבא · תא · דבכ
- 2 אל · דמא [תאו]
- 3 אל · חצר [ת]
- 4 בנגת · אל · ראנ [ת]
- 5 דערב · הנעת [אל]
- 6 אל · רקש · דע
- 7 ת י נ ב ו · דמחת
- 8 חבזמ · ן ש
- 9 דיהלא · הוה[יל]

### III

A comparison of the four stones furnishes the following facts: (see table below).

Virtually the same abbreviated text is employed in Commandments 4 (the observance of the Sabbath<sup>1</sup>) to 8 (“neither shalt thou bear false witness . . .”). This might point to a fixed tradition, in respect of this part of the Decalogue, which affected even the abbreviated text and made it uniform.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the first three Commandments which are extant only on two of the stones (Nablus and Palestine Museum) are quoted with an interesting variation. The Nablus Decalogue has no trace of Ex. xx, 2 as part of the First Commandment, which verse is treated in the Samaritan MSS. as a preamble to the Decalogue. This arrangement is maintained in von Gall’s edition where verses Ex. xx, 3-6 are enumerated by the letter ‘alef.’<sup>3</sup>

The Palestine Museum inscription starts off with what is definitely taken from the official Jewish First Commandment (Ex. xx, 2). It has, after that, as its Second Commandment verse Ex. xx, 3 in exactly the same form as the Nablus stone, which latter treats this phrase as First Commandment. But the Jewish Third, “thou shalt not take the name of Lord thy (page 220) God in vain”, which is the Samaritan Second Commandment, is omitted in the P.D. while it is found in the N.D. This seems to suggest that P.D. included in its Second Commandment by implication Ex. xx, 7, the Jewish Third Commandment.

It shall be pointed out that in Jewish and Christian circles varying ideas about the arrangement of the first three Commandments were held. The official Jewish view takes Ex. xx, 2-3 to be the First Commandment, followed by verses 4-6 as Second.<sup>1</sup> But R. Ishmael<sup>2</sup> (second century A.D.) counts verse 3 as the First Commandment, viewing verse 2, apparently, as a preamble, in complete agreement with Samaritan practice. A similar system is adopted by Josephus and Philo<sup>3</sup> who count verse 3 as Commandment 1, verse 4-6 as Commandment 2 and verse 7 as Commandment 3.

The Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches agree with the view in regarding verse 2 as a preamble. Verse 3-6 become thus the First Commandment and in order to make up the required number “Ten”, the last Commandment is divided into, no. 9: “Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s wife”- no. 10: “Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s house, etc.” A parallel system seems to underly the division into “petuhoth” and “setumoth” in Deuteronomy v.<sup>4</sup> The first parashah includes verse 6-10. The second parashah comprises verse 11. According to this arrangement only two Commandments are counted before “Observe the Sabbath day . . .” whereas the Jewish tradition embodied in Babli Makkoth, Methilta and Pesikta Rabbati requires here three Commandments.

The parashah system in Deuteronomy has therefore a division between “neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s wife” and “neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s house”, achieving thus the required number “Ten”. To this conforms the (page 221) Roman Catholic Church practice. The Protestant

Churches, the Lutheran excepted, follow the official Jewish tradition which takes “neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s house, etc.” as one Commandment.

As said before, the Samaritans had to make room in their Decalogue for an additional Commandment by compressing the traditional “ten” into nine. This they did, apparently, by counting verses Ex. xx, 2-7 as two Commandments against the traditional threefold partition of the Jews. As said already, fluctuation in the numbering of these Commandments in Jewish circles is witnessed until the days of R. Ishmael (second century A.D.).

As shown above, the two Samaritan Decalogue inscriptions (Nablus and Palestine Museum) represent different ways of compressing the first three Jewish Commandments into the required two. The N.D. does it by omitting verse Ex. xx, 2, which in Jewish tradition is taken as Commandment no. 1, but is treated as a preamble by Philo, Josephus and R. Ishmael. The Palestine Museum stone contains the beginning of verse 2 as abbreviation of the Samaritan Commandment no. 1; and verse 3 as a representation of Samaritan Commandment no. 2, including verse 7 (the Jewish Commandment no. 3).

The present writers are inclined to consider this fluctuation as being an indication that the stones record a pre-canonical Samaritan form of the Ten Commandments which goes back to a period when the Samaritan Codex had not yet been definitely fixed.

