

Chapter 1

Samaritan Pentateuch

INTRODUCTION

The Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) constitutes the entire canon of sacred text for the Samaritan community. Its prominent role within the Samaritan community is clear. Public reading of the Pentateuch is a central component of communal worship and religious festivals. Inscriptions taken from the Pentateuch decorate public buildings and private homes alike. Devotees memorize portions from the Pentateuch and incorporate these memorized texts into prayer and private piety. The importance of the SP as a living and vibrant part of the Samaritan community cannot be overstated. The symbiotic relationship between the Samaritans and the SP makes it impossible to conceive of the community without the SP or the SP without the Samaritan community.

Despite its close ties to the Samaritans, the SP's influence is not limited to the Samaritan community. Referred to in the writings of the early Christian patristic authors as well as in the Talmud and by early Jewish writers, the SP was a recognized textual tradition known throughout the Levant in the early centuries of the Common Era. Lost to the West for hundreds of years, the SP reemerged in the seventeenth century and found itself immediately embroiled in religious debates between the various branches of Christianity. For the better part of 150 years, this unfortunate controversy among Roman Catholic and Protestant scholars over the preferred reading of the Old Testament text sidetracked investigation away from the SP as a tradition and text valuable in and of itself. Fortunately, this religious polemical veil has been removed, and once again the SP has drawn the attention of scholars, religious and nonreligious, as an important text in its own right and as an important textual witness to the vibrant and tenacious Samaritan community.

Scholarly attention given to the SP grew exponentially during the last two decades of the twentieth century and promises to grow even further in the opening years of the twenty-first century. Literary critics investigating the text transmission of the Hebrew Bible are consulting the SP, as are sociologists and anthropologists interested in the history and cultures of the Hellenistic

Levant. Publications of the DSS have provided tantalizing evidence to suggest that the SP textual tradition was a major participant in the literature of the Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic Levant.

ORIGIN

The text that became the SP is the result of expansions and alterations made to a text type that had a considerable history of use prior to its adoption by the Samaritans as their sacred text.¹ Comparisons with the LXX, the MT, and, more recently, the Qumran materials have demonstrated that the text adopted by the Samaritans was part of a group of texts that existed side by side and, in various ways, related to each other in the centuries before the turn of the eras.

Several attempts have been made to diagram the history of the text prior to its sectarian Samaritan identification.² None of the proposed reconstructions have won unanimous support, but a generally accepted outline has emerged within a scholarly consensus.³ In broad terms, the path that led to the four texts we know today (LXX, MT, SP, and that represented by the appropriate DSS, such as 4QExod) developed as follows. A loose, but common, text tradition circulated that encompassed the Old Greek (OG) text, the MT, the 4QExod, and the SP. From this the OG text split off first, developing its own set of unique expansions and characteristics. For a time, the textual tradition common to the MT, 4QExod, and the SP continued developing until the 4QExod and SP traditions followed a path of their own, marked by a number of expansionist tendencies that distinguish it from the tradition later resulting in the MT. Finally, the traditions behind 4QExod and the SP went their separate ways, with the addition of major expansions in the SP, such as those found in Exod 20, intended to make clear the legitimacy of worship on Gerizim.⁴ These “textual trajectories” are, as it were, the footprints of social

¹Judith E. Sanderson, *An Exodus Scroll from Qumran: 4QpaleoExod and the Samaritan Tradition* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 308; James Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 69.

²See the survey presented by Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 31–34.

³The major alternative to the theory presented here is a theory of regional or local texts. See Frank Moore Cross Jr., *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies* (rev. ed.; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961); Purvis, *Samaritan Pentateuch*, 80–81; and Frank Moore Cross Jr. and Shemaryahu Talmon, eds., *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

⁴Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 311.

groups that developed their own self-identity and used the respective textual traditions as a means of articulating their identity and legitimacy in the face of competing groups and ideologies.

