

THE HEBREW PAPYRUS OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

F. C. Burkitt

A HEBREW papyrus is a rarity in any case, but the document that forms the subject of this paper is unique. It is a papyrus containing the Decalogue in Hebrew followed by the *Shema*, the text differing in many notable particulars from the Massoretic standard, and agreeing with that which underlies the Septuagint version. When we add that there is every reason to suppose that the Papyrus is at least five or six hundred years older than any piece of Hebrew writing known to scholars, it is evident that the tattered fragments of which a facsimile is here inserted are interesting and important from every point of view.

The recent history of the Papyrus is involved in some obscurity. It came into the possession of Mr. W. L. Nash, the Secretary of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, having been bought in Egypt from a native dealer along with some very early uncial fragments of the *Odyssey*. Mr. Nash thinks it very probable that the whole "find" comes from somewhere in the Fayyum. These Greek fragments must be as old as the second century A. D., and are probably much earlier: they contain portions of *Odyssey* XII. 279-304, and have been edited by the present writer with a facsimile in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* for November, 1902, p. 290 ff. The Hebrew fragments which form the subject of the present article were entrusted to Mr. Stanley A. Cook, Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, and one of the sub-editors of the new *Encyclopaedia Biblica*. Mr. Cook identified the fragments and published them in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical*

Archaeology for January, 1903, in an admirable paper which contains, in addition to the text and translation, a full discussion of the interesting questions to which this discovery has given rise. The Papyrus itself has been most generously presented by Mr. Nash to the Cambridge University Library.

So much for the way in which the Papyrus has made its reappearance in the world. About one thing there can be no doubt. There can be no doubt that it is a genuine relic of antiquity and not a forgery. The scraps of Greek papyrus with which it was associated are certainly genuine. It may be safely said that no forger of antiquities has the palaeographical knowledge necessary for such work as this; and if he had had the knowledge, he would not have allowed his work to be thrown in, as a thing of no particular value, among a collection of Greek documents. I have thought it worth while to insist upon the genuineness of the Papyrus, because unfortunately it has been found impossible to make a satisfactory photograph of it. What appears here is a photograph of the *papyrus*, but not of the *handwriting*. The papyrus is a very dark yellow, and by the time this has made a sufficient impression on the photographic plate, light enough has been reflected from the black surfaces of the letters themselves to affect the plate also: consequently, while every fibre in the material was visible in the photograph, the letters were not visible at all or were exceedingly faint. What is seen in the reproduction is a very careful drawing of the letters upon the photograph, made by myself from the Papyrus. In doing this I was greatly helped by the faint marks on the photograph, which could be identified when compared with the original as the traces of the several letters. Fortunately there is no serious case of doubtful reading. In a slanting light the letters are clear on the Papyrus itself, and there is only one word in the decipherment of which Mr. Cook and I are not completely agreed. Modern fluid ink and modern pens, coupled with the circumstance

that it was almost impossible to erase a badly-formed letter, made the copy somewhat rougher than the original, but I can honestly claim that the facsimile gives a not misleading view of the appearance of the handwriting.

In its present state the Nash Papyrus consists of four fragments, all of which fit together. The largest is nearly two inches across and about four inches long. It appears to have been doubled up into a packet. A portion of the upper margin (not shown in the photograph) is still preserved, and one of the smaller fragments contains a portion of the right-hand margin. The handwriting is arranged in a column with an average of a little over thirty letters in a line. The greater part of twenty-four lines are preserved, and there are traces of a twenty-fifth, but it is of course impossible to say how much further this column extended. The fragment containing a portion of the right-hand margin appears to terminate with the natural edge of the Papyrus, so that what is preserved is the beginning of a document. The smallness of this margin suggests that there was never more than the single column of writing. The material is now very brittle, and it would be hazardous to detach it from the card upon which the fragments have been gummed, but Mr. Cook and I have managed to ascertain that there is no writing on the other side. Before speculating on the nature of the document, it will be convenient to give the actual text, and to examine its relation to other authorities. Then will follow a few words on the date of the Papyrus, and the value of the text.

HEBREW TEXT.

