A PRE-MASSORETIC BIBLICAL PAPYRUS.

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"The received, or, as it is commonly called, the Massoretic Text of the Old Testament Scriptures has come down to us in manuscripts which are of no very great antiquity, and which all belong to the same family or recension. That other recensions were at one time in existence is probable from the variations in the Ancient Versions, the oldest of which, namely the Greek or Septuagint, was made, at least in part, some two centuries before the Christian era." These words, from the Preface to the Revised Version of the Old Testament, give expression to the generally accepted view of all Biblical scholars, and the theory, based as it is upon a series of incontrovertible facts, at last seems to be completely justified by the unexpected discovery of a small fragment of one of these pre-Massoretic texts referred to. The welcome evidence in question appears in the shape of some pieces of papyrus which were acquired in Egypt, and are now in the possession of Mr. W. L. Nash, F.S.A., to whose kindness I am indebted for the opportunity of making a more or less complete study of them.

Hebrew papyri are exceedingly rare, and, until Steinschneider in 1879 published a few fragments from the collection of papyri in the Berlin Museum, none were known to exist. These, according to

1 The earliest dated MS. is the St. Petersburg codex with the superlinear points (A.D. 916), the British Museum Or. 4445, though undated, is judged to be somewhat older—"probably written about A.D. 820-850" (Ginsburg, Introd. Eth. Bibl., 469). For other ancient MSS. see Gaster, Proceedings, XXII (1900), p. 230, Strack, Hastings' DB, IV, p. 728.

2 The Greek fragments edited by Mr. F. C. Burkitt in the Proceedings, Vol. XXIV, p. 290, were obtained at the same time.


Chwolson, may belong to the VIIth-VIIIth centuries. An Aramaic poem and a few other small fragments (among them one of the oldest specimens of Arabic in Hebrew letters), dating from the IXth century, were found in the collection of the Archduke Rainer, and to the same period Dr. Schechter has ascribed a mutilated liturgical papyrus-codex now in the possession of the Cambridge University Library. A few fragments preserved at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, complete the total of known Hebrew papyri, although it is of course not unlikely that other specimens exist elsewhere undetected, perhaps even unnoticed. Interesting though the above-mentioned papyri are for one reason or another, they are eclipsed in point of age, paleography, and contents, by the one which forms the subject of the present paper.

The newly-discovered papyrus is in four pieces, the largest of which measures 3 1/2 in. x 1 1/2 in. It is perfect at the head, but mutilated at the foot and at both edges. The three remaining fragments are not independent, and the re-arrangement as shown in Plate I will, I think, sufficiently explain itself; it gives us, as the greatest measurement, 5 in. x 2 1/2 in. It being found impossible to take a photograph which would reproduce the written characters with sufficient legibility, Mr. F. C. Burkitt was kind enough to facsimile it. It must therefore be understood that the Plate is a reproduction of a photograph of the papyrus upon which the writing has been copied from the original with pen and ink. Mr. Burkitt's well-known palaeographical skill guarantees the accuracy of the transcription, and in expressing my indebtedness to him I cannot help realising that had it not been for his assistance, the present article, without any adequate representation of the handwriting of the papyrus, would have suffered greatly.

It contains twenty-four lines of Hebrew, with probable traces of a twenty-fifth. Vowel-points, accents, and diacritical marks of any description are wanting; there are no signs to indicate verse-division, but the words are separated from one another by a space, and the final letters are regularly employed. The spacing, however, is irregular, and the words are sometimes run together; contrast lines 4 and 12, and note תּוּבּ (l. 15) written as one word. The

1 Mittheilungen aus der Sammlung d. Erbkers. Rainer, i, pp. 35-44 (1866).

2 Chwolson (op. cit., col. 121, n. 1) has an interesting allusion to some unknown Hebrew papyrus then (1882) in the possession of an Englishman.
papyrus is of a dark brown colour and is written only upon one side. It was, perhaps, originally a roll, and not a codex in book-form. On the paleography, see below, pp. 48 sqq.

On Plate II. will be found the text of the papyrus fully restored. Characters within brackets have been lost owing to the partial or total mutilation of the papyrus; those surmounted by a dot are either doubtful or almost illegible, or, when at the end or beginning of a mutilated portion, are partially wanting. The precise arrangement of the restored words is of course open to correction. It will be noticed that the nineteen lines of the largest fragment are of fairly uniform breadth, and contain from 19-23 letters (average 20-25), whilst at the most 22 or 23 are required to complete them (average 11-17). 1

From the small fragment which has fortunately preserved a portion of the right-hand margin (ll. 15-19), it is seen that six or seven letters have to be restored at the commencement of each line. We find here, also, that each line begins with a fresh word (ll. 15, 19, are no doubt certain), and it is actually possible to make nearly all the remaining lines begin with an undivided word, without going very far above or below the average number of letters required. The lines, it is true, end somewhat irregularly, but this is not unusual in early writings; only the length of line 1 and the commencement of line 5 are real stumbling-blocks (see the notes, P. 37 sqq.).

