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***HEBREW ILLUMINATED BIBLES OF THE
IXTH AND XTH CENTURIES
(CODICES OR. GASTER, Nos. 150 AND 151):
AND
A SAMARITAN SCROLL OF THE LAW
OK THE XITH CENTURY
(CODEX OR. GASTER, No. 350).
TOGETHER WITH EIGHT PLATES OF FACSIMILES OF THESE
MANUSCRIPTS
AND OF FRAGMENTS FROM THE GENIZA IN EGYPT.
PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME.***

BY M. GASTER, PH.D.

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(p.23)[240] **A SAMARITAN SCROLL OF THE HEBREW PENTATEUCH.**

Up to a short time ago not a single copy of the Hebrew Samaritan Text of the Pentateuch in Scroll-form was known to exist outside the Samaritan community in Nablus. The codices of this text which had reached Europe from the XVIIth century, on and upon which the edition in the Paris and the London Polyglott rests, were all, without exception, in Book-form. In the first Appendix to Nutt's edition of the "Fragments of a Samaritan Targum" which appeared in 1874, Prof. Harkavy was still able to write as follows: "In the year 1870, the Russian Minister of public worship purchased from the well-known Karaite traveller and archaeologist, Abraham Firkowitsch, his collection of Samaritan MSS. for the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg. It consists almost exclusively of fragments; this circumstance arising from the fact that the collector, during his stay in Nablus and Egypt, completely ransacked the Samaritan Genizoth (that is to say, the garrets and cellars of the synagogues, whither their worn-out books were conveyed), thus acquiring several fragments of Samaritan Pentateuch rolls—*none of which have before this, to the writer's knowledge, ever reached Europe.*" Later on, in classifying the materials purchased from Firkowitsch, Harkavy says the first division will consist of "fragments belonging to twenty-seven parchment Pentateuch rolls. None of

this kind, as has been already remarked, have hitherto been discovered in any European library, all the existing ones being in the shape of books; the reason of this appears to be that the Samaritans hold such rolls as especially sacred, from their being intended for use in the Synagogues, and so will part with them for no sum, however large, to those of another faith." And further on: "Be this as it may, these fragments have been till now the only ones known in Europe, and so they are of considerable importance for explaining to us how the Samaritans write the Sacred Law for use in Divine (p. 24) worship. Unfortunately, as might have been guessed from the place where they were found, they are for the most part in bad condition, and as Samaritan palaeography is not yet in a condition to decide with certainty upon the age of an undated MS., it is only such as contain dated epigraphs whose age can be without doubt ascertained. Only six of the fragments contain such notices, and only three of this number have their dates perfect; one (No. 4) was written (A.H. 599=) 1202-3; another (No. 10) in (A.H. 605=) 1208-9; the third (No. 15) in (A.H. 808 =) 1405: it is, however, quite certain that several other fragments in the collection belong to a much earlier age. It is interesting to notice the way in which the Samaritans insert these epigraphs in the Pentateuchs. For this purpose the column of text in the roll or page of the book is divided down the middle by two perpendicular lines, the interval between the lines being left vacant, except for the insertion of such letters from the text as serve the writer to compose the epigraph."

This extract from Prof. Harkavy's note is of extreme value, as it shows that up to 1870 no scroll of the Samaritan-Hebrew text was known to exist in any library in Europe. The importance of the scroll has not been sufficiently gauged by Harkavy, and the value which this form of sacred writing of the Text of the Bible has for the study of ancient palaeography. He has, furthermore, omitted to touch upon the relation in which the Samaritan Scroll stands to the Hebrew Scroll of the Jews.

Since that time a few fragments have been incorporated into the library of the British Museum, and one has come into my possession. The oldest fragment in the British Museum is ascribed to the XIIth or XIIIth century, it contains Num. xvi, 1-xxvi, 22, altogether eleven chapters (Or. 2686).

Before describing my own fragment, which reaches from Deut. xxvii, 1 up to the End of the Pentateuch, it is necessary to dwell more fully on the importance which this text in the Scroll-form has for the study of Biblical archaeology in general, and for the internal history of the sacred scrolls of the Pentateuch in particular. Prof. Harkavy has drawn attention merely to the fact that, through these unique fragments we are now in a better position to ascertain the way in which the Samaritans wrote their sacred Scroll- But the Samaritans must have followed older examples, and in the comparison with such lies, to my mind, the greatest value of the Scroll of the Samaritan recension.

