SOME UNRECORDED FRAGMENTS
OF THE HEBREW PENTATEUCH
IN THE SAMARITAN VERSION

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I

The four fragments of the Samaritan Pentateuch to be described here were found in the library of the late Mr. P.L.O. Guy, who at one time had been connected with the Department of Antiquities of Palestine, and later with that of the State of Israel.¹ The provenance of the fragments is unknown. However, we may surmise that they are parts of codices which were, or yet may be, in the custody of the Samaritan community at Shechem (Nablus). They may have come into the possession of Mr. Guy while he was a member of the expedition that dug at Tel Balâṭah, the site of ancient Shechem, in 1926-28. The present author was unable to check whether the fragments can be traced to MSS which are today kept by the Samaritan community. So far also no connection between the new fragments and recorded MSS could be established. It is hoped that their publication will enable other scholars to compare them with MSS at their disposal and possibly relate them to their original codices.

There may be observed a renewed interest in the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch, mainly due to two recent events: the discovery in Qumran of Pentateuch fragments exhibiting a Samaritanus-type text², and the preliminary publication of parts of the famous Abisha Scroll. Therefore it may be useful for further studies to collate the new fragments with the text offered by A. von Gall in his edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch and with the MSS noted by him in his apparatus.³ In the case of one folio, which contains Deut. xx, 1-xxi, 2,

¹ The fragments were presented to the Department of Antiquities of the State of Israel by Mr. Guy’s daughter, Mrs. Ruth Stanner. The present author is indebted to Mrs. H. Katzenstein, Deputy Director of the Department, for permission to publish the fragments and for some pertinent information.
³ A. von Gall, Der hebräische Pentateuch der Samaritaner, Giessen 1918.
we shall further collate the corresponding text of the Abisha Scroll, of which Num. xxxv, 1-Deut. xxiv, 42 have been published to date.  
Though the portions of text preserved in the five folios never overlap, the fragments are not interrelated and can be shown to stem from different MSS. Three of these are represented by one folio each and one by two adjoining folios. Differences in ductus, in scribal peculiarities and in the state of preservation clearly indicate that these MSS were written at widely diverging dates. Hence we shall deal with each of the four fragments separately.

II

Samaritan palaeography is not sufficiently developed to allow of the dating of MSS by palaeographic evidence. The marked tendency of Samaritan scribes to imitate the majuscule ductus of predecessors resulted in a relatively stereotyped script, which makes it practically impossible to establish a developmental sequence of letter forms, although many of the extant MSS can be reliably dated by their colophons.

Also the general state of preservation of a MS, the colour of the parchment and the ink, are of but limited value in the determination of its age, since external conditions, such as the place of its safeguarding, decisively influence the appearance of a MS.

However, we have some other widely-accepted means by which to classify Samaritan MSS and to date them with some degree of accuracy. It appears, first of all, that the terminus ante quem for parchment codices is the beginning of the 16th century. The latest parchment codex so far known was written in 1518. From then on paper was always used. The earliest Samaritan codex written on paper, in von Gall’s list, dates from 1383-84.

Further differentiation can be achieved by observing the fairly consequential development of some scribal techniques which help in establishing the relative dates of MSS in a given group. By a comparison with dated MSS exhibiting these scribal features in the various stages of their development, one may then arrive at an approximate absolute date for the fragments or MSS under review. The evolution of these techniques has been investigated and successfully employed by students of the Samaritan Pentateuch, foremost by E. Robertson, whose analysis we propose to follow here:

1. In practically all Samaritan Pentateuch MSS the separator-dot is uniformly used as a divider between words. At first it was employed also at the

end of lines. But in this position the dot was soon omitted, since it did not
serve any real purpose. The omission became standard procedure. Already
in the oldest dated MSS, from the early 13th century, the separator-dot is
nearly always dropped at the end of lines. The retention of the dot after the
last word of a line therefore witnesses to the relatively high antiquity of the
MS in which it is found.