The fragment distinguishes itself pre-eminently from all known papyri by reason of its contents. It contains the Decalogue and the Shema,' but with remarkable divergences from the Massoretic Text; indeed, not only may it be asserted that no one MS. is known to contain so many variants in so short a space, but the majority of them are absolutely unique, and are to be found neither in the collations of a Kennicott or a De Rossi, nor in traditional notices of lost manuscripts.

In the notes that follow, some attention has been paid to the versions, although the collations do not claim to be complete. It is hoped, however, that they are sufficient to give the reader a clear idea of the relative value of the text. As regards the Decalogue, the text of Exodus (xx, 2-17), and not Deuteronomy (v, 6-21), is presumed throughout, unless stated to the contrary, but I leave the question open for the present as to which of the two recensions the papyrus really represents. 3

Line 1. 2 Twenty-two letters are wanting between the end of line 1 and the commencement of line 2. This is considerably above the average number, and it is conceivable that the words מִיתָרָה יִרְבּוּ וְלֹא הָעָבֹדָה יִשְׂרָאֵל were omitted in the text. That these words are a later addition (from Deuteronomy) to the Exodus recension of the Decalogue is the view of such Old Testament critics as Wellhausen, Holzinger, and Baentsch. Aphraates (ed. Parisot, Hom. ii, col. 62), in a quotation, passes immediately from "land of Egypt" (Ex. xx, 2) to "thou shalt not make," etc. (v. 4), but this can scarcely be taken as conclusive evidence in support of the omission. 5

Line 2. יִלְדוּתִּי. 4 The restoration, "be[for]e me" (cf. πρὸ προσώπου μου, 6b in Deut.), is probable, and it is therefore unnecessary to conjecture a different reading (e.g., יִלְדוּתָיו) on the strength of 6a πάλιν ἐμοί (BAFL, and AFI in Deut., cf. praeter me, abique me [Sabatier]. Targ., and similarly Pesh.). 7


2 Above line 1 and midway between בֵּית הָלָה and קָבֵרָה there appear to be traces of an H. They are not distinct enough, however, to enable one to speak with any degree of confidence. It should be mentioned that the actual width of the upper margin (as also of that at the right-hand side) is 1/8 inch.

3 Mr. E. J. Filcher ingeniously suggests that if the papyrus in its complete state were a Service-book, the omission of the words may be due to the fact that the authorities of the Synagogue, living in the midst of a fanatical and turbulent population, may have considered it prudent to refrain from publicly describing their land of residence as a house of slaves, thus avoiding a phrase "which might be considered as casting an aspers upon the country or its inhabitants."

4 After I had made my copy, and before the photograph was taken, a minute particle of papyrus containing portions of the D of פַּרְעֹה and the I following disappeared.

5 The reading "with me" (ָּדָקְלָק) in Aphraates (col. 62) is not conclusive.
reading of Sam. (Pent. and Targ.) in Ex. (תָּמִם, הָיָה) is conformed to Deut.

Line 10. See note on אֶלֶף, l. 2.

There is no reason to suppose that the noun is in the plur. (א in Ex. and Deut., זְגוֹרָה, doo).

The insertion of the preposition (contrast M.T. יָדָעָה) is found in a few Heb. MSS. and in the LXX of both Ex. and Deut., in O. Lat. of Deut., and in the Vulgate of Ex. only. The reading is justified by Ex. xxvi, 26, xxxi, 15, xxxii, 2, Lev. xxiii, 3, etc.

Line 11. The insertion of אֲבָנָה is supported by the Book of Jubilees (ל, 7), א. O. Lat. (Sabatier, Robert), Vulg., Sam. (Pent. and Targ.), and Syr.-Hexaplar (with the obelus). It is wanting in M.T. (and elsewhere in parallel passages, e.g., Deut. xvii, 8, Lev. xxiii, 3, 7, etc.; but constrast Ex. xxxiv, 2, and Jer. xvii, 24), Targ., and old Syriac MSS., although in the printed editions of the Peshitta, and in MSS. from the VIIIth–IXth centuries onwards it has found a place, owing, doubtless, to the influence of the Septuagint.

The suffix of the 3rd. s. m. is יָדָעָה; cf. הָיָה, l. 9. The suffix, on the other hand, is יָדָעָה in one of the MSS. (l. 21), and this interchange agrees admirably with O.T. usage, e.g., Gen. xix, 11 (יָדָעָה, but יָדָעָה, יָדָעָה in the former, whilst the Targ., and several Heb. and Sam. MSS., omit it in the latter.

Line 7. יָדָעָה. In Deut. (v. 10) יָדָעָה and יָדָעָה agree with Ex.

Line 8. There does not appear to be room for the addition of אֲבָנָה after יָדָעָה, which is presupposed by אֲבָנָה in Ex., and בּ בּ בּ בּ בּ בּ in Deut.

Line 9. הָיָה. See note on אֲבָנָה, l. 11.