(p. 25) [242] Another point of no mean importance which claims the attention of the Bible student, is that up to now the comparison between the Hebrew text of the Samaritan recension as such, with that of the Jews, not from the graphical side, but from that of the text carried out by the scholars of the last two centuries, has been based exclusively on the Book-form, no Scroll being available for that purpose. In my study on the Illuminated Bibles I have taken occasion to accentuate the essential difference which exists between the Bookform and the Scroll. The former is the *profane* text, left in the hands of the people for any use they choose to make of it, not hedged in by any of the numerous prescriptions which hold good only and solely in the case of the Scroll. The Books are not used in religious service, nay, they are distinctly forbidden to be made use of in that way. The Book becoming the "Vulgate," will easily be corrupted, mistakes will creep in, and even the most accurate

injunctions and directions given by the authors of the Massora have not prevented corruptions from getting into these texts. Not so, however, is the condition of the Scroll, which is used in the religious service. Most stringent directions are laid down for the scribe; he must pay scrupulous attentions to them, and the community which is to make use of these Scrolls is guided by similar laws. The slightest deviation from these laws at once annuls the *sacred* character of the text, and unless speedily corrected—as long as such corrections are compatible with the character of the passage, and they do not extend beyond certain minute defects, none of any grave import—the Scroll is at once removed from the service.

Anxious to obtain the most accurate version of such a text, we must necessarily turn to the only source where we have reason to expect of finding it least tainted by faults of scribes, and preserved in as perfect a manner as possible. For these reasons the comparison between the two recensions of the Hebrew text must be taken up anew, and carried out, not as hitherto, with the aid of the Book, but with that of the Scrolls of the Pentateuch. As far as I am aware, no such Scroll has yet been published, and it is therefore difficult to say in what relation the Book-form stands to the Scroll. It cannot be doubted that of the two the Scroll is the earlier, and that the Book-form depends entirely upon the Scroll, which is the more accurate, for it is *sacred*. The Book will unquestionably contain the most characteristic readings of the Scroll, but the number of deviations of the Samaritan from the Massoretic text is so great, and so large a proportion of these deviations have been shown to be due to scribes' errors and to later attempts to improve the text, that a new revision is indispensable. Only then when this has been carried out with minute accuracy, shall we be in a position to ascertain with some versimilitude the true relation between the two recensions of the Hebrew text.

Even the text of the Book is not invariably the same, as is well known. I have compared some leaves from Hebrew-Samaritan Pentateuchs in my possession, of extreme antiquity, at least as old as Cod. Or. 1443 British Museum (XIIIth century), if not older, with the printed Samaritan text of the Pentateuch in the London Polyglott, and even therein have I found differences. How much more likely is it then to anticipate similar results from a comparison between the Books and the Scrolls? I might mention on this occasion that I possess Dr. Kennicott's copy of the Samaritan text which he had cut out from the Polyglott, and interleaved, and to which he has added some marginal notes.

But before proceeding to the textual criticism, the graphical aspect claims special consideration. Among the Jews a peculiar code of laws obtains, the antiquity of which is somewhat difficult to establish, which regulates the correct writing of the Scroll for the use in the Synagogue. Most minute regulations are laid down, and detailed injunctions are formulated, for the writing of such a Scroll. The material, the ink, the size, the form of each letter, and in each case the exceptions from these rules are all carefully noted. The blemishes which would annul the validity of such a Scroll, the way how to mend them, and a clear statement of the mistakes which are considered irreparable. We have then rules as to the number of letters and lines on each column, the spacing of the letters and of the lines, the margin which is allowed to each column, the minor divisions of the text, and the final form of the Book or Scroll; the way in which the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy and in Exodus are to be written, each in a distinct form of alternating hemistiches.

To all these questions, and many more that belong to the hitherto neglected chapter of Biblical palaeography, the Book-form is unable to give any satisfactory answer. Some of the more important

elements, such as the divisions of the text, on which I shall have to dwell later on, are retained, to a certain extent by the Book; but even herein have I been able to find serious (p. 27)[244] divergences between the MS. of the British Museum and the corresponding portion in the Scroll, notably in the writing of Deuteronomy, chapter xxxii. Of minor points I mention that the signs, dots, etc., at the end of the verse, and those that are found in some instances in the middle, differ also greatly in MSS. It is evident that in copying the text from the Scroll on to a leaf neither the line nor the column have been reproduced with any fidelity. We moreover never find the text written in two or three columns to the pages, as is the case with the oldest MSS. of the Jewish Book recension. The form adopted in some Books is the line across the whole page. However insignificant these details may appear, they have their importance, they form part of the history of the Bible in its transmission from ancient times, and though apparently touching merely the outward side, they show even in these minor points whether the scribe remained uninfluenced by the currents of the day in which he wrote, and may therefore be trusted, or whether he followed the example of the Greek or the Roman, the Syrian or Arabian scribe. Did he preserve the ancient tradition faithfully, or was he influenced by extraneous examples? and if it be an ancient tradition, did he, in the case of a Samaritan, follow a tradition akin to that which held sway among the Jews? or had he an independent tradition to guide him in preparing a *sacred* Scroll? Identity between the two would at once show the extreme antiquity of such a tradition.