2. Already in some of the earliest Samaritan Pentateuch codices, there are
found additional punctuation marks, ten in number, which are called sidrey
migra, ‘reading rules’. In a few MSS these signs are recorded in toto in an
appendix to the main text. The use of these marks was apparently never stan-
dardized. Among the Samaritans no school of scribes emerged whose influence
on scribal traditions is comparable to that of the major schools of the Jewish
Massoretes. As a result most of the extant MSS are only partly provided with
these punctuation marks. This is the case, e.g., with one of the oldest com-
plete codices, MS Add. 1846 of the University Library of Cambridge, which
may be dated in the 12th, or possibly the 11th century.6

A systematic presentation of the punctuation marks is given in the work
of Ibn Darta, who lived at the end of the 10th or the beginning of the 11th
century.7 But the signs must be even older, since they have Aramaic designa-
tions. After the 10th or 11th century, when a renaissance of Hebrew was
experienced in Samaritan literature, the signs most probably would have
been given Hebrew names.

Z. Ben-Ḥayyim very plausibly deduces from the external forms of the signs
that initially only three basic symbols were used: the dot or the colon as a
syntactical divider; the half-circle as the question mark; and the slanted
stroke as the exclamation-mark. Later subtler variations, such as the twin-
dot (angelo), and combinations of the basic symbols were developed to indicate
further nuances of speech. Consequently a MS which shows only the basic
symbols, or a mere rudimentary development of complex forms, may be
expected to be of higher antiquity than one in which the full-fledged system
is employed.8

especially pp. 167–171).
7 Two extant versions of this treatise were edited by Z. Ben-Ḥayyim in The Literary and
Oral Tradition of Hebrew and Aramaic Amongst the Samaritans, Jerusalem 1957, vol. I,
xxxxix–lvi; vol. II, 339–374. Cp. also P. Kahle, op. cit. The symbols are: angled ‘, afsaq :,
anju °, erkenu /, šeyala  BDSM, ze’iqo ,  imahnu <, ba’u <. za’af =, turu:. In later MSS
the afsaq sometimes appears in the variations = :.
8 Ben-Ḥayyim, op. cit., vol. I, lvi
3. Initially the end of a paragraph, or qisah, seems to have been indicated by a blank line. But already in early MSS the simple colon is introduced to mark a qisah, sometimes followed by a blank line. This symbol was then further elaborated and a profuse variety of finalia came into existence. The commonest among them is the colon with the added horizontal stroke, (—). Of even later origin are the more complicated forms :— —; —<—; —c—; —c<—; etc. We may consider it a rule of thumb that the more intricate the finalia the younger the MS.

4. In later MSS the text is spaced in such a fashion that a column will always end on a sense-pause marked by a divider symbol. In early MSS this is not necessarily the rule.

5. Samaritan MSS of the Pentateuch at the very first glance give the impression of an extremely orderly layout of the page. In most cases, though by no means in all, the scribe achieved this regularity by impressing with a stylus horizontal lines on the hairy side of the leather. In the same manner longitudinal lines were traced to determine the width of the column. With the opening letters pressed against the vertical line at the right margin and the end-letters against that at the left, a striking squareness of the written column was achieved. Already in an early period the longitudinal lines were doubled at a distance of a one-letter wide space. Into this space the scribe carefully wrote the first, respectively the last letter of each line. This technique resulted in the arrangement of a ‘one-letter column’ at both margins of the page. A variant of this system is the ‘two-letter column’ at the left hand margin. Also a ‘mixed’ type can be observed in which the one-letter and two-letter arrangements are indiscriminately employed. Generally speaking the one-letter type seems to be the oldest and the persistently-executed two-letter system the youngest, with the ‘mixed type’ constituting a transitory stage. These, however, are not absolute criteria. The two-letter type is used already in the 12th century, while some later dated MSS exhibit the one-letter technique.