So Ex., against שָׁמַע in Deut. (v. 12). On the possibility that Deut. originally read שָׁמַע, see below, p. 53. The

1 From an examination of Syriac MSS. in the British Museum it appears that 오ֹדִים is omitted by Add. 14425 (the oldest dated Syriac Biblical MS.), and the second oldest Syriac MS. of known date—A.D. 404, by two MSS. of the VIIIth century (Add. 14427, and Add. 14426, Deut.), by one of the VIIIth century (Add. 12133, Ex.), and the second oldest Syriac MSS. of the VIIIth–IXth centuries read 오ֹדִים in Deut. only, and not in Ex. (or. 4400, and the Milan Codex Ambrosianus.) It is found in Rich. 7145 of the VIIIth–IXth centuries (Ex.), in the Cambridge “Buchanan Bible” (Oo. I, 1, end of XIIth century), in Rich. 7146 (XIVth–XVth centuries), and later MSS.

2 cf. קִדְמָה, Judges xix, 24 (but קִדְמָה, vv. 2, 25), קִדְמָה, Prov. xxix, 18 (but קִדְמָה, v. 21). יָדָעָה recurs regularly on the Moabite Stone as a nominal and verbal suffix (e.g., יָדָעָה, יָדָעָה, יָדָעָה).
That הָרִים is not the feminine form is conclusively shown by the M.T. רֵאְשָׁת in v. 11 (cf. also Deut. v. 12, Gen. ii. 3, v. xxxv, 2, Is. lv. 2, etc.).

Line 12. The text agrees with Deut. against Ex. (והָרִים), but the fuller reading is presupposed by א in Ex., although the only Hebrew support seems to be that of the א in Ex. (one MS. cited by De Rossi), and א in Ex. (one MS. cited by Kenn.). The י is prefixed to הבּר in accordance with Deut. (omitted by some MSS., א, and Sam. Pent. and Targ.), and several MSS. in Ex.

The general agreement of the text of this commandment with Ex. is seen from the presence of Ex. xx. 11, and the omission of Deut. v. 15, and the closing words of v. 14. For the view that the text in Deut. was originally simpler, see below, p. 53, and note that א in Deut. does not mean (as in Old Lat.) has inserted in v. 14: v. 15 'נִבְרָתָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָא כָּנָa. The text of the commandment differs more markedly from Ex. xx. 12, than Deut. v. 16. On the other hand, Deut.'s יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה YHWH יְהֹוָה (omitted by four MSS.) is here wanting, and the arrangement agrees with א (in Ex. and Deut.). O. Lat. (Sabadier and Robert [Deut.], Ephe. vi. 2, and Philo.) The superiority of the new reading is shown by the general agreement of the order with other Deuteronomistic passages (see Deut. xxii. 7, and cf. iv. 39, 39 [33]); but contrast Deut. vi. 2 39.

1 The Syr. Hex. gives the reading without mark or comment. It is found also in Aphra. (Herm. xiii. col. 541). The Brit. Mus. Or. 4400 reads יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה YHWH, and with this agrees Add. 14425 (on the MS., see above, p. 39, n. 1), which stands alone in following the M.T. יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה YHWH. These two MSS. and Add. 11233 agree in making Deut. v. 11 the second commandment (so א, St. Augustine, and others). [The more modern Cambridge S. Indian Syr. MSS., Oo., I. 26 and 27 have adopted the same division, but vary in the second half, partly through error.]

2 The form of the suffix can be paralleled, and the Rev. R. H. Kennett, of Queens' College, Cambridge, to whom I applied for information, informs me that he has always held that the suffix in the Syr. יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה YHWH is contained in the א, and that the silent א is, which was probably never pronounced, may be merely an orthographical convention. He adds, however, that no doubt the Hebrew originally possessed many grammatical forms ignored by the Massora, but it would be precarious to postulate the existence of any such form unless traces of it could be found in the Kethib. Unless א here is a consonant, it is also possible to suppose a contraction of מ, with the omission of א (as in יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה YHWH, on Heb. seals for נוּדָא, נוּדָא, and with א плена, as in יְהֹוָה YHWH, Job xxxi. 23).

3 'That it may go well with thee,' is omitted by א in Ex., and by three Heb. and Sam. MSS. in Deut.

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Defective in Deut., but see above on נָשִׁי. l. 2. נָשִׁי is read by ס (Ex. only), Pesh. and Ar.1 (Deut. only), but there was scarcely room for it on the papyrus.

Line 18. The order (א) adultery, (ב) murder, (ג) steal, is found in Ex., only in Holmes and Parsons, nos. 14, 16, 30, 57, 73, 75, 77, 78, 139, 136. גֵּאָל agrees with the M.T. in the order א, ב, ג, but אגֵּאָל alone has א, ב, ג. Yet another arrangement (ג ב א) appears in Brit. Mus. Rich., 7146, a Syriac (Jacobite) MS. of the XIVth-XVth centuries—probably an error. In Deut., גֵּאָל agrees with the M.T. (ג ב א), but the above order (א ב ג) is found in גֵּאָל and in Holmes and Parsons, nos. 19, 44, 54, 74, 75, 76, 106, 108, 118, 134.

The Septuagint support is therefore stronger in Deut. than in Ex.