If this reconstruction is correct, it is best to consider the SP as a tree branch coexisting with other branches that developed from a common trunk.⁵ Indeed, the text of Qumran and that of the Samaritans are so similar that they may well be considered articulations of one single text type.⁶

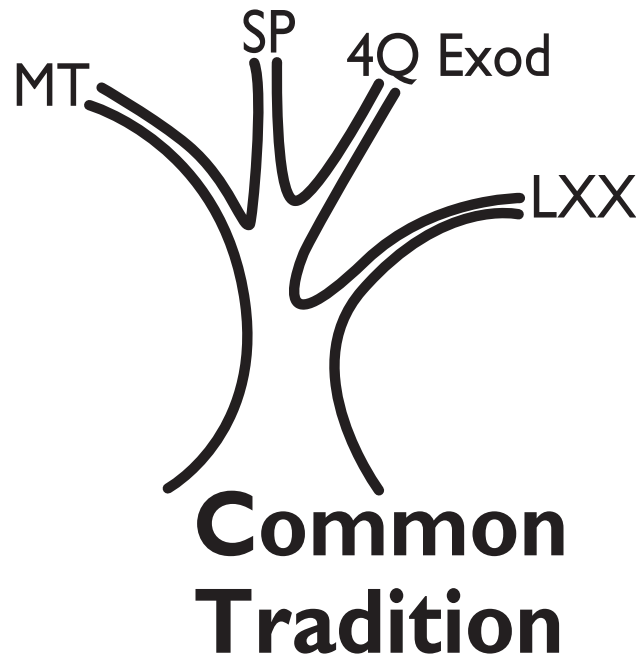


Figure 1. Schematic of the “manuscript tree”

The Samaritans held their Scriptures in common with other groups within Palestine during the last several centuries B.C.E.⁷ The expansions contained in the Samaritan and Qumran texts include challenges to the supremacy of Jerusalem as the preferred site of worship and to the cult stationed there. The presence of these challenges within the texts makes it easy to

⁵ See Frank Moore Cross Jr., “History of the Biblical Text,” in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (ed. Frank Moore Cross Jr. and Shemaryahu Talmon; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 181.

⁶ Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 314.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 317.

imagine that the various text types used by groups in Palestine had become weapons by which the struggle for religious legitimacy was fought.

Comparing the differences between the SP and the 4QExod material may help furnish clues to the historical circumstances surrounding the sectarian recension that finally resulted in a text fit for the Samaritan community.⁸ The last major recension, and the one that separates SP from 4QExod, is the expansion, found in Exod 20, that creates a new tenth commandment and elevates Gerizim as the legitimate place of worship. Once the Samaritan community canonized this text recension, it assumed a static quality allowing it to function as an identifying hallmark of the Samaritan faithful. Just when this final recension took place is difficult to say, but at present all signs point to a process that began in the late Hasmonaean period, during the late second or early first century B.C.E., but may not have finally become static or complete until the second century C.E.⁹

HISTORY

The SP is known outside the Samaritan community already in early patristic and Jewish writings.¹⁰ Care, however, must be taken when reviewing these writings, for the term “Samaritan” can be used to refer to inhabitants of the region of Samaria or to the ethnic and religious group. For example, Justin uses the term several times, but only in chapter 53 of the *First Apology* can it be concluded that by the term “Samaritan” he means the religious group. Origen, writing in the third century, seems to have at least a passing acquaintance with the SP. He recognizes that the Samaritans revere the Pentateuch but not the Prophets.

⁸Sanderson, *ibid.*, 319, contributes observations in this direction.

⁹See Frank Moore Cross Jr., “The History of the Biblical Text in the Light of the Discoveries in the Judean Desert,” *HTR* 52 (1964): 287–92. Ingrid Hjelm has presented very interesting arguments in *The Samaritans and Early Judaism: A Literary Analysis* (JSOTSup 303; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 93. See also Purvis, *Samaritan Pentateuch*, 85. Alan D. Crown (“Redating the Schism between the Judaeans and the Samaritans,” *JQR* 82 [1991]: 17–50) has argued for a date as late as the third century C.E. for the schism between Judaeans and Samaritans.

¹⁰As an initiation into the subject of the SP in patristic writings, see Bruce Hall, “The Samaritans in the Writings of Justin Martyr and Tertullian,” in *Proceedings of the First International Congress of the Société d’Études Samaritaines* (ed. Abraham Tal and Moshe Florentin; Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1991), 115–22. A survey of rabbinic material can be found in Robert T. Anderson and Terry Giles, *The Keepers: An Introduction to the History and Culture of the Samaritans* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002), 42–50.

Likewise, in the rabbinical literature, care must be taken to discern when the term “Samaritan” refers to the religious sect and when it does not. Within this literature, the SP is certainly not accepted as an authoritative text. Two of the best known examples will suffice to illustrate.