6. After the introduction of the guide lines the scribes took great care to utilize only the space thus delineated. Therefore overspilling of letters into the margin, especially at the head of the line, where this cannot be attributed to lack of space, points to the relatively high age of the MS.

In applying the criteria outlined above to the fragments to be reviewed here, we propose to present first the one which appears to be the latest by the standards described. We then shall proceed to discuss the others in an

9 Thus von Gall, *op. cit.*, lxiii.
10 *Cp., e.g.*, plate 12 in M. Gaster, *The Samaritans*, London 1925.
order which leaves the oldest to the very last. It is expected that this arrangement will put in better relief the progressive increase of scribal devices that can be observed in Samaritan scribal tradition.

Let it be stated from the outset that none of the fragments under review exhibits any vocalization signs, except for the short horizontal stroke above a word in fr. 2 which decides its specific reading, more than one possibility being open. The complete absence of vocalization signs indicates the comparatively early date of all the fragments.

III

Fragment No. 4

General Description

This well-preserved fragment consists of one folio containing, recto Deut. xx, 1 (ך) — 11 (יחנ表現), and verso xx, 12 (ח) — xxi, 2 (יחניר)

The size of the practically intact folio indicates that it is part of a handsome and large codex. It is 28.6 cm. high and 25.2 cm. wide. The left-hand margin is torn. Stitches at the upper left-hand corner, where its width amounts to only 24.9 cm., show that the margin had been patched at that place. Consequently, we may assume that the original width of the MS was at least 26 cm.

The flesh side of the leather (col. a) has a whitish colour while the other side is of a glossy yellowish tint. Horizontal and longitudinal lines were slightly impressed on the flesh side and appear as protrusions on the other page (col. b).

The resulting columns have an identical width of 14.5 cm., and measure 16.8 cm. respectively 16.1 cm. in length. Column a holds 25 lines fully written, two partly written and one blank line. Its length thus exceeds by the height of one line the length of column b which has 25 lines fully written, one incomplete and one blank line. There are 24-26 letters to a fully written line. The space between the lines is 0.6 cm.

The handwriting is exceedingly regular and is to be attributed to an experienced scribe. The letters on the average are 0.5 cm. wide and 0.5-0.6 cm. high, and are easily legible. Also the punctuation marks are clearly discernible, though in some places the ink has faded.

The fragment is of a two-letter MS. The initial letter of each line is set well apart. Thus a one-letter column appears at the right-hand side of the page. There is no overspilling at the margins, except at the top lines of col. b, where a crowding of words resulted in a very slight protrusion of end-letters into the margin.

As is the custom in Sam. Pent. MSS, the scribe endeavoured to space the
words in such a manner that identical letters or whole words in succeeding lines appear one directly below the other. However, this technique is only sparingly employed. Thus col. a, lines 19-20 and col. b, 7-9 open with a ḥē, and the first four lines of col. b open with a waw. At the head of lines col. b, 17-18 the words קרית and קרית are written one on top of the other. Similarly on col. a, 2 and פק on a, 3 are arranged so that the letters exactly top each other. Cp. further col. b, 13-14: ATHMAR HEBREW and on col. a, 14-15: ATHMAR LAMMADAH etc.

Punctuation Marks

Punctuation symbols are fully utilized in this fragment. The separator-dot is consistently employed between words and is as consistently omitted at the end of lines.

Also the other basic dividers are well represented. The colon here has the form of two superimposed slanted short strokes rather than of two dots (col. a, 3, 7, 8, 10 etc.; b, 19, 23). The two dots are found only in combination with other symbols as a qəṣah sign (col. b, 23), or for ornamentation purposes (col. b, 23).

The twin-dot (anged), the mid-sentence pause, is lavishly employed (col. a, 2, 4, 6, 12, 13, 20; b, 1, 18 etc.). We further observe the slanted stroke, where it cannot represent the erkenet and must therefore be another variant of the colon, used as a minor syntactical divider (col. a, 1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10; b, 4, 12, 13, 20, 21, הוליג, and at the beginning of the blank line col. b, 15a). Once it is found with a dot added (‘/‘) (col. b, 26 ויקוד), and once with a superimposed twin-dot which could be an obliterating mark (‘‘) (col. b, 14 בוליג).