[... אנכי י]הוה אלהיך אשר [הוצא]תיך מארץ מ[צרים]	1
[לוא יהיה ל]ך אלהים אחרים [על פ]ני לוא תעשה [לך פסל]	2
[וכל תמונה] אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ [מתחת]	3
[ואשר במי]ם מתחת לארץ לוא תשתחוה להם [ולוא]	4
[תעבדם כ]ן אנכי יהוה אלהיך אל קנא פק[ד עו]ן]	5

[אבות על בני]ם על שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי [ועשה]	6
[חסד לאלפים] לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי לוא ת[שא את]	7
[שם יהוה א]להיך לשוא כי לוא ינקה יהוה [את אשר]	8
[ישא את ש]מה לשוא זכור את יום השבת [לקדש]	9
[ששת ימי]ם תעבוד ועשית כל מלאכתך וביום [השביעי]	10
[שבת ליהוה] אלהיך לוא תעשה בה כל מלאכה [אתה]	11
[ובנך ובתך] עבדך ואמתך שורך וחמרך וכל [בחמתך]	12
[וגרך אשר] בשעריך כי ששת ימים עשה [יהוה]	13
[את השמי]ם ואת הארץ את הים ואת כל א[שר במ]	14
וינח [ביום] השביעי עלכן ברך יהוה את [יום]	15
השביעי ויקדשיו כבוד את אביך ואת אמ[ך למען]	16
ייטב לך ולמען יאריכון ימך על האדמה [אשר]	17
יהוה אלהיך נתן לך לוא תאנף לוא תרצח לו [א]	18
[תג]נב לוא ת[ע]נה ברעך עד שוא לוא תחמוד [את]	19
אשת רעך ל[וא תת]א[וה את ב]ית רעך שד[הו ועבדו]	20
ואמתו וש[ורו וחמרו וכל אשר לרעך	21
[Blank]	
[ואלה החק]ים והמשפטים אשר צוה משה את [בני]	22
[ישראל] במדבר בצאתם מארץ מצרים שמ [ע]	23
[ישראל] ל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד הוא וא[הבת]	24
[את יהוה א]להיך בכל [לבבך. . .]	25

TRANSLATION.

- 1 [. I am Jahwe thy God that [brought] thee out of the land of E[gypt:]
- 2 [thou shalt not hav]e other gods be[fore] me. Thou shalt not make [for thyself an image]
- 3 [or any form] that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth [beneath,]
- 4 [or that is in the waters beneath the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them [nor]
- 5 [serve them, for] I am Jahwe thy God, a jealous God visiting the iniquity]
- 6 [of fathers upon sons to the third and to the fourth generation unto them that hate me, [and doing]

- 7 [kindness unto thousands] unto them that love me and
keep my commandments. Thou shalt [not]
8 [take up the name of Jahwe] thy God in vain, for Jahwe
will not hold guiltless [him that]
9 [taketh up his name in vain. Remember the day of the
Sabbath [to hallow it:]
10 [six days thou shalt work and do all thy business, and
on the [seventh day,]
11 a Sabbath for Jahwe] thy God, thou shalt not do therein
any business, [thou]
12 [and thy son and thy daughter,] thy slave and thy
handmaid, thy ox and thy ass and all thy [cattle,]
13 [and thy stranger that is] in thy gates. For six days
did Ja[hwe make]
14 [the heaven]s and the earth, the sea and all th[at is
therein,]
15 and he rested [on the] seventh day; therefore Jahwe
blessed [the]
16 seventh day and hallowed it. Honour thy father and
thy mother, that]
17 it may be well with thee and that thy days may be long
upon the ground [that]
18 Jahwe thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not do adultery.
Thou shalt not do murder. Thou shalt [not]
19 [st]eal. Thou shalt not [bear] against thy neighbour
vain witness. Thou shalt not covet [the]
20 [wife of thy neighbour. Thou shalt] not desire the house
of thy neighbour, his field, or his slave,]
21 [or his handmaid, or his o]x, or his ass, or anything that
is thy neighbour's. [Blank]
22 [(?) And these are the statutes and the judgements that
Moses commanded the [sons of]
23 [Israel] in the wilderness, when they went forth from
the land of Egypt. Hea[r]
24 [0 Isra]el: Jahwe our God, Jahwe is one; and thou
shalt love]
25 [Jahwe thy G]o[d with al]l t[hy heart].