The usual, or Massoretic order, is found in Josephus (second half of first century, A.D.), Mt. xix, 18, the Didache (first half of second century),2 and became fixed at an early date. On the other hand, the above order is supported by Romans xiii, 9, Jas. ii, 11, Mk. x, 19 (A.V.), Lk. xviii, 20,3 Philo (see Ryle, ad loc.), Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus of Portus, Ambrosiaster, and others.4

In the omission of the conjunction in l. 18 and 19, the text agrees with Ex. (also ס Sam. Pent. in Deut.) against Deut. M.T.

Line 19. The reading נָשִׁי agrees with Deut. (v. 20) against נָשִׁי, Ex. (v. 16).5 ס (ט) occurs in both, though not conclusive, favouring נָשִׁי, which is read by several Heb. MSS. even in Deut. (presupposed also by Targ. Onk., and O. Lat.). Of the two readings Holzinger prefers נָשִׁי as the more concrete term, and, pointing to v. 7 (ס כַּיָּרָה), observes that in so short a passage as the Decalogue, נָשִׁי would hardly have been used in two different senses. On the whole, it is more probable that נָשִׁי has been

1 See Lagarde, Materialien (Leipzig, 1867). The same text has a curious omission in Ex. xx, 12, reading "honour thy father and mother that thy life may be long which the Lord thy God giveth thee." The Syr. MS., Brit. Mus., Or. 4400, stands alone (so far as I know) in reading נָשִׁי

2 Probably, as Mr. Burkitt informs me, under the direct influence of Mt. xix, 18.

3 Contrast Vulg. and Pesh. in Luke, the Sinaitic palimpsest in Mark (cf. R.V.), and the parallel Matt. xix, 18. (For this arrangement, cf. also 6's treatment of Jer. vii, 9.) Aphraates (col. 546), who merely mentions adultery before murder, elsewhere (col. 537) gives the order: covet, murder, adultery. Here, as in the case of l. 1, his evidence is not conclusive.

4 See the commentaries ad loc., and cf. Geffcken, Ueber d. verschiedene Einteilung d. Decalogue (Hamburg, 1838), who cites also the Frisian church. (p. 201 sq.)

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substituted in Ex. xx, 16, to remove all doubt about the sense (Addis)—the more difficult reading is the older (cf. also Baentsch).

Lines 20 sq. The smaller fragment (the readings are not very easy) contains portions of l. 20 sq., and joins on fairly well to the larger. Traces of ב (l. 21) appear on both. The precise arrangement of the two pieces under the large fragment is indicated by the amount of space required for the restoration of l. 23 sq.1

From the text as restored it will appear that it agrees with Deut. v. 18 [21] against Ex. xx, 17, in the mention of מַעֲשֵׂה before מִסְמָר. Apart from a few MSS. which read the reverse in both, the reading in Deut. is presupposed by ס in Ex. The insertion of מַעֲשֵׂה also characterises Deut., although it is found in ס, Sam. (Pent., and Targ.), and in a few Heb. MSS. in Ex. On the other hand, instead of the repetition of מַעֲשֵׂה (on the spelling see above, l. 2), Deut. supplies a new verb (משׁוּה), although again in this it is not followed by the Sam. (Pent. and Targ.), the Palest. Targum (not Onkelos), ס, and Old Lat. Mr. Burkitt, however, is convinced that מַעֲשֵׂה is actually the reading of the papyrus. The ס, which he finds, is far from clean, and if מַעֲשֵׂה is correct, the last two characters are not very intelligible. Both readings are difficult.

The מַעֲשֵׂה before מִסְמָר (l. 20) is a novelty, and it is also to be restored presumably at the end of l. 19. The number of missing letters is then brought up to the average. As regards the words restored in l. 21, some Heb. MSS. omit ס before מַעֲשֵׂה, and the reading מַעֲשֵׂה (with כ) is found only in Ex., but is presupposed by ס, Pesh. in Deut. Further, in Deut., all MSS. of Pesh. insert "vineyard" after "field," with the exception of Add. 14425, where, too, "servant" and "maid-servant" are transposed. ס, in both, adds סָכִית פַּ֠נָּה פַּ֠רְעֹּ֥ה (סָכִית פַּ֠רְעֹּ֥ה), a secondary element probably derived from the fourth commandment. An analogy to this appears in סָכִית סָכִית פַּ֠רְעֹּ֥ה אֲדֹּֽוֹ (Deut. v. 14).2

Line 22. The Decalogue is followed by the Shema' (Deut. vi, 1) They should probably come a little more to the left of the larger fragment, and not immediately under it as on Plate I.

2 Vulg. in Ex. nov conceptus . . . nec desiderabit, in Deut. only the former once. As regards usage, the verb מְמַעֲשֵׂה, in fact, was to be expected with פָּרְעֹּ֥ה rather than with פָּרְעֹּ֥ה.