The difficulties in the path of such an inquiry are great. In the first instance Jewish Scrolls of the Law are not dated, and I even doubt whether the Samaritan have any dates. The remark of Harkavy which I quoted above is vague, and may refer only to the Book-form, and not to the Scroll. Of the fragments of the latter, as far as I have been able to ascertain, with the exception of my own MS., there is none in the British Museum and in the Bodleian containing the final portion of the Pentateuch, usually the place for such an epigraph. Very old Scrolls of the Law, in order to save them from possible profanation, have as a rule been buried, or, what is tantamount to burial, they have been hidden away in a secret place in or near the Synagogue, the "Genizah" from which those fragments in St. Petersburg and elsewhere have since emerged. From the moment that so-called "Model-codices" were endowed with vowel signs and accents, they could no longer serve as Originals for the writing of a sacred Scroll. Such texts would much more mislead than (p. 28) lead. If a text is to serve as a "model" for the Scroll, it must be the *bare* text of the Pentateuch without any addition whatsoever. Everything in the shape of point or accent is rigorously excluded from the Scroll. No trace of verses or chapters, with the exception of those divisions of which I shall speak presently, is allowed; and great attention is paid to the arrangement of the columns and lines. The "model" must represent the very copy of the Law as it appears in the Scroll, and must be, if possible, written in such a manner as to provide all the required elements for a perfect copy. The scribe has only to follow that model faithfully in order to obtain an accurate sacred Scroll. Of such "model" codices, which are thus entirely different from the famous Massoretic Codices of Ben Asher, or other leading authorities, and wrongly called by that name, scarcely one single old copy seems to have been preserved.

Of the Standard MSS. of the Pentateuch mentioned by Dr. Ginsburg in his "Introduction to the Bible" (p. 429 ff.), the majority have disappeared. As far as one can judge by the quotations, they seem to have belonged mostly to the Massoretic type, and to have contained vowels and accents and Massoretic marginal notes. It is not unlikely, however, that one or the other, such as the "Jerusalemite" and the "Jeriho" Codex, and above all the Codex "Ezra," may have been such

"Standard" codices; but in the absence of more ample evidence it is impossible to go any further. The reference of Maimonides to the famous Codex so often corrected by Ben Asher (Hilkhoth Sefer Torah, ch. viii), proves this "Model" or Standard Codex to have been also one of those codices in Book-form, and not a Scroll, as it contained all the books of the Bible, Pentateuch, Prophets, and Hagiographa. Maimonides relied on it for the correct readings and for other details connected with the internal accuracy of the Scroll, but he could not have used it as a "Model codex" to copy his Scroll from it directly. He expressly states that "he relied in all these things on the copy so well known in Egypt, which contained the twenty-four books of the Bible, and had formerly been in Jerusalem, where they used to correct their Scrolls in accordance with its readings, as Ben Asher had corrected it and gone over it many times, improving it." No such correction would be tolerated in the Scroll. A Scroll written by some great authority may have occasionally served as a Model for another, but the difficulty of handling such a sacred Scroll, and the danger of injury were so great that the experiment, if ever made, would (p. 29)[246] certainly not be often repeated. Profane model codices must have existed, and there can be no doubt as to such guides and models from very ancient times, which exhibited all the peculiarities of the Hebrew Text, such as used in the Scroll of the Synagogue. They have perished, through the constant use to which they have been put, and with them some of those old traditions. Since the discovery of printing such a "Tiqqun," as it is called, has often been printed to serve as a guide to the scribe, the last printed is one prepared and published by the well-known Massoretic scholar, the late Dr. Baer. The lines in some of these prints are so arranged as to correspond entirely with the prescriptions holding good for the Scroll.

In spite of the extreme anxiety to preserve it as correct as possible, various traditions developed; some of them embodied in the Massorah, others alluded to in ancient writings, or found in such Model codices. They refer to "scriptio plena" and "defectiva," to Open (פְּחֻרְחָה) and Closed Sections (סְתֻחֻמָּה), to the form in which the Songs of Moses in Exodus and in Deuteronomy were to be written. Minor or greater discrepancies and differences in tradition led to the desire of having one Standard codex of the Law. Maimonides tried to establish one; others did the same. In this process some of the old peculiarities have disappeared. Should I be spared to publish the only old Model Codex of the Pentateuch which has preserved among other things those "Tittles," which have disappeared from our Scrolls as far back as the time of Maimonides, I may then dilate on this change and on many others, and treat then of the origin of the Scroll which obtains in all the Synagogues of Europe. It is an interesting chapter in the history of the Bible, which has escaped hitherto the investigations of the scholars. In the endeavour to establish such a Standard Codex, the best and oldest texts available were laid under contribution at that time, and a new Model or Standard MS. was then established. The old tradition was most faithfully preserved, only differences adopted by different schools of Massorites were to a certain extent adjusted, and certain graphical details omitted. No new elements were introduced, and the old tradition concerning the Law in the form of a Scroll, which goes back to the time prior to the introduction of the Accents and Vowels, is faithfully reflected in this, the latest model Codex.