This assumption is substantiated furthermore by the fact that the Jewish Commandment no. 10: “Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s wife, etc. . .” (Ex. xx, 17) is represented in different ways in those inscriptions. It shall be called back to mind that this Commandment is found in two different versions- in Ex. xx and Deut. v, which are compared below. It is, moreover, numbered, numbered as two commandments in some early Christian traditions.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the text of this (page 222)

Commandment is completely identical in Samaritan MSS., in both its readings, Ex. xx and Deut. v.\*

In the four inscriptions, treated here, this Commandment is abbreviated in three different ways. The fullest is given by the Nablus and Leeds stones, namely: “Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s house; and neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s wife”. The Palestine Museum inscription has only the first part of this sentence, omitting “and neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor’s wife”. The shortest version is found in the Sychar Decalogue which reads only: “Neither shalt thou covet”.

The special Samaritan Tenth Commandment is again differently quoted in the stones. The Nablus, Leeds and Sychar Decalogues chose the sentence **היהלא הוהיל תבזמ תינבו** drawn from Deut. xxvii, 5 to represent this rather lengthy addition to the Decalogue. The Leeds Inscription alone adds to this (page 223) the verse Deut. xxvii, 8. But while the former sentence, verse 5, is part of the Tenth Commandment in Samaritan MSS., verse 8 is *not* included and is therefore drawn directly from its original source for inclusion in our stone.

The Palestine Museum Decalogue quotes the Tenth Commandment by a different verse, part of Deut. xxvii, 4, reading in accordance with Samaritan tradition, “Har Gerizim” instead of “Har Ebal”. These words are, as a matter of fact, the quintessence of the Samaritan additional Commandment. If the suggested restoration is correct, they were preceded by **הרותה תאזקה** which would be a feature common to the Palestine Museum stone and the Leeds Decalogue.

It is rather astonishing that in this critical point the stones differ from one another. The Samaritans took exceptional care to give in their Pentateuch MSS. in both Ex. xx and Deut. v readings of their Tenth Commandment which are (page 224) identical in the smallest detail. The deviations in the stones are the more surprising when we bear in mind that in the Third to Eighth Commandments all the inscription are the same word by word.

These facts seem to suggest that the stones date from early days and record a version of the Samaritan Decalogue which had not yet been definitely fixed.<sup>1</sup> This is the more probable when we consider that the fluctuations are mainly found in (a) Commandments 1 to 3 on which no unanimity had been established as late as the second century A.D.; (b) in the Tenth Commandment (“neither shalt thou

established as late as the second century A.D., (b) in the Tenth Commandment (‘neither shalt thou covet’) which is preserved in two different Jewish versions and was counted as two Commandments by the Alexandrians; (c) and in the Samaritan additional Commandment which scholars tend to view as a rather late Samaritan fabrication.

#### IV

It is useful to summarise below the points of difference between the Samaritan and Massoretic Hebrew Pentateuchal versions of the Ten Commandments. Therefore we shall compare the Samaritan Pentateuchal versions with the four Samaritan Decalogue inscriptions.

First of all, just as there are two versions of the Ten Commandments in the Hebrew Massoretic text, viz. Ex. xx and Deut. v, so, too, there are two versions in the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch text Ex. xx and Deut. v. There is one significant difference, however, between Massoretic versions and the Hebrew Samaritan. While there are differences between the Exodus and Deuteronomy version in the case of the actual Ten Commandments (treated by them as nine), such differences being parallel to the differences between the Hebrew Massoretic Exodus and Deuteronomy versions, the Samaritan special Tenth Commandment is identical in both the Samaritan Exodus and (page 225) Deuteronomy versions. Differences between Hebrew Massoretic Exodus and Deuteronomy Ten Commandments are: “*nor* the likeness of” Ex. xx, 4 for “the likeness of” Deut. v, 8; “upon the third” Ex. xx, 5, “*and* upon the third” Deut. v, 9; “Remember the sabbath day”, Ex. xx, 8, “Observe the Sabbath day”, Deut. v, 12; “thy manservant” Ex. xx, 10, “*nor* thy manservant”, Deut. v, 14: “nor thy cattle” follows immediately after “thy maidservant” Ex. xx, 10, but Deut. v, 14, inserts after “maidservant” Ex. xx, 10, But Deut. v, 14, inserts after “maidservant” “nor thine ox, nor thine ass”.

More substantial variants are: after “within thy gates” Ex. xx, 10, Ex. xx, 11 commences with “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it”. But Deut. v, 14 after “within thy gates” has “that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou”. Then Deut. v, 15 continues, “And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm”. Ex. xx, 11 completes this Commandment with “wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it”. Deut. v, 15 ends it with “therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day”.