3 On such multiplication of details in the Decalogue, particularly in the fourth commandment, see Geiger, Urschrift u. Uebersetzung, p. 466.
This introduction to the Shema' bears every appearance of genuineness. It is not easy otherwise to account for its reading, since the nearest parallel, Deut. vi. 45, is not sufficiently close to suggest that the Septuagint translator has merely borrowed. On the assumption that the introduction originally formed part of the Hebrew text, how is one to account for its omission? Two explanations may be hazarded. In the first place, without entering into a discussion of the literary analysis of this portion of Deut., it is conceivable that the introduction was omitted, partly to avoid any break in the continuity, and partly because an introduction was already contained in iv. 44, 45, or better, in vi. 1. 3

In the second place, the Palestinian Targums insert before the Shema' a Haggadic anecdote ascribing the origin of the famous words in v. 4 to the sons of Jacob. When one remembers the importance attached to the Shema' from the earliest times, and recalls the tendency, fully exemplified in the Pharaonic Book of Jubilees, to thrust back laws and institutions to pre-Mosaic times, it is not a difficult conjecture that the introduction, conflicting as it did with the Haggadah of the time, was dropped either before or at the formation of the Massoretic text.

From the above notes it will be seen that where the Hebrew text agrees with Deut. against Ex., it has the support of the Septuagint version of Ex., and where it has independent readings of its own, it is supported, in the first instance, by the LXX (and O. Lat.), and, to a much lesser degree, by the other versions. Most convincing of all is the introduction to the Shema'. But there is no good reason on this account to doubt that the fragment is a genuine Biblical text. It is known that the Hebrew Pentateuch was read in Egypt at least from the time of the writer of the Letter of Aristeas down to 1

Suggested by Swete, *Intro. to O. T. in Greek*, p. 332. The verse runs: "These are the testimonies and the statutes and the judgements (the third term is omitted by B') which Moses spake unto (so B), but F "commanded") to the children of Israel (AL inserts "in the wilderness") when they went from (6 inserts "the land of") Egypt.

A title is undoubtedly helpful, and some critics have even supposed that vi. 1 once stood nearer to v. 4 than it does now (see *The Hexateuch*, ed. Carpenter and Harford-Battersby, London, 1906, vol. II, ad loc.).


1 It is worth adding that in a Hebrew inscription from Palmyra (see below, pp. 49, 51, and col. 10 on Plate of Alphabets), containing the Shema', the divine name is always replaced by נְאֵר. This is not later than the 3rd century (see *Bijdr. v. Assyriec.*, IV [1902], p. 203 sqq.).
Justinian's day, and it is inconceivable that a Hebrew-speaking Jew should have required a retransliteration from a version such as the Septuagint. Further, the evidence shows that the text agrees, now with BFL against A, now with BAF against L, etc., so that no particular MS. or recension is represented to the exclusion of others.

Finally, in a translation from the Greek, one would not only have expected to find words corresponding to σταυρον κτήσεως ανένυς (l. 21), etc., but literal renderings might be expected in the case of εν γερ ζημιάς (v. 11, l. 13), and οι ψαρίες του δενός (v. 12, l. 17). The addition of νηλι πασχαλινα in the Shema is not necessarily to be regarded as based upon the LXX. It is equally possible to suppose that the text is dependent upon any other version: the Sam., Pesh., and Targ. agree too closely with the M.T., and the absence of the distinctive interpolations after the Decalogue precludes the first mentioned. It may, therefore, be taken for granted that the papyrus is a genuine Hebrew text.

This being assumed, it follows that we have to do with a Hebrew Biblical fragment which differs more widely from the M.T. than any known MS. It is important to observe that these readings are so consistently supported by the Septuagint that they clearly cannot be regarded as due to the imagination or defective memory of a scribe, nor may we suppose (comparing Josephus, Antiquities, iii, 5, § 4, end) that they are a deliberate alteration from superstitious motives (οι βαπτιστικοί... λειψιν φανερών προς λείψιν). Only one explanation seems possible. The scrupulous fidelity in the preservation and correct transmission of the Old Testament dates only from a certain period. It is due to this care that the consonantal text has remained virtually unchanged during the last seventeen hundred years, and that we can trace it back through the oldest manuscripts to the Vulgate, the Targums, the translation of Aquila, and the Mishna. But a critical and unbiased study of such earlier and independent writings as the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Book of

2 Perhaps it comes nearest to B's text of Deut. (see below, p. 53). At all events it has no close relationship with the Hexaplaric texts.
3 Had the text merely copied or imitated any of the versions, it would assuredly have presented those blemishes which here and there obscure certain of the Hebrew fragments of Ecclesiasticus.

1 The term "Massoretic" text is, strictly speaking, incorrect. It was the scribes (scribes) who were the revisers and redactors of the canonical text. The Massoretes came later. These were the "authoritative custodians of the traditionally transmitted text... their province was to safeguard the text delivered to them by 'building a hedge around it,' to protect it against alterations, or the adoption of any readings which still survived in manuscripts or were exhibited in the ancient versions" (Ginsburg, Introd. to Hebrew Bible, p. 421).


3 See Robertson Smith, op. cit., p. 65 sqq.
the books were first written down, and that, "on the whole the purer text was undoubtedly preserved by the Jews."  

If the claim that this papyrus represents a pre-Massoretic form of the Hebrew text be justified, it does not necessarily follow that the fragment is chronologically pre-Massoretic. It is not improbable that private MSS., or MSS. not strictly Jewish, were copied and perpetuated in Egypt years after the M.T. had been adopted in Palestine, although it will be readily understood that a time would come when all variant texts of this character would fall into disuse. How long such texts continued, and to what extent they were used, is difficult to decide.  