Mar Zutra or, as some say, Mar ‘Ukba said: “Originally the Torah was given to Israel in Hebrew characters and in the Sacred [Hebrew] language; later, in times of Ezra, the Torah was given in the Assyrian script and the Aramaic language. [Finally], they selected for Israel the Assyrian script and the Hebrew language, leaving the Hebrew characters and the Aramaic language for the *hedyototh*.” Who are meant by the *hedyototh*—R. Hisda answers: “the Cutheans (Samaritans).” *b. Sanh. 21b–22a*¹¹

In this passage, it is apparent that the very script used by the Samaritans is clear evidence that the SP text is different and not to be preferred over the MT.

The second example bases the rabbinical rejection of the SP on the content of the Samaritan text.

R. Eleazar son of R. Jose said: “In this connection I proved the Samaritan Scriptures to be false. I said to them, ‘You have falsified your Torah but you gained nothing thereby. You declare that “the terebinths of Moreh” means Shechem. We have learned this by an inference from analogy; but how have you learned it!’” *b. Sotah 33b*

Deuteronomy 11:30 is the subject of the contention mentioned by R. Eleazar.¹² The MT ends simply with the phrase, “the terebinths of Moreh” whereas the SP adds a clarifying explanation, “over against Shechem” and so locates the exact spot. R. Eleazar’s point is that even though the identification specified by the Samaritans is correct, they confirmed that location by adjusting their sacred text, making the SP less than reliable.

For centuries the SP was preserved solely in the Samaritan communities themselves and was unknown to Western scholarship. That all changed, however, in the early part of the seventeenth century. In 1616 the scholar, statesman, and adventurer Pietro della Valle purchased a SP manuscript from a merchant in Damascus. Little did della Valle anticipate the central role it would play in Samaritan studies. The manuscript originated in Damascus and reports to have been completed in 1345/1346. European scholars received it enthusiastically, and seven years after its purchase by della Valle, the manuscript was presented to the Paris Oratory and published in

¹¹All quotes from the Babylonian Talmud are from Isidore Epstein, ed., *The Babylonian Talmud*, London: Soncino Press, 1936.

¹²A discussion of Deut 11:30 appears later in this chapter.

the *Paris Polyglot*, edited by Morinus. A second polyglot, the *London Polyglot*, edited by Walton, appeared in 1675. Von Gall used this manuscript as his Codex B, and it served as the basis for his edited version of the SP, published early in the twentieth century.

Both seventeenth-century editions of the SP quickly became embroiled in controversies between Protestants and Roman Catholics, each group seeking to gather evidence supporting its own contentions regarding the content of Sacred Scripture. The dispute raged over the merits of the MT, on one hand, upon which Protestant translations of the Bible were based, and the LXX and Vulgate, on the other, the textual traditions preferred by Catholic scholars. The fact that the SP agrees with the LXX in a limited number of readings led certain scholars, such as Capellus and Morinus, to advocate the value of the text, for it was thought to support their contention of the primacy of the LXX.¹³ Protestant scholars, however, such as Hottinger, argued against the reliability of the SP tradition on the basis of these same common readings of the SP and the LXX.¹⁴

This controversy continued for the better part of two centuries, based on the assumption of SP's similarity to LXX although the SP reads, in fact, closer to the MT than to the LXX. The latter point became lost to those with more sectarian agendas to debate. Thus a mistaken description of the SP was used as fuel to fire controversy between Catholics and Protestants. An important exception to this argumentative trend was the work of Kennicott in the middle of the eighteenth century.¹⁵ He attempted to move the discussion about the SP away from sectarian considerations with a careful consideration of the SP text on its own merits. Despite Kennicott's efforts, however, the SP remained embroiled in these religious disputes.

The delay in textual criticism of the manuscripts came to an end with the groundbreaking work of W. Gesenius in 1815.¹⁶ Gesenius constructed categories by which to examine the variants between the MT and the SP: (1) grammatical emendations made in the SP, (2) glosses added to the SP text, (3) variations added to the SP removing ambiguities in the MT, (4) the elimina-

¹³A. L. Cappelus, *Diatriba de veris et antiquis Hebraeorum literis* (Amsterdam, 1645); Joannes Morinus, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae in utrumque Samaritanorum Pentateuchum* (Paris, 1631).