Ex. xx, 12 after “Honour thy father and thy mother” has not, as Deut. v, 16, “as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee”. Deut. v, 16 interrupts the rest of the commandment after “that thy days may be long” with “and that it may go well with thee”, before finishing like Exodus with “upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee”. Ex. xx, 14 “Thou shalt not commit adultery” is introduced with a “neither” in Deut. v. 18. Similarly with the remaining Commandments in Deut. v, 19, 20, 21.

The Tenth (Jewish) Commandment has further points of interest. In Ex. xx, 17 the prohibition of coveting the “neighbour’s house” precedes the coveting of the “neighbour’s wife”. In Deut. v, 21 the wife precedes. While in Ex. xx, 17 the same verb is used for “coveting” house and wife, in Deut. v, 21 a different verb is used with reference to each: “Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s wife; neither shalt thou desire thy (page 226) neighbour’s house”. After “house”, Deut. v, 21 inserts “his field” (not mentioned in Ex. xx, 17) before “manservant”.

We pass now to the relation of the Samaritan recordings of the ten Commandments (Ex. xx and Deut. v) to their Massoretic counterparts. Basically the Samaritan Exodus form agrees with the Massoretic Exodus Deuteronomic recording, e.g. Exodus midrashic addition to the Fourth Commandment. (The Samaritan Deuteronomic form of this addition is that there of the Massoretic Deuteronomy.) But at the same time there is evidence of harmonization, e.g. the Samaritan Ex. xx, 8 has “Keep the Sabbath day” as Deut. v, 12 (Sam. and Mass.) instead of the Massoretic Ex. xx, 8 “Remember”. Harmonisation is more in favor of Exodus. With the Ninth Commandment “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” (Ex. xx, 16; Deut. v, 20), in Exodus (Mass. Heb.) we have רָקַשׁ דַּע, but in Deuteronomy (Mass. Heb.) the reading אוֹשֵׁב דַּע is given. The Samaritan Pentateuch Decalogue texts follow Massoretic Exodus and Deuteronomy respectively. The Decalogue Inscriptions which have preserved the full

reading of this Commandment are the Sychar and the Nablus; both of them follow the Exodus text reading דע רקש דע. In both the Leeds and the Palestine Museum inscriptions the stones are damaged at this point; in the case of the Leeds nothing can be read after “thy neighbour”, while in the Palestine Museum inscription only *shin* is preserved. It is worthwhile to remark that von Gall’s edition quotes two Samaritan MSS. which read דע רקש דע even in the Deuteronomy text.

In view of the fact that דע רקש דע is found in the Nablus and the Sychar inscriptions, which otherwise seem to belong to different groups (see below), and that two fifteenth century Sam. MSS. read דע רקש דע in both Exodus and Deuteronomy, the following possibilities lie open: (a) that there was an early Samaritan tradition that דע רקש דע should be read in both Exodus and Deuteronomy, (b) or that here we have an instance of later harmonization in the case of MSS. E and I (ed. Von Gall), and (page 227) the stones represent the Exodus recording. With the tenth Commandment the Samaritan Deut. v, 21(18) keeps the Exodus (Sam. and Mass.) identity of verb for “coveting” either “neighbour’s wife” or “neighbour’s house”, and like Ex. xx, 17 mentions “house” before “wife”. “Neither” is inserted in both Sam. Ex. xx, 17 and Deut. v, 21 (18) before coveting the latter. This is not found in the Mass. Ex. xx, 17 but occurs in the Mass. Deut. v, 12(18) before the prohibition of “coveting” or “desiring” either. However, Sam. Ex. xx, 17 and Deut. v, 21 (18) insert in the list of things not to be coveted “his field” as only Mass. Deut. v, 21 (18).

The extra Samaritan Commandment is basically Deut. xxvii, 2-7 of the Samaritan version bringing in, in addition, Deut. xi, 30, modified at the end by reference to gen. xii, 6. The extra Samaritan Tenth Commandment is exactly the same in the Samaritan Ex. xx and Deut. v forms of the Decalogue. It appears to have been known to Origen according to Field (cf. Origenis Hexaplorum, Oxford, 1875). There it is marked by asterisk as not in the Jewish Bible. The Syro-Hexapla scholiast adds that this is the Samaritan Tenth Commandment.<sup>1</sup> We may ask ourselves, however, if the Samaritan Tenth Commandment in its exact form was actually known to Origen or if the Syro-Hexapla copyist, knowing the Samaritan form fixed by his own day, translated it exactly as he knew it then. We must bear this in mind in discussing the date and dates of our inscriptions of the Samaritan Decalogue.