Should it so happen that among the hundreds of Geniza fragments there should be found Biblical passages with noteworthy variants from the textus receptus, it will be necessary to determine whether they are based upon a sound and ancient tradition, or whether they admit of another explanation (e.g., scribe's errors, etc.). It is the fact that the readings in the papyrus find authoritative support that gives them their value. Were they absolutely without a parallel in the ancient versions they might not unjustifiably be regarded with suspicion.

I have intentionally emphasized the fact that the papyrus is not necessarily pre-Massoretic in point of view of date, in order that the paleographical evidence may now be examined without any preconceived view one way or the other.

On Plate III will be found a comparative table of alphabets illustrating the relation of the handwriting on the papyrus (col. 5) to other allied forms. As in the history of Greek writing, the paleography of Hebrew papyri should perhaps form a department by itself. Unfortunately, with the sole exception of the fragments now under discussion, there is nothing between the Egyptian-Aramaic papyri (col. 1), the latest of which may belong to the Ptolemaic period, and the Berlin specimens (col. 11), ascribed to the VIIth—VIIIth centuries of this era (see p. 34 sqq., above). The new papyrus


1 cf. Litzkowski, *Jewish Encycl.*, p. 553. Mr. Burkitt further points out that in the "Rabbincit it is which has the broken-backed form and notוב in the papyrus... the papyrus script has nothing to do with the later Rabbincit any more than papyrus Greek curvitur of the first century has to do with the medieval "".

A superficial resemblance, therefore, is no argument against the antiquity of the papyrus. Even as it regards the older Egyptian-Aramaic, Litzkowski (op. cit., p. 445d) notes ""the astonishing fact that not only the general features of the script are much like the cursive Hebrew of the Middle Ages, but that many of the signs taken by themselves are absolutely identical.""
ligatures are very rare in Hebrew, even in the cursive writing, but, on the other hand, they often occur in Palmyrene, and are frequent in Nabatean and Sinaic inscriptions.

The form of the Tetragrammaton comes nearer to that which the early Hexaplaric translators represent by ΙΙΙΙΙΙΙ, than to the more archaic 𐤇𐤇.alloc, recently recovered from a fragment of Aquila.1

The former represents the true "square character" of Aramaic origin, introduced not earlier than the IInd century a.C., whilst the latter is a lineal descendant of the script on the Siloam inscription, and finds its nearest parallels on the coins of Antigonus and Simon han-Nâšî.2

As regards the individual letters, א is of various forms and sizes. Most remarkable is the turning in of the left leg, of which only faint traces were hitherto known in Hebrew (cols. 7 and 10). The closely-related Nabatean form (col. 4) is not common, and belongs to an inscription of B.C. 1; it is also found once or twice in the Sinaic graffiti. The second Nabatean example is the usual final form, and resembles the ornamental Palmyrene (col. 2). Here, however, the bend is less marked.

The various positions of the left-hand stroke are noteworthy. The closest analogies are in Egyptian-Aramaic (col. 1), and Palm. (col. 2, the best examples are of B.C. 9 and A.D. 188). On the papyrus it is clearly in the transitional stage, but it has not yet attained the shape (resembling a פ and the Greek Π) which is regularly found on all Hebrew inscriptions.

The final form is closed in L. 17, but open in L. 22. For the former, the older form of the letter, the only analogies in Nabatean inscriptions are not later than 55 A.D., but it is frequent in Sinaic and regular in Syriac.

The "broken-backed" form is common in Nab. and Pal., but has only left the merest traces in Palest. ossuaries and the Sadda inscr. (cols. 6, 8).

The occasional smallness of the lower part of א, and its not infrequent elevation above the line, find a parallel in the Bâneh

1 F. C. Burkitt, Fragments . . . of Aquila from a MS. formerly in the Geniza at Cairo (Cambridge, 1891), p. 15 m.
2 (For the of also Clermont-Ganneau, Scœurs, Nos. 11 (י"ת, written ה"ת), and 44 (ב"ת). These, and allied forms of old Hebrew (illustrated in the Proceedings, XIX [1897], p. 172, plate II), existed side by side with the "square character" down to the IIInd cent. A.D.)

3 Cf. also P.E.F.Q., 1900, p. 112, No. 7 (Rutini, Epig. Miscell., I., p. 13, No. 52).
4 It is, perhaps, precarious to argue from the wording in the letter of Aristarchus that the writing of the Palestinian Jews was regarded as quite distinct, not only from the native Egyptian—which is obvious—but also from the Egyptian-Aramaic script, which would no doubt be well-known to the librarian Demetrius (Swete, Introd. to O.T. in Greek, p. 520, li, 25 sqq.; p. 255, I. 3 sq.; Kautzsch, Pseudopigraphen, II, p. 5, 11; p. 7, § 38). But the language is obscure, and the first of the two passages is probably not free from glosses.
Arabic inscr. of N. Arabia or Egypt. All that can be said is that the Nabatean, Palmyrene, Hebrew, and Syriac are closely related sister alphabets, derived from Aramaic forms current in Asia Minor, Syria and Mesopotamia in the IVth—IXth cent. B.C. Had we Arabic inscr. from Palestine of that period, we should doubtless be able to determine the relationship and development of the several forms more clearly.¹