The first known attempt to fix the tradition goes back to the VIIth or VIIIth century, and is found in the Treatise Soferim, (p. 30)[247] which deals also with the Liturgy. Scattered notes in the Talmudic writings are there focussed for the first time. The treatise, however, is incomplete in many ways. Responsa emanating from various heads of Colleges in Babylon, Gaonim, as they were called, supplement some of these lacunae. Mr. Elkan Adler has recovered from the Cairo Genizah another extremely old treatise about the writing of the Scroll of the Law, dating probably from the XIth

century (published by him in 1897), and Maimonides has inserted in his great Work all the laws considered obligatory for the correct writing of such a Scroll, giving minute directions about all those points enumerated above, and also indicating the mechanical way how the writing was to be done, how the proper measures for the parchment and the columns in them were to be taken.

Without entering into all the minutiae, we may at once ask how does the Samaritan Scroll compare with this corpus of rules and prescriptions? To start from the writing in the "Book" would be a thankless task, considering that it differs essentially from the Scroll in almost every detail of execution, and the edition based as it is upon that form follows it in every respect. Only to mention one fact, there are no chapters indicated in the Scroll, and therefore the division which has been adopted for the edition is entirely misleading; it is not found in the text of the Scroll.

A brief description of the MS. which forms the basis of this investigation may now precede the critical examination of the writing. This MS. contains the last portion of the Law: Deuteronomy, chapter xxvii to the End of the Book. It is written in a fine and exceedingly clear hand. No date and no epigraph are found in this end of the Book. The age can be approximately fixed by comparing this fragment with the British Museum MSS., and above all with the fragment of the Samaritan Targum published by Nutt. The letters show a more archaic ductus than in the MSS. of the British Museum, of which one is ascribed to the XVth and the other to the XIIth or XIIIth century. Considering that our fragment resembles the Targum fragments, which Nutt placed, latest, in the XIth century, we may fairly claim the same age also for this fragment. The only guide in matters of palaeography is the similarity of certain forms at a given period, and the invariable law that the older a MS. is, the more clear is the writing and the more accurate the execution. The heavy and large type of the Book form, of which I have specimens at least as old as those of (p. 31)[248] the British Museum of the XIIth century, prove nothing against the finer writing of the Scroll. The scrolls in the British Museum are also written in the same small fine type which we find in the old fragment of the Targum.

The lower margin of the Scroll has perished, the Scroll having been hidden away for many a century in the old Genizah—as I believe, of Nablus. It has come into my possession, together with other fragments, some six or seven years ago, but I cannot give any further details as to the way in which they came into my hands.

If the MSS. in the St. Petersburg Library are not older than this fragment, which I ascribe to the Xth or XIth century, then this may be the oldest known fragment of the Samaritan Hebrew text of the Pentateuch. It is written on vellum, which seems to have been prepared in a somewhat different manner from that used in the Books. It is white, not even a shade of colour on it, unlike the leaves in the Book, and evidently prepared in the same manner as the vellum is prepared by the Jews for the Scroll, for which only the skins of "clean" animals can be used. The fragment consists of two such skins sewn together with hemp, contrary to the custom of the Jews, who employ only sinews of the same animals. The length of the whole skin is divided into columns, the space between the columns being half an inch, corresponding entirely with the prescriptions laid down for the proportions to be observed at given sizes of skins used. The first skin is divided into four columns of equal width, with an equal number of lines in each column. The length of the line corresponds with that prescribed by the Jews, and shows absolute identity with the manner in which the Jews write the Scroll, viz., long

lines, and not narrow lines and columns, as found in books and in the oldest Greek MSS. of the Bible. The Samaritan books are also written with long lines across the page.