In making the restorations at the beginnings and ends of the lines it must be borne in mind that ה, מ, ם, צ, ש, ת (and sometimes כ) are wide letters, and that ד, ו, ז, ך, פ, ף, ך (and sometimes ב and נ) are narrow letters. Lines 15-19 indicate that about seven letters are lost on the right hand of lines 1-14, 20-22; consequently, no more than four letters as a rule are lost on the left-hand side. I think therefore that Mr. Cook has supplied too many letters at the ends of lines 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 11, and too few at the beginnings of the following lines. That the division here adopted is right may also be seen from lines 4 and 5, for to add ולוא תעבדם at the end of line 4 leaves only כ׳ to be prefixed to line 5. At the end of line 20 I have added ועבדו after שדהו, leaving only ואמתו to be prefixed to ושרו at the beginning of line 21. It is more likely that the end of a line should be crowded than the beginning, and in the handwriting of the Papyrus all the letters in ועבדו are rather narrow.

The only point where there is some doubt as to the actual reading of the Papyrus occurs in line 20, where I read תתאוה “desire” (as in Deut. v. 18b), but Mr. Cook is still inclined to read תחמוד “covet” (as in the preceding line and in Ex. xx. 17b). The surface of the Papyrus is here somewhat damaged and the middle letter is defaced-so much so, that it looks more like צ than א or מ. But the curve at the foot of the left-hand stroke of the second letter is characteristic of ת and not of ה, while it is very difficult to suppose that the last letter can be anything but ה. If תתאוה be right, the א exhibits an extreme form of that curious horizontal sweep at the end of the right foot, which is characteristic of the handwriting of this Papyrus, e. g. in the אהה of the *Shema*’.

The Ten Commandments are familiar to every one, and I do not propose to go through the text line for line. Mr. Cook, in the course of his paper in the Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, has already done this, and the reader will find there full and clear details about the readings of the Versions and other authorities. I propose here only to touch upon such points as may help us to discover the nature of the document and its date.

The first question which naturally presents itself is the identification of the Biblical passages. Does the Papyrus give us a text of Exodus or of Deuteronomy? In agreement

with Exodus against Deuteronomy it begins the Fourth Commandment with "Remember" instead of "Keep," and does not add "as Jahwe thy God commanded thee" after "to hallow it." It adds at the end of this Commandment the verse "For in six days Jahwe made the heavens and the earth," &c., as in Exod. xx. 11, and does not give the verse Deut. v. 15 or the clause "that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou " in the preceding verse. In the Fifth Commandment it agrees with Exodus in not having the clause "as Jahwe thy God commanded thee." On the other hand, the Papyrus agrees with Deuteronomy against Exodus in the Fourth Commandment by prefixing "thy ox and thy ass" to "thy cattle," in the Fifth Commandment by inserting the clause "that it may be well with thee," in the Ninth Commandment by reading "vain (אִשָּׁר) witness" and not "false (שָׁקֵר) witness," and in the Tenth Commandment by putting the wife before the house, and by the insertion of "field " before " slave," and (if my reading be correct) by having "desire" in the second place instead of "covet." To these we must add the appearance of the *Shema*', which of course belongs to Deuteronomy alone. Most of these agreements with Deuteronomy against Exodus are also found in the Greek text of Exodus, but not all: in fact, we may say with confidence that in the Ninth Commandment the Greek supports שָׁקֵר both for Exodus and for Deuteronomy. Moreover וְהָיָה שָׁקֵר "his field" in the Tenth Commandment is without the conjunction as in Deuteronomy, while the Greek has οὐτε τὸν ἀγρὸν αὐτοῦ.

It is, I venture to think, impossible to resist the impression that the Papyrus gives a text containing elements both from Exodus and from Deuteronomy, just such a text as might be formed in a liturgical work based indeed upon the Pentateuch, yet not a direct transcript either of Exodus or of Deuteronomy. We know from both Talmuds that the daily reading of the Decalogue before the *Shema*' was once customary, and that the practice was discontinued

because of Christian cavils.¹ It is therefore reasonable to conjecture that this Papyrus contains the daily worship of a pious Egyptian Jew who lived before the custom came to an end.