From what has been said (see p. 47 sq.) it will be readily understood that because the papyrus represents a pre-Masoretic form of the text, it is not to be regarded as necessarily perfect or correct in every detail. Future investigation must determine its precise value for the textual and literary criticism of the Biblical passages it contains. It would have been extremely interesting had the papyrus contained certain passages which in our M.T. are admittedly corrupt. The Septuagint and other versions frequently presuppose readings that differ from the M.T.; inspection shows that in a number of cases they do not appear to originate with the translator, that they are not due to a later tampering with the version, and that the superiority does not lie with the extant Hebrew. The textual critic accordingly concludes that the reading actually represents what the translator found before him, and that it is the Hebrew text that has suffered—though often the origin of the corruption may be wholly unknown.

It happens, however, that the Biblical passages which the papyrus has preserved are free from mere textual corruption, and the new readings, whether superior or not, are of a distinctly literary type. It is to be noticed, also, that although many of the Septuagint readings now acquire an authority which they had not previously possessed, and are substantiated in the most welcome manner, sufficient remains to show that the Greek translator, in accordance with his custom (frequently noticed elsewhere), has not scrupled to make alterations or additions which are of no value, and for which, doubtless, there was never the slightest authority.

For the literary criticism of the Decalogue I venture to think that the papyrus is evidence of the most valuable character. The view is held by many critics that the Decalogue originally consisted of concise statements such as are now found in the VIIth—IXth

¹ It may be added that the date ascribed to the papyrus receives some support, perhaps, from the appearance of the material, which, in the case of Greek papyri at least, is said not to be later than the IIIrd cent. It would also hold good if the conjecture that the papyrus was a roll, and not a codex, could be proved.

commands (cf. also Josephus, Antiquities, iii, 5, § 5), in which case there may have been several recensions, differing from one another in the extent of their hortatory expansions. It is not easy to explain the present Masoretic form of the Exod. recension unless we assume that it has been influenced by Deut. (which in some respects presents better readings), and this view requires the further assumption that it existed in at least two forms—the second being that represented by the LXX. But this is not the place to discuss the relation between the two Masoretic forms. The fact remains that the papyrus comes midway between the two; it seems unnecessary to regard it as a third independent recension, and instead of treating it as a fuller form of Exod., I venture to decide that it represents a simpler form of Deut.

The chief arguments in support of this view are drawn from the variants in Hebrew MSS. of Deut., from the evidence of the versions (especially the Vatican MS. of the LXX), and from the opinion of critics regarding the secondary character of certain elements peculiar to the Deut. recension.

In the first place, the differences between the text of the papyrus and Deut., which refer to some half-dozen cases of the addition or omission of γ, or to the scriptio plena, need not be taken into account in view of the varying readings of MSS. cited by Kennicott and Dr. R. In the ninth commandment, the papyrus expressly agrees with Deut. In the tenth commandment, the view that Deut. originally repeated διὸς finds support among the versions (see on l. 20, p. 43 above). On the fourth commandment, see the remarks on l. 12 (p. 40 above). It is admitted that Deut. v, 12 b is a secondary addition, and it is probable that this verse originally began with "remember," and that the alteration to "observe"—a favourite word in Deuteronomic passages—was effected when v. 15 ("and thou shalt remember," etc.) was inserted, in order to avoid tautology. Further, it is not improbable that Deut. originally had the words now found only in Exod. xx, 11, since not only does δ add at the end of v. 15: καὶ ἄρα ἔφανεν αὐτὸν (cf. ἡμέρας in Ex.), but the Vatican manuscript has also preserved in v. 14 the words "for in six days the Lord made both the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that in them is."¹

¹ On the other hand, it is not to be ignored that the addition to v. 14 which is peculiar to Deut. is perhaps original; cf. the reason assigned by the earlier Elohist writer in Ex. xxiii, 12.
Another point, that has direct bearing upon the view now under discussion, should not be overlooked. The Decalogue commences at the head of the column, and the restoration shows that it must have opened with the words "I am the Lord thy God." In both Ex. and Deut. the Decalogue starts a new section, but whereas the latter commences as mentioned above, Ex. has the introductory title "and God spake all these words, saying." It does not seem very likely that this was to be found at the foot of a preceding column, although naturally there is not sufficient evidence in support of an argument either way. At all events the point is one to be borne in mind when considering the original purpose of the papyrus.

For the solution of this problem the evidence of the papyrus is hardly conclusive. It is very tempting to suppose that it formed part of a lectionary or collection of passages from the Torah, and the fact that the passages in question are Deut. v. 6–21 [18] (probably) and vi. 4 sq., might even suggest a lectionary of Deuteronomy itself. In addition to this, there is the evidence in the Gospels that the Commandments and the Shema' were regarded as the most important rules of life and conduct. We know that portions of the Law were copied out separately for children, since we learn that it was disputed whether the procedure was legal, and the majority of the Rabbis were against it. Children studied the Shema', but it was preceded not by the Decalogue but by the Hallel (Pss. cxiii–cxviii). Moreover, the usual school-books for beginners were Genesis and Leviticus, and R. Jehuda (about 150 A.D.) allowed only Gen. i–vi, 8 or Lev. i–viii to be copied. It would seem, therefore, that the evidence does not favour the suggestion that the papyrus is a fragment of a lectionary.