The distance between the lines is equal to the size of the letters, as is the rule with the Jewish Scroll. In the writing of the words there is a marked difference, for in the Samaritan text they are separated by dots, whilst no dot or other diacritical sign is allowed in the Jewish text. The parchment has first been marked by lines drawn with an iron point all the length of it, a similar line running down the left end of the last column in each skin. The letters are written under these lines, just as in the Jewish text, where, according to the law, the Scroll is valueless unless the lines are previously drawn for the writer, and the letters written under and not on or over the lines. The number of lines in each column seems to agree also with the traditional number, there are at least forty-seven on each column, about ten to twelve are missing; the traditional minimum for the Jews is forty-two, the maximum sixty. This maximum is evidently not overstepped in the Samaritan. The length of the line allows a sufficient number of words on each line. According to the law each line must contain at least thirty letters, except in the case of incomplete lines at the end of one of the old divisions of the text. The number of letters in the Samaritan Scroll exceeds the maximum.

Three divisions at least are known in connection with the text of the Pentateuch, viz., the open and closed Sections and the Sedarim. The latter has entirely disappeared from the European texts of the Bible; it has been retained however in the Eastern MSS., hailing from Yemen and from Persia. The "Sedarim" are not of the same age as the first two divisions, and are seldom, if ever, mentioned in the older portions of the Talmudical writings; they have probably never been introduced into the Scroll. These divisions may be compared on the whole to the chapters of the more recent division of the Bible. The relation in which the "Sedarim" stand to the other two divisions of the text has not yet been clearly established, in spite of the assertion often repeated, but not proved, that they represent the divisions of the Bible for the reading in a three-years' cycle. The prevalent custom is to finish the whole Pentateuch in the course of one year, subdividing the text into fifty-two or fifty-three portions; but in some places the reading took three years, and in consequence thereof the text was divided into 150 or more small sections. However alluring this hypothesis may be, it is none the less difficult to reconcile it with the fact that we have more than 160 such sections. Dr. Ginsburg, following the tradition of the Oriental MSS., has inserted them in his edition of the Bible. In most cases the Sedarim coincide either with the "Open" or with the "Closed" sections.

The "Open" section is of two kinds: either the previous section closes in the middle of a line, when space must be left free for writing of at least three triliteral words; or the line goes on to the end, and then a whole line is left blank, and the next section begins with a new line. The "Closed" section is also of a twofold character: first when the previous section comes to an end in the middle of a (p. 33)[250] line, then the space for nine letters is left open, and at least one word of the following section is written in the same line, or secondly the line finishing the previous section reaches the very end, or comes so close to it that no free space for nine letters and one word is left, in which case the following section begins, not "a linea," but with a free space, more like a new paragraph. No satisfactory explanation for these two forms of dividing the text has yet been found, and the tradition concerning them is not so uniform as one could wish, especially having regard to the fact that to change one for the other in the Scroll is equivalent with invalidating it. So much stress was laid upon the maintenance of these divisions, that it suffices for the scribe to substitute an Open for a Closed section, or *vice versa*, to have the Scroll declared unfit for divine service. (*Cf.*

Ginsburg, Introduction, p. 9 ff., and the list of a different tradition of Closed Sections in Appendix I, p. 977 ff.)

If we turn now to the Samaritan Scroll, we see that the columns are also divided into smaller sections, consisting mostly of more than five verses, some only of two or three verses, especially in the last chapter of Deuteronomy. They seem to be all like Open Sections of the Jewish text, a whole blank line separating one section from the other. In some instances the last line of the section is extended in an artificial manner; in order not to allow the last half to be empty, the last two or three words are written with so wide a space between the letters that they reach the very end of the line. When the last line consists merely of one or two words no attempt is made to extend the few letters over the whole space of a long line. In a few instances the last word, if there is only one more to be written, is placed at the left end of the blank line which separates one section from the other. The Book-form has retained these divisions with some faithfulness, and they are also reproduced in the printed edition.

How old these divisions are can best be gauged by the fact ascertained by me through the comparison with old Greek and Syriac MSS. of the Bible, that these also have similar divisions, and that they agree in many cases, if not in all, with the divisions of the Hebrew text; but as far as I have been able to gather, the finer differences between Open and Closed as made in the two forms of the Hebrew original are not as carefully observed. The divisions in the Greek and Syriac sometimes coincide with the Open, and at other times with the Closed, but more often with (p. 34)[251] the Open than with the Closed division. In comparing the Samaritan with the Jewish text we obtain exactly the same results. Most of the divisions in the Samaritan coincide with the Jewish divisions, but they are much more numerous in the Samaritan text than in the Jewish, especially in comparison with the Jewish Open sections.

The Open sections seem to be the older of the two classes, for with them coincide as a rule also the Sedarim and the Parashiyoth, *i.e.*, the larger divisions and the Pericopes. It would be premature to speculate on the origin of these sections, or on the relation that may exist between them and the Synagogal service. I trust that others will take up this question and continue the comparison of the divisions of the Hebrew recensions with those in the old translations. Much light will thus be thrown upon an obscure problem of biblical archaeology.