First let us compare translations of the Samaritan Deut. xxvii, 2-8 and the Samaritan extra tenth Commandment (Ex. xx, 17b and Deut. v, 18b).

(Sam.) Ex. xx and Deut. v	(Sam.) Deut. xxvii
And it shall come to pass when the Lord thy God brings thee to the land of the Canaanite whether thou art entering to possess it.	And it shall come to pass on the day when ye cross the Jordan to the land which the Lord thy God is giving to thee.
Then thou shalt set up for thyself great stones and plaster them with lime and thou shalt write upon them (upon the stones) all the words of this law. (Ex. xx, Deut. v.) (page 228)	
	When thou crossest in order that thou mayest enter into the land which the Lord thy God is giving to thee, a land flowing with milk and honey as the Lord the God of thy Fathers spake to thee.
And it shall be when ye cross the Jordan ye shall set up these stones which I am commanding thee to-day on Mount Gerizim.	
	And thou shalt plaster them with lime.
And thou shalt build there an altar to the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up upon them iron, (with) whole stones: thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God and thou shalt offer up upon it burnt offerings to the Lord thy God and thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings and thou shalt eat there and rejoice before the Lord thy God.	
	And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.
That Mount is beyond Jordan towards the way of the going down of the sun in the land	

of the Canaanite that dwells in the Arabah facing the Gilgal close by the oak of Moreh facing Shechem.	
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## V

On the Leeds stone, in a later hand and divided from the main text by a deep line, is a citation from Deut. xxiii, 4, “The Law Moses commanded to us”. In the Nablus inscription, within the frame and as if part of the Tenth Commandment, is a citation from Num. x, 35-36, “Arise Yahweh, return Yahweh”. The Palestine Museum inscription, which like the N.D., is surrounded by a decorative frame, has no such appendix to the Tenth Commandment.

One thing has to be stressed. Neither P.D. nor S.D. have such a final line; Leeds has the final line added as a sort of afterthought and how long after we do not know. But the Leeds final line is not the same as that of the N.D. These final lines in their different ways seem to hint at ideas from one of the paragraphs following the Samaritan Tenth Commandment. These paragraphs are not found in the Hebrew Massoretic text of Ex. xx and Deut. v. The relevant paragraph is comprised of Deut. v, 26, Deut. xviii, 18-22 and Deut. v, 27-28. A trans- (page 229) lation of this paragraph (taken from Gaster, *op. cit.*, p. 190) is given in the footnote below.<sup>1</sup>

The Leeds final line, “Moses commanded us a law, an inheritance for the assembly of Jacob”, stresses the role of Moses as the Lawgiver at Mt. Sinai. The same idea seems to underlie the additional paragraph mentioned above. However, the verse itself is not part of the standard Samaritan Decalogue appendices.

The Lawgiving at Mt. Sinai is probably referred to in the last line of the N.D., which cites Num. x, 35-36 in condensed fashion. Num. x, 35-36 reads: “And it came to pass, when the Ark set forth that Moses said, *Rise up, O Lord*, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before Thee. And when it rested, he said, *Return, O Lord*, unto the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel”. This verse again does not figure in the official Samaritan Decalogue appendices.

The Nablus final line may be a deliberate attempt on the part of the mason to refer to the Samaritan doctrines of Rahutha and Panutha (i.e. Devine Favour and Divine Displeasure). The period of Divine Favour was from the Lawgiving to the time of Eli. Then came the period of Divine Displeasure, which has continued ever since, and will continue till the Taheb, the Samaritan equivalent of the Messiah, comes.