But further, the Hebrew text upon which the fragment is based was far from being identical with the Massoretic text. Even if we refer each phrase to its origin in Exodus or Deuteronomy, whichever be the most convenient, there still remain several readings which do not agree with the Massoretic text, and do agree with the Septuagint. In the Fourth Commandment we have the insertion of כ before [השב יע] יום in 1.10, and the addition of כה after תעשה in the following line. At the end of the same Commandment we find "seventh day" instead of "Sabbath day," again with the Septuagint. In the Fifth Commandment, the reading, "that it may be well with thee, and that thy days may be long on the ground," agrees in order with the Greek. The order, Adultery, Murder, Steal, is that of some texts of the Septuagint (including Philo), and it is found in the New Testament (Mark, Luke, Romans, James, not Matthew). To crown all, we have the preface to the *Shema*, which is found in the Septuagint of Deut. vi. 4, but not in the Hebrew; and in the *Shema* itself we find--

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד הוא

the אהו at the end being added in agreement with the Greek, both of the Septuagint and of Mark xii. 29, which has Ἄκουε, Ἰσραήλ, Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν Κύριος εἷς ἐστίν.

In this Papyrus, therefore, we have a Hebrew document based upon a text which is not the Massoretic text, but has notable points of agreement with that which underlies the Septuagint. It is not a question only of difference from the Massoretic standard; mere differences might have arisen through carelessness. The all-important point is the agreement with the Septuagint. This shows us that

¹ Talm. J. *Berakhoth*, i. 8 (4) ; Talm. B. *Berakhoth*, 12 a.

the variants have a history behind them, and that they belong to the pre-Massoretic age of the text. We can trace the consonantal text of our printed Hebrew Bibles back to the time of Aquila, to the time of the revolt of Bar-Cochba. From that time onwards there has been but little serious change in the Hebrew text of the Canonical Scriptures as accepted by the Synagogue. From that time onwards the composition of a document such as our Papyrus is inconceivable.¹ In other words, it is a relic of Jewish religious literature earlier than the age of Rabbi 'Akiba, who died in the year 135 A.D., and who was the founder of the accurate study of the Hebrew text.

It is of course probable that our Papyrus is the copy of an earlier document. The original composition might be older than Rabbi 'Akiba, but our fragment might be very much later. At the same time there are palaeographical considerations which suggest that the Nash Papyrus is itself of very great antiquity. It is entirely unaffected by the conventional rules that regulated the writing of Scripture in later times; the ך of ךןא in the *Shema*' is not enlarged, there are no "crowns" to the letters, nor is there any division into verses. It is also a mark of very early date that several of the letters are run together by a ligature, e.g. in 1. 15. We have to compare the handwriting not with rolls and codices of the early mediaeval period, or with the other surviving fragments of Hebrew written on papyrus, but with Palmyrene and Nabataean inscriptions. The nearest parallel of all is to be found in a Nabataean inscription of A. D. 55, and I

¹ I cannot resist quoting the words of Dr. Landauer about Euting's discovery of a text of the *Shema*' engraved over the lintel of the ruined Synagogue at Palmyra. Dr. Landauer says: "Variationen im Text eines so uralten Gebets wie das Sch'ma wird kein Verstandiger bei einer Ueberlieferung aus einer Zeit wie die der Mischna etwa erwarten. Die Umschreibung von Jahwe durch ךןא uberrascht uns nicht, wohl aber dass dem Kiinstler ein Lapsus passirt ist, indem er ךשיכתך mit mater lectionis schreibt und, wenn ich recht lese, ךןאכתך mit ך" (*Sitzungsberichte* of the Berlin Academy for 1884, p. 934).

am inclined to assign this Papyrus to about the same date. Those who place it later will have to account for the archaic ן (X), the large broken-backed medial; the occasionally open final ם, the ך with a short foot (like Palmyrene and Syriac), and the looped it. The handwriting is cursive, but it is as distinct from the so-called "Rashi." character as the cursive Greek of pre-Byzantine times is distinct from the minuscule hands of the Middle Ages. And I have already drawn attention to the fact that our Papyrus made its reappearance before the world in company with Greek fragments of the Odyssey, which are certainly as old as the second century A . D., and may be very much earlier.