Returning to our Samaritan text, we find the nearest approach to a Closed section in the first column of Deuteronomy xxxii. 16-26, but being antiphonal the text is written in a kind of hemistych. The Jewish text separates each verse from the following by a closed space, whilst the Samaritan divides each verse by a blank space in the very middle of it. A full blank line separates the last verse from the following portion, to which corresponds in the Jewish text the beginning of chapter xxviii, which is also an Open Section as well as the beginning of a Sedra. Here all the three forms of textual division coincide. The other divisions in the MS. are the following, as far as they are preserved in the upper portion of the MS.; the lower is mutilated and lost, having been destroyed by dampness. I give the first verse with which the Section begins:— xxviii, 27, 36, 49, 54, 56; xxix, 1 (top of the column), 9 (coinciding with Jewish Open Section, Sedra, and Parasha), 13, 21, 30; xxx, 15 (top of column); xxxi, 1 (also Jewish Open Section and Parasha), 7, 9, 14 (also Jewish Sedra and Open Section), 16, (25?), 30; xxxii, 1 (also Jewish Open Section, Sedra, and Parasha); xxxiii, 12, 13, 18, 20, 22, 24, 28; xxxiv, 1, 5, 8, 10.

These examples show how close the connection is in the outward form between the two recensions of the Hebrew Pentateuch, and at the same time how old this traditional division of the text must be, as it is found in the Jewish and in the Samaritan. It is also noteworthy that the final chapter of the Pentateuch is so arranged in the Samaritan Scroll, as to reach the middle of the column, exactly (p. 35) [252] as it is prescribed for the Jewish recension, and is not brought down quite to the bottom of it.

Our fragment contains happily the Song of Moses and his Blessing (Deut. chaps, xxxii and xxxiii). Concerning the former special rules are laid down for the writing thereof. The six preceding lines must commence with certain fixed words, and after the conclusion five lines are similarly arranged. The Song itself must be written in the form of hemistychs, not that each verse is being divided into two halves, but each *line* is divided into two halves; as Maimonides puts it, "each line has a space in the middle in the likeness of a Closed Section." There are thus verses consisting of four or even five such hemistychs, others only of two, according to their length. In order to prevent confusion a list of initial words has been established from ancient times, and the initials of the six portions into which this chapter is divided at the service in the Synagogue is already mentioned in the Talmud (Rosh ha-shana, 31a). Maimonides gives a complete list of the initial words of all the hemistychs (Hilkoth Sef. Torah, ch. 8), the whole Song being written in seventy lines.

Comparing now the Samaritan Scroll with these rules, we find the general principle observed, details only are disregarded. There are two Open Sections before the beginning separated merely by one verse, the lines are also divided in two halves, so that this column is no longer written with lines across the whole width but is broken up into two of equal size. The division does not follow exactly the Jewish tradition: the end of the verse does not always coincide with the end of a hemistych. The space in the middle is merely due to a mechanical division, but is dictated probably by the ancient tradition, that this portion must be written in hemistychs.

It is now very remarkable that the old Codex of the Museum of the XIIIth century (Or. 1443) follows exactly the Jewish Massoretic tradition in the division of the verses and lines, coinciding absolutely with the rule given by Maimonides, and differing in this essential point from the old Scroll.

This coincidence proves if anything the greater antiquity of the Scroll over the Book, as the other practice obtained probably at a later period and under Jewish influences; it shows how little reliance can be placed even upon the oldest of the texts written in Book-form.

Diacritical points over the letters such as recorded by the (p. 36) [253] Massora for chap, xxix, 28, are missing in the Samaritan Codex, no dotted letters being found at all in it. Similarly there is no capital "He" in xxxii, 6 (הלוי); the Samaritan has the small letter as usual. On the other hand we find in the Samaritan text many signs that are wanting in the Jewish recension. Foremost among these the mark at the end of the verses. As far back as the middle of the VIIIth century we find R. Jehudai Gaon protesting against placing two dots at the end of a verse, and declaring a Scroll with such marks unfit for divine service (Adler, loc. c, p. 38). The practice of marking the end of the verse must therefore be much older. It is found in the Samaritan Scroll, but it must be noted that there are two different signs used, *viz.*, two perpendicular dots (:) and two horizontal dots (..). In two or three instances the end is marked thus (•:). The Book form has still more dots and signs at the end of the