As to orthography we note that there is no difference between that of the stones themselves and that of the Samaritan Decalogue text in so far as the latter is cited on the stones. As we remarked (page 230) above, the Decalogue inscriptions abbreviate the Commandments where possible and cite only the significant features of each Commandment. Even so, words are not in themselves abbreviated on these stones, nor are words written defectively; not that there was much opportunity, as it happens, with the words of the Decalogue text quoted on the stones, to employ *matres lectionis* to any extent; but neither has the Samaritan Pentateuch Decalogue text done so. Indeed the Samaritan Pentateuch text (von Gall ed.) and the Massoretic Hebrew Decalogue text are very close in orthography<sup>1</sup> apart from, e. g. מישלש (Ex. xx, 5 Mass.) but מישילש in the Samaritan Pentateuch text; another example is וישדקל (Ex. xx, 8 Mass.) which appears in the Samaritan as ויהשדקל. In Ex. xx, 11 ויהשדקיו appears alike in Hebrew Massoretic and Samaritan. Incidentally the Leeds inscription top line, damaged as it is, still show that the suffix appeared in that form there on the stone just as it does in the Samaritan Ex. xx, 8, as against the form וישדקל in the same verse Ex. xx, 5 in the Hebrew Massoretic.

Something should be said regarding the epigraphy of these four Samaritan Decalogue inscriptions. Montgomery in “The Samaritans”, 1907, published a table (plate 13, facing p. 278) of which columns vi, vii, viii are described as “Monumental Samaritan”. Column vi is from the First Emmaus inscription; column vii is from the Nablus “Ten words” (i.e. of Creation); while column viii is from the Leeds Decalogue inscription. Had Montgomery published a column devoted to the Nablus Decalogue inscription he could have supplied his readers with a *no* to compare with that of the Leeds. He could

description he could have supplied his readers with a *pe* to compare with that of the Leeds. He could also have furnished one with a *gimel* (not found in any of the three inscriptions which he made the basis of his table). Montgomery's drawings of the Leeds letters leave much to be desired. Of course one must allow for the very poor photograph at his disposal, e.g. the left foot of the *beth* is not so pronounced. The *taw* on the other hand has much more pronounced upward right hand (page 231) stroke. The Leeds *daleth* has a very marked long horizontal top tail and in Montgomery's *zayin* is perhaps his worst misrepresentation.

To pass on now to the comparison of the epigraphy of the four Decalogue inscriptions, the Leeds, the Nablus, the Palestine Museum and the Sychar. As a preliminary remark one should point out that the nablus and the Palestine Museum stones have each an ornamental border, but, apart from this fact and that they are the bigger stones and of similar texture and colouring, resemblance ends. The Nablus and the Leeds stones have lateral lines incised with shallow incision; between these lines the text is deeply inscribed. In the case of the Leeds inscription the letters definitely depend from the upper line, and *mem* and *lamed* and *kaph* do not merely touch the upper line but pass through it as does the *nun* in both the Nablus and Leeds.

In the Sychar and the Palestine Museum stones there are no lateral dividing lines. In all four inscriptions there are word dividers represented by one dot. These are in relief in the Nablus inscription, in the other inscriptions they are indented. (In the Palestine Museum stone it appears as a vertical stroke, in the Leeds inscriptions have the colon at the end of Commandments. The Nablus is more consistent in the use of the colon.

In dealing with the epigraphy proper we note that the Nablus and Leeds inscriptions have in the case of the *keph*, the *mem*, and the *nun* at the left hand foot in all cases an open wedge, open at the angle of about forty-five degrees and made by two separate linear indentations. In the Palestine Museum and the Sychar inscriptions this feature appears as a closed wedge-like cavity made by a triangular stylus.

The top lateral stroke of the *mem* and the *keph* in the Leeds and the Nablus inscriptions are truly horizontal, especially in the Leeds. This applies, too, to the Bottom line of the Leeds inscription which, as we have seen (above), appears to be by a different hand from the main text. In the case of these letters the Palestine Museum and the Sychar inscriptions have (and especially is this so with the Palestine Museum stone) (page 232) two shallow curves instead of a truly horizontal line. The Nablus and the Leeds (main text) and the Sychar inscriptions have vertical "crowns" (strokes) in their *mems* and *kaphs*, strokes of equal breadth throughout their length. But the Palestine Museum stone has wedge shaped strokes reminiscent of the wedges at the left hand foot of these letters. These wedge strokes are also found on the top of the *mem* in the separate bottom line of the Leeds inscription. The Palestine Museum stone has a propensity for making the simple strokes of the Nablus and Leeds inscriptions into wedges, but the wedges are found in the *shin* in the bottom line of the Leeds stone. There you have the straight, horizontal base of the *shin* found in none of the other three stones, which make it two shallow curves. The closed wedge-like indentation as a tail piece is found in all stones in some letters, but in the Palestine Museum stone most often. The Leeds and the Nablus inscriptions, on the other hand, stand close together as regards epigraphy; the Palestine Museum and the Sychar inscriptions, on the other hand, have much in common in this respect, e.g. the heads of the *beth* and *resh* are there rounded, but the L.D. and N.D. the heads of *beth* and *resh* are angular. The tendency to curves in preference to sharp corners is, even so, developed in the P.D. inscription, e.g. of the *'ayin* in P.D. as against even that in S.D. In all such cases cited above the idiosyncrasies of the individual sculptor cannot be ruled out, but when stones as different as L.D. and N.D., on the one hand, and P.D. and S.D., on the other, have features in common, perhaps we need not stress the sculptor's idiosyncrasies. What is clear is that we have, on the one hand, a tendency to curves and, on the other, to angles. Which is the earlier?