A dot followed by a horizontal stroke (‘‘) (col. a, 5 ויקוד) may be a variant of the ze‘iqah. The symbol comprised of a dot above a hook (‘‘) somewhat reminiscent of a semicolon (col. b, 20 ויקוד), is undoubtedly a variant of the seyala (‘‘), the question-mark.

A single dot above the line is employed in col. a, 26 to call attention to the defective spelling of שפיר, which is typical for this MS.

The termination of all four paragraphs found in the fragment is indicated by a variant of the basic qəṣah symbol, a slanted double stroke, once (col. b, 23) with the addition of another sign (‘‘). Three of the four paragraphs end with an incomplete line (col. a, 23, 27; b, 23), the remaining one with a full line (col. a, 15) followed by a blank. The blank spaces of the partly written lines are filled in with ornamental designs comprised of dots and strokes (‘‘, ‘‘, ‘‘).
Collation

The text of the fragment is uniform with the eclectic text presented in von Gall’s edition (G.). It shows the marked tendency towards defective spelling which v. Gall considered to be typical of the Samaritan version. In this respect both G and our fragment differ from the Abisha Scroll (Ab.). There this portion, Deut. xx, 1-xxi, 2, is preserved in what Perez Castro takes to be the oldest part of the scroll (A), while E. Robertson assigns it to the second hand (II). 13

A collation results in the following variants:

Deut. xx, 5, 8, 9 fr. = G 
(= MT): בַּשְׁמָרְיָם
xx, 11 fr. = G (MT): לָשׁוֹן
xxi, 12 fr. = G: שֶׁבֶר יָם
Ab. = 12 MSS v. Gall:
שלש
Ab. = 15 MSS v. Gall:
שתברך
MT: שֶׁבֶר יָם

All the particularities of the fragment point to an age comparable to that of the late parts of the Abisha Scroll. A date in the 15th century would seem to be appropriate.

Fragment No. 3

General Description

The fragment consists of one folio written on both sides and containing Gen. xxxi, 43 (דֵּהַר), and xxxii, 1 (יריבך) respectively. The parchment is well preserved, except for four holes at the lower left-hand corner. These were probably made by worms, or else resulted from rot. The lower edge of the leaf, which originally measured 27.7+ cm. in length and 24.4 cm. in width, is now completely torn. At the right-hand bottom of the folio a piece of parchment was cut away. Two parallel rows of needle stitches are evidence that a patch was substituted for the missing part, but also this is not preserved.

Horizontal and vertical guiding lines were ruled into the flesh side of the leather (col. b) and are clearly visible against the white background. They show as slight protrusions on the other, light brown side. The resulting columns are identical in length and width, measuring 15.5 x 14.3 cm. Col. a contains 26 full and one blank line, col. b 25 full and two blank lines. The space between the lines measures 0.5-0.6 cm. This is a one-letter MS with both the first and

last-letter column set well apart. In no case do letters spill over into the margin.

The handwriting is very regular, without any specific individual traits. The letters are well proportioned, measuring 0.5-0.6 cm. in height, and 0.3-0.5 cm. in width. There are 24-25 letters in a fully written line. Both the letters and the punctuation marks are clearly legible also in places where the ink faded.

In keeping with the well-known custom of Samaritan scribes, both cols. open with the letter waw. Identical letters in successive lines are preferably arranged one beneath the other, especially in the one-letter columns at the beginning and at the end of lines (col. a, 2-3 yod; 7-8 waw; 13-14 yod; 17-18 yod; 20-21 lamed; 23-25 yod; col. b, 1-2 yod; 5-6 yod; 6-8 yod; 8-9 taw; 21-23 yod). The same holds true for identical words or groups of words (cp. especially col. a, 20-21 and 22-23).