The five letters ך ם ן ף and ץ all appear on the Papyrus in distinct medial and final forms, but the development of nearly all these forms can be traced almost back to the Christian era. The distinction of medial and final Kaph, for instance, is as old as the first beginnings of Syriac literature. More curious are the considerations derived from the spelling of the Papyrus. The most characteristic feature of this spelling is its independence of the Biblical standard. On the one hand we have the archaic ן and שמה for בו and שמו, and in agreement with the Massoretic text the vowel o is not written plene in משה, אנכי, אלהים, or the present participle. The distinction between the vowels in שור and חמר is maintained, just as in the Massoretic text of the Commandments. On the other hand we have לו every time for לא, we have תעבוד and תחמוד (but also תגנב), and יאריך is written plene. זכור agrees with the present Massoretic spelling.

These spellings cannot be brought forward in favour of a later date than what I have urged in the preceding paragraphs. The *scriptio plena* had become general by the year 66 A. D., for from that time we find חכ והן on Jewish coins. And I cannot help remarking by the way that I believe the saying in Matt. v. 18 about the *jot* and the tittle (ἰῶτα ἐν ἡ μίᾱ κεφαλαία) to refer not to the size of certain

letters but to their use as vowels. The word *waw* meant “a hook,” and this I fancy may have been rendered *κεραία*, as a Greek equivalent for the original Semitic term. Thus the fashion of representing the long vowels *i* and *u*. by the consonants *ʾ* and *ʿ* was not only in use about the year 30 A. D., but was already beginning to invade the copies of the Law. Our Papyrus represents the everyday usage. The Massoretic text of the Bible, based as we believe it to be upon the spelling of a MS. of about 135 A.D., represents a mixture. It often preserves the archaic spelling of an earlier age, as is natural in a copy of any ancient writing: on the other hand, many spellings represent the usage of the second century A. D.

The differences between our Papyrus and the Massoretic text show that the scrupulous care to preserve the words of the Law accurately, which prevailed among the later Jews, was not universally taken in the first century A.D. and the preceding ages. The agreement between the Papyrus and the Septuagint also proves that some things in the Greek which we may have been inclined to regard as paraphrase or amplification are in fact the faithful reproduction of the Hebrew text that lay before the translator. But there remains a more serious question, the question as to which is really the better text. Does the text approved by Aquila and the Massorettes, or the text of the Nash Papyrus and the Septuagint, more nearly represent the text of Exodus and Deuteronomy as (shall we say) Ezra left it? I am afraid, after all, that in this instance I must vote for the Massoretic text. So far as the Decalogue and the *Shema*’ go, the Massoretic text appears to me the more archaic and therefore the more genuine. In these passages the Massoretic text reads to me like the scholarly reproduction of an old MS. which happens here to contain no serious errors, while the Nash Papyrus is not the scholarly reproduction of a MS., but a monument of popular religion, giving a text of the Commandments with the grammatical difficulties smoothed down.

I trust I may escape being misrepresented as holding a brief for the Massoretic text. On the contrary, I believe that the printed Hebrew Bible contains serious errors, both palaeographical and editorial. Many of these errors can, I am confident, be removed by an intelligent use of the Septuagint, and I greatly rejoice to learn from the Nash Papyrus that the ancient Greek translation was even more faithful to the Hebrew which underlies it than some of us dared hope. But it does not follow that all the labour of the Sopherim was thrown away, or that every early variant is a relic of a purer text. Especially is this the case with the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch became, canonical from very early times, and the consonantal text was practically fixed in the Maccabaeian age. And if any part of the text were fixed, surely this would be the Ten Commandments. When therefore we find that the Ten Commandments actually differ in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, we have some ground for supposing that they have escaped intentional harmonization. And if they have escaped intentional harmonization they have escaped the only serious danger to which they would have been exposed, for it is hardly likely that a mere palaeographical error in such a well-known context would have been left uncorrected.

The clearest instance to my mind is in the text of the Fourth Commandment. Here I believe the Massoretic text to be right, and the Nash Papyrus to give an easier, less original, reading: at the same time it is a better commentary on the true text than either the Authorized Version of 1611 or the Revised Version of 1881, both of which actually follow the Samaritan text. The Massoretic text has **ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך ויום השביעי שבת ליהוה כל מלאכה** i. e. Six days thou shalt work and do all thy business ; and the seventh day, Jahweh thy God's Sabbath, thou shalt do no business.