The present writers confine themselves to pointing out these differences without drawing any final conclusions as to the relative dates of these inscriptions. The state of Samaritan epigraphy up to the present does not enable us to fix with any degree of accuracy the progress of the development of Samaritan characters.

Perhaps it is helpful to summarise the conclusions of past scholars regarding the dates of some of these stones. Write regards the Leeds stone as at least three or four hundred years old, but perhaps much older. Montgomery (*op. cit.* p. 275) would (page 233) date the Leeds inscription along with the Nablus Decalogue inscription and the Nablus inscription of The Ten Words of Creation<sup>1</sup> as “anterior to the disruption of the Samaritan community by Justinian”. In dating these two Nablus inscriptions thus, he is following Rosen (*op. cit.*). Blau (*op. cit.*) had dated these as from the first Samaritan Temple on Mt. Gerizim destroyed by John Hyrcanus. This last view is extremely unlikely; what would be more likely would be that it came from the second Samaritan Temple built after Bar Kokba’s revolt in the thirties of the second century A.D. (if indeed it came from the temple and not a synagogue). Be that as it may, the second Samaritan temple was destroyed finally in the time of the Emperor Zeno (A.D. 474-491). Samaritan synagogues suffered as well at this time. There is no need to argue that we must wait until Justinian’s day for the reduction of the Samaritan Community as a result of his edict of 529, “De Haereticis et Manichaeis et Samaritis”. Certainly, then, in 529 steps were taken for the destruction of Samaritan synagogues, the rebuilding of which was forbidden. But despite the ability of the Samaritans to give trouble in 529, the Samaritans even after 486 were at a low ebb.

The P.D. inscription is listed in Palestine Museum as of the third or fourth century A.D. The Sychar inscription identified by Dr. Bowman only last summer has not so far been dated. As pointed out above, of the four inscriptions S.D. and P.D. stand together not only in epigraphy but in certain textual features as well. If dating of P. D. were right we should provisionally suggest a somewhat similar date for the Sychar inscription.

### Conclusions Based on Internal Evidence

According to the Biblical tradition (Ex. xxxii, 15, Deut. iv, 13, v, 19, x, 34) the Ten Commandments were written on two stones. Philo (De Decalogo xii) and Josephus (A.J III, v, § 4) tell us that the Commandments were divided into two groups of (page 234) five, engraved on each stone respectively (a similar division is mentioned in the midrash Ex. R. xli). Scholars have realised that if the present Massoretic text is original, the first tablet would have contained considerably more words than the second. It has therefore been assumed that the original Commandments One to Five and Ten (Jewish official enumeration) had had a much shorter form, and had been amplified by so-called midrashic elements; the differences between the additional elements in the Exodus and Deuteronomy forms of the Fourth, Fifth and Tenth Commandments seem to support this view. As stated the Samaritan Pentateuch Decalogue texts follow the Massoretic Exodus and Deuteronomy respectively in broad outline.

It is interesting to remark that the abbreviated form of the Decalogue, as found in the Samaritan Decalogue inscriptions, is nearly identical with the supposed original form of the Decalogue as given by Wildeboer and others (the additional Samaritan Commandment excepted).

It should be noticed that differences between the forms of individual Commandments on these stones occur only in Commandments which modern scholars recognize as having in Pentateuch texts (Mass. and Sam. alike) midrashic elements. Since the Samaritan Pentateuch Decalogue texts largely follow the respective Massoretic Hebrew midrashic additions in Exodus and Deuteronomy (with exception of Commandment Nine (Jewish Tenth), where the Samaritan text has harmonized the Exodus and Deuteronomy forms mainly in favour of Exodus), it would be absurd to suggest that the Hebrew Pentateuch, in the possession of the Samaritans presumably before the Samaritan schism, had not already such additions. Yet it is possible that the Samaritans, or some Samaritans, for long thereafter had traditions of the basic forms of the Commandments concerned. On the other hand, it might be urged that the individual sculptors used their own discretion in abbreviating Commandments as they so desired. But even this latter suggestion, if correct, would probably point to a fairly early date for these stones, possibly in the first few centuries of the Christian era. Divergence does not seem to have been tolerated as the Samaritan group became smaller. (page 235)