Section, three dots like these (-•:) with the stroke in front of the third point. Further, the space between the sections is filled up with peculiar marks consisting of dots alternating with semicircles and lines. In more modern copies we find a star with dots in the inner angles *. . Not a single trace of these latter signs are to be found in the Scroll. The absence or presence of these signs will henceforth assist to fix the approximate date of a MS. In comparing the position where these dots occur in the Samaritan text with the Jewish, we find that as a rule the horizontal double dots (•-) are used in the *middle* of the verse where the disjunctive accents are used in the Bible, especially Athnah (*) and Zaqef qaton (:), whilst the perpendicular mark as a rule is at the end of the verse, just as they are also found in the profane and in the printed texts. We may consider them as indicating generally the end of the verse, which however does not always agree with the end of the same verse in the Jewish recension. The use of these special dots is neither as regular nor as consistent in the printed Samaritan text. Instead of the horizontal (•-) of the Scroll we find often in the print the vertical (:), and *vice versa*. Nor do we find in the Scroll the stroke over certain letters denoting as a rule abbreviations, which occur in some old MSS. in Book-form and are partly reproduced in the print. All these differences prove the superiority of the Scroll over the texts that have been preserved in the form of books. It is a far more true rendering of the Samaritan recension of the Pentateuch. The parallelism between the Jewish and Samaritan Scroll shows further that the Samaritans followed on the (p. 37)[254] whole the same traditions which held sway among the Jews in regard to the manner in which such scrolls were to be written, and they thus strengthen the old tradition, and contribute to the hitherto neglected Biblical palaeography a by no means unimportant chapter.

The differences examined up to now were differences in the writing and in the external form. No less important is the harvest which a thorough examination of the text itself is yielding. We must remember that in treating of the Sacred Text a single letter is of importance. The accuracy with which such Scrolls were written and are written by the Jews, and as a result of our inquiry we may say the same of the Samaritans, and the absolute identity in the general rules observed for that purpose, give a singular value to any deviation either from the Massoretic Jewish text or from the Samaritan Book form.

I am adding here a list of *variae lectiones* which I trust will again direct the attention of Biblical scholars to the Samaritan text.

In about 190 verses preserved in the Scroll we find now in List I about 250 differences from the Massoretic text. These differences can be divided into the following rubrics: (a) a copulative letter is *added* in the Samaritan, such as ך, which occurs most frequently, then more sporadically "ג., ל, ן (initial and final), and, in a few instances, ם; they amount to 59: (b) in 13 instances such letters are *omitted* in the Samaritan, whilst they are retained in the Massoretic text; (c) in four instances *words* are added in the Samaritan, and (d) five words found in the Massoretic are omitted in the former. More numerous than these are, (e) the differences in the "scriptio plena" and "defectiva"; in (a) no less than 63 cases a word which appears in the Massoretic text with the "scriptio defectiva," is written in the Samaritan with the "matres lectionis," (b) in 24 cases the Samaritan has the "defectiva" against the Massoretic text. Of far greater importance are (f) the variants in the readings of the text, (a) either words are *altered* in the Samaritan altogether, other words being substituted for them, or (b) in the word itself a certain change has been made, thus making alterations in the meaning of the word; of these, which may be considered the really important variants, we count about 50, including also more minute changes. Letters transposed in the same word belong to a