**Punctuation Marks**

Punctuation symbols are less varied and less elaborate than those found in fr. 4. The separator-dot is always used between words and is employed three times also at the end of lines (col. a, 2, 3, 5). The colon usually has the simple form of two superimposed dots, and at the end of a paragraph is found also with the additional horizontal stroke (—) (col. a, 16; col. b, 6, 21). Only once is the twin dot used at the end of a line (col. b, 22) and once we find the slanted stroke *cum* dot divider (./) (col. b, 15).

The *qisah* consistently ends with a completed line followed by a blank. Only in one out of three blanks is an ornamental design found (col. b, 6a). This is of the simplest form :--; actually a composite *qisah* divider.

The relatively high age of this fragment is evidenced also by the extension of a *qisah* over two columns. While col. a ends with a syntactical pause, indicated by an *afsaq* (colon), the last line of col. b breaks in the middle of a clause.

A 14th century, or possibly 13th century date seems to be indicated for this MS.

**Collation**

Gen. xxxii, 7 fr.: ירשנھו ב. ירשנھו ג. לומלדתך ק. לומלדתך ג.
xxxii, 10 fr.: ירשנھו ב. לומלדתך ק. לומלדתך ג.

One reading of the fragment, found also in 10 MSS of v. Gall's apparatus, merits special mention. In Gen. xxxi, 50 MT has the mid-verse pause under שמע and reads the following phrase אֲלָה אַדְמַת יֵשׂ בָּרִין וְיָרָן, with the verb in the imperative. The fragment has a colon after אֲלָה and must therefore have read אֱלָא אֶת מְפַלְפַל אָלָה, taking the verb as a participle. This obviously was the reading of some Greek MSS, which translated ὅρων. A similar conception seems to underlie also the main Greek tradition: ὅρων ὀβδέλυς μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ἔστιν.
FRAGMENT NO. 2

General Description

This is a sheet of parchment of two folios with four columns. Folio I verso: Ex. ix, 25 (י׳ רוצ׳) — x, 2a (יב) ; recto: x, 2b (רא) — 7 (לע) ; folio II recto: x, 8 (ר) — 19a (קח) ; and verso: 19b (ליא) — xi, 2 (ליא). 14

At present the height of each folio is 26.2 cm. and the width 22.1 cm. However, since the bottom and left-hand margin are not intact, the page originally may have been somewhat larger. The two outer pages (Ia and IIb) have a brown leathery tint, which blends from a light brown on the right-hand side to a very dark hue on the left. The inner pages, the flesh side of the skin, are of a whitish colour.

The right-hand margins of the folios are well preserved. Even the holes made by the binder’s needle are intact. Against this much of the left-hand, the outer margin, is lost, especially at the bottom. Here the parchment is thin and extremely brittle.

The text, where preserved, is easily legible, except on the left-hand side where the ink faded. The two inner columns, Ib and Iia, are in the worst condition. Having been superimposed they stuck together, and when they were reopened, ink and vellum particles of one folio adhered to the other.

At the right-hand bottom margin of folio I a rectangular piece of parchment has been cut away. 15 Needle holes at the ridges prove that the page had been mended at some time. But also the substituted piece is lost.

Horizontal and longitudinal lines were ruled on the flesh side of the skin. The impressions are very slight and barely show on the other side. The written columns are not quite of the same size. Ia measures 17.3 x 14 cm.; Ib 17 x 14.4 cm.; Iia 16.9 x 14.8 cm.; and IIb 17.6 x 14.7 cm.

Col. Ia has 29 complete and three partly written lines with no blank; col. Ib: 28 complete, 2 incomplete and one blank line; col. Iia: 30 fully written, one partly written and no blank lines; col. IIb: 28 complete and two blank lines. The average number of letters to a full line is 24-27. The space between lines amounts to 0.6-0.7 cm.