We have shown above (see table) the discrepancy of view as to the enumeration of the

we have shown above (see table) the divergencies of view as to the enumeration of the Commandments even in non-Samaritan circles from the beginning of this era. It is plain that the Palestine Museum stone and the Nablus have different ideas as to what constitutes the First Commandment and the Second at least. While divergence of views as to enumeration persisted until late in Jewish and Christian circles, it is unlikely that this was the case in the small Samaritan community. In the case of the Ninth Samaritan Commandment (Jewish tenth) the stones show diversity in abbreviating; while Leeds and Nablus stand together, the Palestine Museum and the Sychar stones differ from each other as well as the other two. In the case of the Palestine Museum stone, its omission of the prohibition of coveting the neighbour's wife was not prompted by lack of space.

But it is in the extra Tenth Commandment that divergence is perhaps most marked. The Leeds inscription quotes a verse in its last line (main text) which is found in neither the standard Samaritan Pentateuch Tenth Commandment form nor in the Hexaparc translation of it. And when we allow for the great importance of this Commandment in Samaritan eyes, as embodying their essential point of difference from the Jews, it is hard to believe that, had the standard text of this Commandment been affixed when these stones were incised, such diversity of abbreviation would have been countenanced. The Leeds stone in particular seems to point to a stage when the Commandment's form was not fixed but was merely realised as being based on Deut. xxvii, 2-8.

One might suggest a pre-Origenic date for these stones, as Origen appears to have known this Commandment in its finished form,<sup>1</sup> and not only this Commandment but the succeeding verses as well. These latter are not represented on the Palestine Museum and Sychar stones; the Leeds, as we saw, adds a line, but it is outside its main text; in the Nablus it is within the frame and not demarcated from the Ten (page 236) Commandments. However, in neither have we verses cited from the Standard Samaritan Pentateuch's succeeding verse to the Decalogue. Origen knew these standard verses following the Decalogue, and in the form they now possess, if Field's assumption is justified. But, of course, if Paul of Tella or some scholiast is to be held responsible for the text now extant in the Syro-Hexapla margin without having based himself on the Origenic original, one would have to allow for a later date for the inscriptions. If this is the case, we would either have to assume a post-Origenic date for the final redaction of the text of the Samaritan Ten Commandments or to view the versions contained in the inscriptions as a continuation of textual traditions which have not been incorporated in the Samaritan "Massora".

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[1] P.S.B.A. 1883, 6<sup>th</sup> (November), pp. 25-26.

[2] This inscription will be designated in this article the Leeds Decalogue Inscription (i.e. L.D.).



<sup>3</sup> An unsatisfactory reproduction of the stone was printed in J.A. Montgomery's *The Samaritans*, p. 275, 1907.

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<sup>1</sup> This practice is based on the Biblical statement that the Ten Commandments had been written on two tablets when delivered to Moses (Ex. xxxii, 15; Deut. iv, 13; x, 34). A similar division is mentioned in Midrash Ex. Rabbah xli. Compare as well Joshephus A. J. iii; v, 4; Philo, De Decalogo xii.

<sup>2</sup> See account of further Samaritan inscriptions in the continuation of this article.

<sup>3</sup> Wright supposed that this inscription, as well as others of the same kind, were placed originally in Samaritan Synagogues. (See *op. cit.*)

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<sup>1</sup> It will be pointed out that the last line was presumably added by a second hand.

<sup>2</sup> A. J. Braver, *Eretz-Israel* (Hebrew), Jerusalem, 1950, map facing p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> The same technique is employed, amongst others, in the "Dead Sea Scrolls" and is easily recognizable in the "Habakkuk Scroll." See M. Burrows (editor), *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery*, 1950.

<sup>4</sup> This is a regular feature of Samaritan Pent. MSS.