The mere arrangement shows that a phylactery is out of the

1 The title is preceded and followed by a closed section, but since these are not marked elsewhere in the papyrus, there would be no necessity to start a fresh line.
2 Thus, the two great commandments are the Shema' and Lev. xix. 18 ff. (Mk. xii, 29 sqq., Mt. xxii, 36 sqq.). On other occasions when inquirers asked how to inherit eternal life, their attention is directed to (a) certain commandments (Mk. x. 19, Lk. xviii, 20), (b) plus Lev. xix. 18 ff. (Mt. xix, 18 sq.), (c) Deut. vi. 5, and Lev. xix. 18 ff. (Lk. x. 27). For the addition of Lev. xix. 18 to Deut. vi. 5 in early quotations, see Holmes and Parsons.
**SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY.**

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31ST, 1902.**

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| £664 1 10 |

I hereby certify that I have examined the Society's Books and Vouchers, and that the above Statement is a correct abstract therefrom.

**Chris. B. Harper.**

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**A PRE-MASSORETIC BIBLICAL MS.**

**Plate 1**

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**Proceedings, Society of Biblical Archaeology.**

**Vol. 62.**

**2023.**
PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE SOCIETY
OF
BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

THIRTY-THIRD SESSION, 1903.

First Meeting, 14th January, 1903.
[ANNIVERSARY.]

SIR HENRY H. HOWORTH, K.C.I.E., &c.,
IN THE CHAIR.

The following Presents were announced, and thanks ordered to be returned to the Donors:—

From the Author:—Prof. Dr. A. Wiedemann. Das Okapi im alten Aegypten. Die Umschau. 13th December, 1902. Frankfort.

From the Author:—Rev. C. Boutflower. Tiglath Pileser, king of Babylon. The key to Isaiah xiii, i to xiv, 27. Part III. The Churchman, December, 1902.

From the Author:—Lieut-General Sir Charles Warren, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., F.R.S., R.E. The Ancient Cubit and other weights and measures. 8vo. Published by the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1903.

[No. clxxxvii.]
## Society of Biblical Archaeology

**Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the Year Ended December 31st, 1902.**

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**Audited and found correct,**

W. J. Haywood,
Edward S. M. Perowne.

I hereby certify that I have examined the Society's Books and Vouchers, and that the above Statement is a correct abstract therefrom.

Chris. B. Harper.

*January 6th, 1903.*
### TABLE OF HEBREW ALPHABETS

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### PLATE II
HEBREW TEXT OF THE PAPYRUS

(Only illustrated)
TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW TEXT OF THE PAPYRUS.

[All verbal variations from the Exodus recension of the Decalogue (chap. xx) and
Deut. vi, 4, sp. are in italics.]

1. (Ex. xx, 2.) [I am the L]ord thy God who [brought] thee out of the land of
Egypt, out of the house of bondage: (1) thou shalt
2. [have none] other gods before me. (4) Thou shalt not make [unto thyself
a graven image nor the likeness of any]
3. [form] that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth [beneath]
4. [or that is] in the water [under the earth: (5) thou shalt not bow down to
them [nor serve them]
5. [for] I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visit[ing the iniquity of the
fathers]
6. [upon the children] upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them
that hate me: (6) and showing mercy
7. [unto thousands of] them that love me and keep my commandments. (7) Thou
shalt not [take the name of]
8. [the Lord thy G]od in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless [that]
9. [taketh his name in vain. (8) Remember the Sabbath day to [keep it holy].
10. (9) Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: (10) but on the seventh
day there is
11. [a Sabbath unto the Lord] thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, [thou,
and thy son],
12. [and thy daughter and (?)] thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, [thine ox,
and thine ass, and any of thy cattle]
13. [and thy stranger that is] in thy gates: (11) for in six days the Lord [made]
14. [the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that] in them is
15. and res[ed] the seventh [day]: wherefore the Lord blessed [the]
16. seventh day and hallowed it. (12) Honour thy father and thy mother[er that]
17. it may be well with thee, and that thy days may be long, upon the land [which]
18. the Lord thy God giveth thee. (14) Thou shalt not commit adultery,
(15) Thou shalt not [be] an evil witness against thy neighbour.
(17) Thou shalt not covet [thy]
20. [neighbour’s wife. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s k] [or, or his /[old],
21. [or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, or his /], or his ass, or anything
that is thy neighbour’s.
22. [[And these are the statutes and the judgements which Moses commanded the
children of ]
23. [Israel] in the wilderness, when they went forth from the land of Egypt
(Deut. vi, 4). Hea[r]
24. [O Israel! the Lord our God, one Lord is He: (5) and thou shalt [love]
25. [the Lord thy G]od with all [thine heart, etc.]