In the first clause " six days " are in what may be called the accusative of duration of time: the symmetry of the sentence shows us that **יום השביעי** is in the same construc-

tion, and "לִי שַׁבָּת" is in apposition to it. If we wanted to bring out the exact force of these accusatives, we might translate "During six days thou shalt work. . . , but during the seventh day . . . thou shalt do no business." But this construction, though perfectly clear, can easily be misunderstood. It is so easy to take "וַיֹּם אֱלֹהֵיךָ . . ." as a separate sentence and say "But the seventh day is the Sabbath," or to regard it as a kind of *nominativus pendens* without any grammatical construction at all. This leaves "לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה", so to speak, in the air: "thou shalt do no business" by itself is rather too general a commandment, and consequently we find "בַּיּוֹם" (written "בַּיּוֹם", as in Jeremiah xvii. 24) added by the Nash Papyrus and by the Samaritan, and implied by the Septuagint and the Vulgate. The Papyrus further prefixes "בַּיּוֹם" to "וַיֹּם אֱלֹהֵיךָ", thereby making it quite clear that "שַׁבָּת" is in apposition and not a predicate. The English Bible has "but the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God *in it* thou shalt not do any work"--a translation that makes havoc of the syntax, and the matter is made worse by the Revised Version, which puts the italic *is* into ordinary type.

The result of this grammatical excursus can be stated in a sentence. On the assumption that the Massoretic text preserves the true wording of the Fourth Commandment both in Exodus and Deuteronomy, the reading of the Nash Papyrus, of the Samaritan, and the rendering of the Septuagint, can all be easily explained; but on the assumption that either the Nash Papyrus or the Samaritan gives the original, it is very difficult to account for the omissions of the Massoretic text.

At the end of the Fourth Commandment (Exod. xx. 11b) I incline to think that we have another instance of the superiority of the Massoretic text, this time in company with the Samaritan. "Blessed the *sabbath* day" (MT.) is less obvious than "blessed the *seventh* day" (Papyrus and LXX), which might easily have come from the context or from Gen. ii. 3. Here again it is interesting to note

that the divergence of the Septuagint from the Massoretic text was not caused by paraphrastic tendencies on the part of the translators, but by the faithful following of the Hebrew text that was used.

It is not necessary here to discuss the longer form of the Fifth Commandment given in the Papyrus, because it practically amounts to an interpolation from the parallel in Deuteronomy which the Massoretic text of Exodus has escaped. It is possible, however, that the received text of Deuteronomy should be corrected here to agree with the Papyrus, i. e. "that it may be well with thee" should precede instead of follow "that thy days may be long."

The variation in order between the Sixth and Seventh Commandments is probably connected with the similar change of order in the Tenth. Just as in the Tenth Commandment the prohibition not to covet the neighbour's wife is placed first in the Papyrus, in the Greek, and even in the Hebrew text of Deuteronomy, so we find that in the Papyrus and in many Greek texts (including Philo), the prohibition of Adultery is put before that of Murder. But is not the order of the Massoretic text in Exodus more primitive? Is it not likely that the original form of the Tenth Commandment was "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's House," the House including the Family as well as the Property? The reason that in Exod. xx. 17, the House comes first is not because 'Akiba or some "Scribe" thought the dwelling more valuable than the wife, but because the first clause of the Commandment was once all that there was of it. The rest is explanatory addition. But the same tendency which has brought up the prohibition to covet one's neighbour's wife to the head of the list has most likely brought up the prohibition of Adultery in front of Murder. Here, again, the Nash Papyrus represents the popular tendencies of a not yet Rabbinized Judaism (if I may be forgiven the phrase), while the Massoretic text gives us the scholarly archaism of the Scribes.

We come at last to the *Shema'* (Deut. vi. 4 f.), undoubtedly the most remarkable part of the new discovery. What are we to say of the new Preface, and what are we to say of the addition of **יהוה** after **אחד**? What reasons are we to give for the omission of this Preface and for the omission of **יהוה** on the assumption that they are genuine portions of Deuteronomy? The question seems to me to be altogether parallel to the question raised by the variations in the Commandments and to demand the same answer.