¹⁴Johann Heinrich Hottinger, *Exercitationes antimorinianae de Pentateucho samaritano* (Zurich, 1644).

¹⁵B. Kennicott, *The State of the Printed Hebrew Text of the Old Testament Considered: Dissertation the Second Wherein the Samaritan Copy of the Pentateuch Is Vindicated* (Oxford, 1759).

¹⁶William Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi samaritani origine, indole, et auctoritate commentatio philologico-critica* (Halle, 1815).

tion of inconsistencies in the MT based upon parallel passages, (5) SP expansions from parallel passages, (6) changes made in chronologies, (7) changes based upon Samaritan grammar and morphology, and (8) variations based upon sectarian Samaritan theology.

These categories are still used in comparative examinations, although the conclusions offered about the variations have changed since Gesenius's time. Gesenius was of the opinion that the SP is a fairly late corruption of a standard Hebrew text and, as such, of very little, if any, value for textual criticism. As in other areas of biblical text criticism, the shadow Gesenius cast influenced the better part of a generation of SP scholarship.

Later in the nineteenth century, Paul de Lagarde made significant strides in establishing the science of the textual criticism of the Old Testament.¹⁷ His work led to a greater appreciation of both the LXX and the SP as early witnesses to the textual tradition that would become stabilized in the MT.

Without doubt, the most important publication for SP studies in the early part of the twentieth century was von Gall's edited version of the SP in 1916–1918.¹⁸ Criticized at times for its unevenness and although significant manuscripts were not available to von Gall (notably the Abisha Scroll), this remains the standard published edition available to Western scholarship.¹⁹ Von Gall's edition appeared at a time when Western scholarship was experiencing an explosion in textual criticism of the Bible, of related texts such as the SP, and of inscriptions recovered by the archaeologist's trowel. P. Kahle argued the case for what he believed to be the antiquity of the SP.²⁰ He recognized that the SP represented a popular text existing side by side with the tradition that would later become the MT. Kahle concluded that in comparison with the MT, the SP preserved many more than the four original readings allowed by Gesenius. He explained the similarities to the LXX by suggesting that the earliest Greek translations were based on popular versions of the Hebrew text, such as the one represented by the SP. In general, Kahle was followed by the Old Testament exegetes O. Eissfeldt, E. Würthwein,

¹⁷Paul de Lagarde, *Anmerkungen zur griechischen Übersetzung der Proverbien* (Leipzig: A. Brockhaus, 1863).

¹⁸August von Gall, *Der hebräische Pentateuch der Samaritaner* (5 vols.; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1914–1918; repr., 1 vol., 1966).

¹⁹As pointed out by Abraham Tal ("Samaritan Literature," in *The Samaritans* [ed. Alan D. Crown; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1989], 435), von Gall's predilection for the MT led him to choose readings that were closer to the grammar of the MT, and so he may have unwisely established the MT as the standard by which to measure the SP.

²⁰Paul Kahle, "Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Pentateuch-textes," *TSK* 88 (1915): 399–439.

R. H. Pfeiffer, F. F. Bruce, and M. Greenburg.²¹ The recovery of the materials from Qumran, including texts that read very much like the SP, has supported Kahle's reconstruction in at least one respect: even if the hypothesis of a popular and an official text existing side by side can no longer be supported,²² Kahle was correct in that the SP represents a pre-Masoretic textual tradition that circulated well beyond the Samaritan sect.

The recovery and dissemination of the scrolls from the Dead Sea has provided a new, much more complete, and somewhat surprising context by which to understand better the SP and the textual tradition of which it was a part. In 1955 P. Skehan concluded, on the basis of his work with the scrolls, that 4QExod belonged to the Samaritan recension.²³ J. Sanderson, who made a detailed comparison between the 4QExod material, the LXX, the MT, and the SP, concluded that the shared expansions of the SP and 4QExod link the two texts and that 4QExod represents an earlier stage of development of the same tradition later expressed in the SP.²⁴ In 1965 B. Waltke made a strong case that the LXX should not be ignored in the reconstruction of the textual context of the SP.²⁵ Such examples of recent scholarship fostered a renewed interest in, and appreciation for, the common textual tradition out of which emerged the text types that we know and recognize today. This common pool of religious texts speaks of the lively social dynamics characterizing Hasmonean Palestine.