The fragment stems from a MS of the one-letter type. The one-letter column is best observed on IIb, but is not very regular. The initial letters are not

14 The word is absent from MT. Sam. may have inserted it here in order to harmonize the passage with Ex. xii, 35.

15 The pieces of parchment which were cut away both from fr. 2 and 3 may have contained notes on the scribes or on the history of the codices. Such notes are sometimes found in the margins of Samaritan MSS.
clearly separated from the others, although the vertical lines prove that a one-letter arrangement was intended. Even on Ia, where the right-hand margin is intact, the column of initial letters is not really detached as it is in other MSS. At least twice spilling of letters over the left-hand margin occurred (Ib, 15; IIa, 4).

The handwriting is clear and regular without being over-standardized. The individual letters are medium-sized. They are 0.3-0.4 cm. high, with some cases of 0.6 cm height, and 0.4-0.6 cm. wide. The scribe obviously wished to utilize fully the available space. He succeeded in getting 30-32 lines to a column which in other MSS of comparable size would hold only 25-29 (cp. fr. 4). The spacing of the lines is somewhat irregular. Especially towards the bottom of the columns crowding can be observed.

On the whole the fragment is written rather carefully. There are no erasures. Twice a letter was omitted and was then inserted above the line (Ia, 12: אִלּוּ; IIb, 11: אֶלֶה). Punctuation Marks

The separator-dot is employed consistently between words, and in some cases is used also at the end of lines (col. Ib, 11, 12, 13, 16, 23; IIb, 8, 9). The colon (afsaq) appears both in the middle and at the end of lines to indicate sentence divisions (col. Ib, 2, 5, 9; IIb, 1, 13, 17). Once it assumes the form of two superimposed almost horizontal strokes (=) (IIb, 8). The twin-dot (anged) is used once as a mid-sentence divider (Ia, 15 אַלֶה אָלֶה). There is only one type of the qisah symbol, and this is used unvariedy (— — ). The qisah can either end with a partly written line (col. Ia, 5, 26; Ib, 13, 32; IIa, 11) or with a completed line followed by a blank without any embellishments (Ib, 26; IIb, 3, 23).

The conclusion of a column does not necessarily coincide with a section division. Thus col. Ia ends in the middle of a line on the word אָמָן, followed by the separator-dot (Ex. x, 2a). MT has here an etnaht. Similarly IIa ends on the words יִרְדֻּךְ הָאֹרֶן (ib. x, 19) under which MT again has a medial pause. Col. IIb concludes with a final pause after the word אֶלֶה אָמָן (ib. xi, 12). MT has here a sof pasuq.

A stroke above the mem of יֵשׁ (Ia, 4, Ex. ix, 26) obviously is meant to imply that these two letters represent the particle šam and not the noun šem. It should be noted that MS E, as recorded by v. Gall, has here the sign which usually indicates the e-vowel.

The relative paucity of punctuation symbols and their simplicity, the use of the separator-dot at the end of lines, the conclusion of columns in the middle of sections, the fact that the MS is of the one-letter type and that the column
arrangement is not strictly observed, all go to show that the fragment is relatively old. One would go safe in assigning it a date not later than the beginning of the 12th century.

Collation

The text of the fragment is practically identical with that adopted by v. Gall in his edition. Only in one instance it has a *plene* spelling where v. Gall’s is *defective*. This is Ex. x, 6 fr. = 5 MSS v. Gall: אַתָּן נָא הָעִבְרִי.

Fragment No. 1

General Description

The fragment consists of one folio, 23.7×20.5 cm., containing recto Gen. xviii, 31 (רַמְאָם) — xix, 9a (תָּהֲלַת; MT: תִּהֲלַת), and verso xix, 9a (רַמְאָם) — 18 (תַּנָּא). It is tolerably well preserved. There are some lacunae on col. a arising from the flaking of the vellum in a diagonal line which crosses from the upper right-hand corner to the middle of the folio. The right-hand margin is almost intact, while the left-hand, the outer margin, is irregularly shaped, due to tear or decay.