Let us begin with the obvious consideration that the Nash Papyrus once more brings out the essential faithfulness of the Greek version of the Pentateuch to the Hebrew that underlies it. The new Preface is found in the Greek prefixed to the *Shema'*, and in **κύριος εἷς ἐστίν** the last word corresponds to **יהוה**, just as in Gen. xli. 25 **τὸ ἐνύπνιον Φαραὼ ἔν ἐστίν** corresponds to **הוא אחד פרעה חלום**. There is nothing to suggest that the text of the Papyrus has been assimilated to the Greek, and so we may well believe that the Septuagint attests a text of the *Shema'* which agrees with that of the Papyrus. But here again it is difficult to believe that the Palestinian recension of the passage represented by the Massoretic text (and the Samaritan) is not the more original. Why should the **יהוה** after **אחד** have been dropped, if it were originally there? It is such an obvious thing to add: it makes the construction so much clearer. True, it takes away some of the force of the great sentence; it dissociates the assertion of Jahwe's uniqueness from the command to love him with no corner reserved for other objects of devotion; it gives, in fact, a philosophical turn to a positive command. Such a turn is foreign to the style of Deuteronomy, but it is exactly what would attract the Jews of the Dispersion. In this instance also I must prefer the archaistic scholarship of the Scribes to the philosophy of Alexandria.

To the Preface much the same argument applies. Words are really not wanted between Deut. vi. 3 and "Hear, O Israel"; in fact, the Preface is a kind of *doublette* to

Deut. vi. 1-3. It reads like a marginal chapter-heading that has become incorporated with the text. It is remarkable how well it fits in with the scheme of the Papyrus. The words *And these are the statutes and the judgments that Moses commanded the sons of Israel when they went forth from the land of Egypt* form an excellent and sufficient transition from the Decalogue which was proclaimed by Jahwe himself to the rest of the Law which was given through Moses only. Mr. Cook has made the bold suggestion that our Papyrus is part of a text of Deuteronomy, in which this Preface actually took the place of the fifteen verses, Deut. v. 22-vi. 3. The Septuagint would in that case represent a conflate text, as it contains both the Preface and the fifteen verses. But Deut. v. 22-vi. 3 is surely a genuine portion of the Book of Deuteronomy it has even run the gauntlet of the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (col. 1081). I think, therefore, that the Preface to the *Shema*' is an interpolation into the genuine text, which the Massoretic text has happily escaped. It is in every respect similar to Isa. xxx. 6a ("The Burden of the Beasts of the South"), which doubtless was also a marginal chapter-heading, except that in the Isaiah passage the interpolation is found in the Massoretic text as well as in the Greek.

To sum up what inevitably has assumed the form of a discussion of technical points. I believe the Nash Papyrus to be a document of the first century A.D. at latest. The document itself I do not believe to have extended beyond the single column which is in great part preserved, and I think it not at all unlikely that it was folded up and buried with its former owner as a kind of charm. The writing which it contains consists of what were considered to be the chief passages of the Law, the text being taken from the various books, and where there were parallel texts, as in the Decalogue, the Papyrus presents a fusion of the two. The Hebrew text of the Pentateuch from which these extracts were made differed from the Massoretic text, and

had many points of contact with that of which the Septuagint is a translation. The date of the compilation cannot be determined, but the Septuagint itself is evidence that such texts were current in the Ptolemaic period. At the same time, as far as our fragments extend, the Massoretic text approves itself as purer, as a more primitive recension of the Pentateuch, than the text of the Nash Papyrus and the Septuagint. Especially is this true with regard to the text of the *Shema*'. There is a story in the Talmud that when Rabbi 'Akiba was martyred he was reciting the *Shema*', and he died as he was lingering over the word **אחד**. "Happy art thou, Rabbi 'Akiba," said the Heavenly Voice, "that thy spirit went forth at **אחד**." I think we may venture to echo this Benediction: there is no need at all for us to add an unnecessary pronoun to **שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד**.

F. C. BURKITT.

Please report any errors to Ted Hildebrandt at: thildebrandt@gordon.edu