separate group (*g*) which numbers only four examples, whilst one single word has been transposed in the same sentence, (*ti*) Grammatical changes for the purpose of introducing greater harmony and (p. 38) [255] symmetry in the construction are represented, (*a*) by 19 cases in which the verb has been changed from singular in the Massoretic into the plural in the Samaritan, and two nouns; (*b*) in chap. xxxi, n, the perfect has been substituted twice for the imperfect, and (7) the reverse has also taken place twice; (0) second for the third person, xxxiii, 28; (*c*) third for the second, xxxi, 13; (?) first plural for third plural, xxxii, 27; (?) the Keri for the Kethib, xxix, 21, and (*k*) in two instances parts of a new verse (xxxii, 15) and a completely new verse (xxxiv, 1) have been introduced into the Samaritan Scroll. (*l*) More curious than these differences, which may be accounted for either by a somewhat different tradition, or by greater carelessness of copyists, not being checked by a "Massora," are orthographical differences, such as \aleph for Mass. \aleph (xxvii, 49; xxxiii, 25); η for π (xxviii, 52; xxix, 18; xxxii, 18, 22); ϕ for \beth (xxxii, 24; xxxiv, 7); \aleph for \daleth (xxxii, 18); \aleph for η (xxxii, 21; xxxiii, 20); η for \aleph (xxxii, 24); and \aleph for \aleph (xxxiv, 1). The similarity between some of these letters in the Hebrew square writing would favour the theory, which has been put forward by some and alluded to by Gesenius (in his *De Pentateuchi Samaritani Origine*, Hallae, 1815, pp. 16, 17), that the Samaritan text is a mere transcript from such a Hebrew Codex. It is, however, not impossible to suggest another explanation, viE., that the scribe wrote by dictation, or by repeating aloud the word read, and was thus guided as much by his ears as by his eyes. It is now a fact that these very letters are pronounced in the same manner by the Samaritans, hence the possibility of substituting a η for π , or ϕ for \beth . The change, however, from \aleph to \daleth cannot be explained by this theory, but as this change is found only in two words of rare occurrence, the change is probably due to the desire (early traceable in the Samaritan recension) of correcting the text and of eliminating obscure passages from it. In both cases the words with \daleth are uncommon words, whilst those with \aleph are very common and well-known. Such a process of continual corruption and alteration can be followed up by comparing the Scroll with the Book form. It cannot be denied that both agree in the majority of cases, yet there is no absolute uniformity, and it will be seen (List II) that in not less than 17 instances the Scroll differs considerably from the Book and agrees with the Massoretic text. If we examine these 17 passages, we find that in three cases it is a question of additional \aleph , in one of final η , one is a "scriptio plena," and two are in plural for the singular, all these found in the Book against the Scroll and (p. 39) [256] the Massoretic text with which the Scroll agrees. The 11 remaining exceptions belong to the more important class of orthographical and textual variants, among these has the Book form three times n against n of the Scroll and Mass., and once even y for n of the Mass. and Scroll; a proof more for the probable *oral* origin of these changes. In saying oral, I mean that the scribe listened either to the dictation of another or, having read the word, he copied it from memory, and, as remarked above, in Samaritan pronunciation no difference whatsoever is made between these letters, they all represent one and the same sound. We have now *seventeen* variations less between the oldest Samaritan text of the Pentateuch and the Massoretic text. Not an insignificant gain from so small a fragment. It is one of extreme importance, as it allows us to infer that, if we ever get a still older text of the Samaritan Scroll, the number of differences and discrepancies between the two recensions of the Hebrew text are sure to be sensibly diminished. Also the Book, imperfect though it is and much disfigured by scribes' errors and by interpolations and additions of an arbitrary character, still retains here and there some readings which are due to the originals from which it has been copied. In a number of instances we find even the Book agreeing more closely with the Massoretic text than the Scroll; I have collected these examples in the third list. It will be seen that the majority of cases consists in differences of "scriptio plena" and "defectiva," the Scroll favouring as a rule the "plena," against the Book and the Massoretic, following therein the general tendency of the Samaritan recension.

These three lists by no means exhaust all the variations between the Massoretic and the Samaritan which have been noticed, *e.g.*, by Doederlein in his excellent but now forgotten edition of the Bible (Lipsiae, 1793). They are all, however, derived from other "Books," which could not be checked; they are missing in the Polyglott, and merely represent more cases of corruptions due to careless copyists. Their only value consists in the negative proof, showing as they do how easily the text had been corrupted and altered, not being protected by a "Massora." No trace of such a Massora has as yet been found in Samaritan MS.

In summing up the results obtained from the minute comparison between the Samaritan Scroll, the Book form, and the Hebrew Massoretic Text of the Pentateuch, we are forced to recognise that all rest upon one and the same old tradition. It must be very old, (p. 40) [257] if it operates with equal force on the Jews and on the Samaritans, who would do everything contrary to the Jews, but who must have considered those prescriptions of too sacred a character to be violated with impunity. The writing of the Scroll in its details follows the same lines as those laid down for the Massoretic. The text is subdivided in a manner which shows acquaintance with those divisions found in the Massoretic text. The agreement extends also as a rule not only to the verses, but also to the subdivisions marked by the Massorites almost with the same sign as the Samaritans; in both instances, as a rule, by two dots (:), in the Samaritan after, in the Massoretic over the word in question. The orthography and the actual form of the text itself has been proved to be in the Scroll much more akin to the Massoretic text than has been believed hitherto. Furthermore, overwhelming evidence has been adduced to show that the Book form is less reliable in its readings than the Scroll, and that the superiority of the latter is indisputable. It is the *sacred* text, against the profane! Only the Scroll can serve as a true basis for further investigations into the relation between the two recensions of the Hebrew text. The final result promises to be close agreement on all vital points, and a direct strengthening of the critical value of the Massoretic text and of its antiquity. For in order to be accepted by the Samaritans, it must be older than the secession of the latter from the Jews, otherwise it would not have been adopted in its actual state, and the differences would be much greater than they are even in the Book form. The re-opening of the inquiry imposes itself, and this alone amply justifies, if justification be needed, the publication of this portion of the Samaritan Scroll.

(only 2 original are shown, other pics not able to show)

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Deuteronomy XXXIII 12-XXXIV 12

SAMARITAN SCRIPT

... and the Lord said to Moses, ...

Deuteronomy XXII, 25-XXIII, 43