Horizontal and longitudinal lines were impressed with a stylus on the flesh side of the skin (col. b) which is of a whitish appearance. The impressions show on the outer side (col. a) which has a brownish hue. These lines often cut through letters, partly erasing the inking, especially on line 22 of both columns, and on the last line of col. b. Furthermore initial letters often protrude over the right-hand marginal line (see bottom of col. a) where this cannot be due to lack of space. These facts lead to the assumption that the guiding lines were ruled on the parchment after the writing had been completed, possibly in order to make the MS conform with later scribal standards. These lines may therefore be attributed to a second hand.

The measurements of both columns are identical: height 16 cm., width 14 cm. The space between the lines is 0.5–0.6 cm. wide. There are 28 written and one blank line on col. a. The concluding word, which could not be fitted into the bottom line, was written in the lower margin. Col. b contains 27 written lines and two blanks. The number of letters to the line is in most cases 24–25. The individual letters are 0.5–0.6 cm. high and 0.5–0.7 cm. wide.

On the whole, the fragment is of the two-letter type. However there are many deviations from this pattern. Lines 5, 8, 10, 19, 28, 29 of col. a, and lines 6, 24 of col. b end with one letter. On line 5 of col. b three letters are set apart, and on line 26 (possibly also on line 11) even four, *i.e.* they do not fit any customary scheme (cp. further col. a, 14). Overspilling of letters
into the left-hand margin occurs on col. a, 16; col. b, 4, 10, 23. Once an omitted ‘ayin was written into the right-hand margin (col. b, 2).

According to custom, lines are spaced in a fashion which allows similar words or letters recurring in adjoining lines to be placed one above the other, e.g. col. a, 2–3 רָעַיאת; col. b, 8–9 נָל. In the latter case this resulted in the crowding of the next line. On col. a, 10 the scribe left blank the first space so that the word נָל should appear directly beneath the matching letters of נל in the line above. Similarly the blank space at the head of line 27 on col. a may be accounted for by the scribe’s intention to write two lameds one below the other. In neither of these cases was the blank filled by a triple dot (・), as is usually done in later MSS.

Punctuation Marks

The separator-dot is consistently employed and is often used also at the end of lines. However, no other divider, including the colon and the twin-dot, is ever used. The end of a section is twice indicated by just a blank line. Only once a qisah symbol is marked (/•) (col. b, 26). There are no embellishments in the blank lines. A horizontal stroke above ה (col. b, 12) identifies the word as the accusative particle.

This absence of all but the most basic punctuation signs gives evidence of the relative antiquity of this fragment. We presume that it is part of a codex which was written not later than the 10th, or possibly the 11th century. Altogether the fragment may be brought into one category with MS Ryl. Sam. VII, n, which E. Robertson considers to be the oldest fragment in the John Rylands Library collection, being written some centuries before the oldest dated MS. 16

Some specific characteristics of col. b seem to indicate that its scribe was not identical with that of col. a. Though faded in some places, the ink on col. b is much better preserved and is blacker than the ink on col. a. The ductus differs perceptibly. On the whole the letters are broader and more angular than on col. a. The differences become apparent by a detailed comparison of some key letters:

The ‘alef is more angular than that of col. a. Its left down-stroke tapers into a little hook bent to the right which is missing in the ‘alef of col. a. This same hook can be observed at the base of the qof. The wedge protruding from the sloping back-stroke of the hé is much more pronounced on col. b than on a. The fêt is broader and higher than that of col. a, and again tapers off into a hook at its top. In comparison with the other letters, the yod of col. b

is appreciably larger than that of a. The wedge of the top of the lamed is much more prominent on col. b than on a. On col. b the base of the lamed is usually appended to the upper line, over which the larger part of the letter protrudes. On col. a the base lies lower, and therefore only a smaller part of the lamed appears over the line.