<sup>5</sup> The extraordinary quest for harmony results in certain scribal peculiarities which are conspicuous in Samaritan Pent. MSS. Identical letters in adjoining lines are written, whenever possible, in a vertical column. This involves often a special spreading of words. Short lines are “closed” by pushing the last or the two last letters (there seem to be extant two differing systems) right up to the end, separating them from other letters of the same word. Open spaces are, therefore, found in the middle of lines and not at the end. This system is employed in the Nablus Decalogue Inscription and is presupposed for the Leeds Stone as well in the restoration suggested. A typical example of this harmonizing tendency can be consulted in the John Rylands MS. of the Samaritan Pentateuch. In the Decalogue version Deut. v all the Commandments beginning with  $\aleph \aleph$  are written in a fashion which brings this word in adjoining lines into one vertical column in the middle of the lines. In Ex. xx this column appears at the beginning of the lines. On textual harmonization in the two Decalogue copies see below.

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<sup>1</sup> According to this suggestion we would have expected a colon in line 6, after  $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$ . But there the ordinary point is employed.

<sup>2</sup> Restored letters are placed in brackets, partly legible letters are indicated by a superimposed dot.

<sup>1</sup> 12 in line 5; 14 in line 3; 15 in lines 1, 4, 6; 16 in lines 2, 7, 9; 19 in line 8.

<sup>2</sup> The Palestine Museum inscription of the Samaritan Decalogue (i.e. P.D.) has a different arrangement of Commandments 1-3, as will be shown below. But certain similarities between the Leeds and the Nablus stone (to be pointed out later on) justify the proposed basing of the restoration on the Nablus version (i.e. N.D.).

<sup>1</sup> In the restoration word-dividers and colons were employed at the end of lines. This is not a generally accepted rule in Samaritan manuscripts but is commonly done in inscriptions. Compare A. Mursil, *Sieben Samaritanische Inschriften aus Damaskus*. Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Bd. CXLVII, Abhandlung I; J. A. Montgomery, *op. cit.*, plates 1-7, 10-12; J. Ben Zevi, *Sefer Ha-Shomronim* (Hebrew), 1935, plates 7, 9.

<sup>2</sup> See Musil, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Rosen, *op. cit.*

<sup>1</sup> See below.

<sup>2</sup> An account of the discovery and a photographic reproduction are given by Montgomery, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-273. For further details consult articles by Blau and Rosen, mentioned above.

<sup>1</sup> This Commandment would come at the top of the Sychar stone, where it is unfortunately missing. The text can be easily fitted in.

<sup>2</sup> It shall be pointed out that this is not the case with regard to Commandments 1-3, the Tenth Commandment and the Samaritan additional clause.

<sup>3</sup> The numbering of the Ten Commandments by aid of the first ten letters of the alphabet is often employed in Samaritan MSS.

<sup>1</sup> Babli Mak. 24a; Mekhilta (ed. Friedmann), p. 70b; Pesikta (ed. Friedmann), p. 106b.

<sup>2</sup> Sifre to Num. xv, 31.

<sup>3</sup> Flavious Josephus, A. J. vi. V. 5; Philo, De Decalogo xii.

<sup>4</sup> In deut. v the Massorah of Ben Asher (ed. Kittel) and Ben Naftali coincide with regard to this division. Ben Naftali employs the same division in Ex. xx as well. But Ben Asher has in Ex. xx a different arrangement. See table.

<sup>1</sup> In Codex Alexandrinus.

\* von Gall's apparatus records a number of MSS. which omit the copula “and” before “thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife”. Others spell  $\aleph \aleph$  defectively.

<sup>1</sup> It was said above that the Samaritan High Priest in the days of Rosen (1860) as well as the now acting High Priest denied any possible Samaritan origin of these abbreviated Decalogue inscriptions. We put forward a theory that this might point to the antiquity of this practice which has become obsolete.

<sup>1</sup> Field's Greek reconstruction of Origen's text is based on the Syriac, *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 116.

<sup>1</sup> And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee; they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children for ever. (Deuteronomy xviii. 16) I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I

for ever. (Deuteronomy xviii, 18) I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not harken unto his words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it to him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my Name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. And if thou sayest in thine heart, How shall it be known that the word is not that which the Lord hath spoken? When a prophet speakest in the Name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.

<sup>1</sup> Even allowing for von Gall's preference for Samaritan MSS. with orthography closest to the Hebrew Massoretic, e.g. his writing of Har-Gerizim as two words.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Montgomery, *op. cit.*, p. 274. The inscription was first published by Rosen, *op. cit.*, p. 622.

<sup>1</sup> If Field, *op. cit.*, is right in making Origen's Hexapla the source of the Syro-Hexapla's translation of the standard Samaritan Pentateuch's Tenth Commandment and its succeeding verses.