The scribe of col. a was much more careful than the scribe of b. There are no omissions, mistakes or erasures on col. a, while they are rather frequent on col. b. On line 2, an omitted ‘ayin is written in the right-hand margin; on line 3, the word תֶּרֶם and the letter sin of the following word were inserted between the lines. The same is the case with the het at the beginning of line 6 and with an ‘alef on line 20. On line 22 a probably miswritten word was erased.

Collation

On the whole the fragment tends to a plene spelling as against the defective spelling adopted by v. Gall in his eclectic text.\(^\text{17}\) There are a number of textual peculiarities, some of which may well be isographs, since they are not found in any other MS collated by v. Gall, or in the relatively early collection of otherwise unrecorded variants published by Ben-Ḥayyim.\(^\text{18}\)

The most remarkable variant is the lack of the two words אֶלֶּה in Gen. xviii, 32 (col. a, 4). Their omission may be due to a scribal lapse, since they are found in all other Samaritan MSS, in MT and in the Versions.

Four times a הֹוֹ is substituted for an initial ‘alef. In two cases — Gen. xviii, 31, 32 (col. a, 3, 5): אָשֶׁר הָשָׁתָה for אָשֶׁר הָשָׁתָה — the spelling of the fragment is not paralleled by any other witness. דִּבְּרָתָה for דִּבְּרָתָה (xix, 5—col. a, 20) is found also in MSS v. Gall C N I. These also read with the fragment לֶמֶצָה וֹרְטִי for אָסֶמָא וֹרְטִי in Gen. xix, 8 (col. a, 25).

Once a medial ‘alef is replaced by a הֹוֹ: שָׁמְרֲנָא for שָׁמְרַנָא (xix, 17—col. b, 23). Here the fragment may be compared with MS X:\(^\text{2}\) חָמַרְטָה. Fr. I stands alone in the insertion of an ‘alef in לֶמֶצָה לֶמֶצָה for לֶמֶצָה לֶמֶצָה (xix, 11—col. a, 1). The misplacing of the ‘alef in הָשָׁתָה (xix, 9—col. a, 30) is found also in MS A.

In xix, 15 fr. I has a not unparalleled substitution of a het for an ‘ayin: לֹא לֹא for לֶמֶצָה (col. b, 17).

These variants quite clearly show an especially prominent slurring of the gutturals. The phenomenon as such is well attested in Samaritan MSS, but

\(^\text{17}\) The new fragments again make it probable that von Gall’s method was based on wrong assumptions. Early MSS of the Samaritan Pentateuch display a clear inclination towards plene spelling. A new edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch, diplomatic and not eclectic, seems to be called for.

again may be observed in excessive frequency in the already mentioned list of variants which possibly is based ‘on the earliest Samaritan MS known’.19

Further variants:

xi, 4  fr. = 4 MSS v. Gall: רנב המשי G: ונהוב
xi, 7  fr. = X2: הוהי G: בראש
xi, 9  fr. = mlt. MSS v. Gall: איה G: שמות
fr. = 10 MSS v. Gall: יהושע נב שמות G: שמות
fr.: רִיב G: רִיב
xi, 10, 16 fr. = mlt. MSS v. Gall: האנשימ 20 G: האנשימ
fr. = MS P: יִרְכַּא G: יִרְכַּא
xi, 12  fr. = MSS IQW1X2: בֶּן יִתְנָה G: בֶּן יִתְנָה
xi, 14, 16 fr. = MSS IQ: בֶּנִית G: בֶּנִית
xi, 15  fr. = mlt. MSS v. Gall: בֶּנִית G: בֶּנִית
fr.: יִרְמְיָה G: יִרְמְיָה
xi, 16  fr. = MS G לָא נבָּטָס G: לא

20 This spelling is found also in Qumran writings, e.g. in 1QS I, 2, 3; II, 2, 13, 18. See further: S. Talmon, “Synonymous Readings in the Textual Traditions of the Old Testament”, Scripta Hierosolymitana VIII, 1961, 368–370.