Gall's *Der hebräische Pentateuch der Samaritaner*, remains the most widely known edition of the SP outside the Samaritan community, continuing to provide the best available access to the SP for most.²⁶ Augmenting von Gall's edition are two more recent scholarly publications of the SP. The first is the edition produced by Abraham and Ratson Tsedaqa in 1962–1965.²⁷ This in-

²¹Otto Eissfeldt, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1934); E. Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia hebraica* (trans. E. F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979); Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941); F. F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments* (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Publishing, 1953); M. Greenburg, "The Stabilization of the Text of the Hebrew Bible in the Light of the Biblical Materials from the Judean Desert," *JAOS* 76 (1956): 157–67.

²²Purvis, *Samaritan Pentateuch*, 79.

²³Patrick Skehan, "Exodus in the Samaritan Recension from Qumran," *JBL* 74 (1955): 182–87.

²⁴Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 307–311.

²⁵Bruce Waltke, "Prolegomena to the Samaritan Pentateuch" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1965).

²⁶Gall, *Der hebräische Pentateuch*.

²⁷Abraham and Ratson Tsedaqa, *Samaritan Pentateuch* (Holon, Israel, 1962–1965).

teresting but unfortunately out-of-print edition places the Samaritan text alongside an Old Hebrew and an Arabic translation of the text. The second is that of Abraham Tal in 1994.²⁸ Tal's publication presents an edited version of MS 6 (C) of the Shechem synagogue. This highly regarded thirteenth-century manuscript is presented with relatively few but carefully chosen editorial notes. Although Tal's work is commendable, he is quick to note that a thoroughly updated critical edition to improve upon that of von Gall's is desirable.²⁹

MANUSCRIPTS

The manuscript most venerated by the Samaritans, from which all other copies are reported to originate, is the Abisha Scroll, housed in the synagogue at Nablus. This scroll presents itself as written by Abisha, son of Pinhas,³⁰ son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, in the thirteenth year after the Israelites entered the land of Canaan. Its reputed antiquity, traced back to the very earliest days of the Israelite experience, gives the scroll a place of honor within the Samaritan community. Unfortunately, modern scholarship has been unable to substantiate this claim of the scroll's ancientness. Although the scroll gives the appearance of "great antiquity"³¹ and the scribal notation dates the scroll to 1065 C.E., a significant portion of modern research dates the scroll to no earlier than the middle of the twelfth century C.E.³² Even if it cannot be attributed to the great-grandson of Aaron, the scroll's great age and its special place within the Samaritan community make the scroll worthy of high regard.

The Abisha Scroll is only one manuscript among many that have become available to the scholarly community, and the last decades of the twentieth century witnessed an increase in scholarly interest directed toward the various Samaritan manuscripts. In collections around the world, there are just under one hundred manuscripts of the SP that date from before the eighteenth century.³³ With few exceptions (notably the Abisha Scroll and

²⁸ Abraham Tal, *The Samaritan Pentateuch, Edited according to MS 6 (C) of the Shechem Synagogue* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1994).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, vi.

³⁰ The name Pinhas often appears with alternate spellings; Phineas or Phinehas. For consistency, we will use Pinhas throughout.

³¹ R. E. Moody, "Samaritan Material at Boston University: The Boston Collection and the Abisha Scroll," *Boston University Graduate Journal* 10 (1957): 158–60.

³² F. Pérez Castro, *Séfer Abisha* (Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1959); Alan D. Crown, "The Abisha Scroll of the Samaritans," *BJRL* 58 (1975): 36–55.

³³ Jean-Pierre Rothschild has compiled a very useful guide to Samaritan manuscripts, "Samaritan Manuscripts: A Guide to the Collections and Catalogues," in *The Samaritans* (ed. Alan D. Crown; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1989), 771–94.

modern copies sold to tourists), most existing pre-twentieth-century manuscripts are in codex form. The earliest of the manuscripts date from the perhaps the eleventh century C.E. (the Abisha Scroll), and a sizable quantity come from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries C.E. Typically, these are written in the Paleo-Hebrew script with the text appearing in two columns per page. It is not uncommon for the manuscripts to include Arabic or Aramaic renditions of the text in columns next to the Hebrew text. Sometimes the text is written in Arabic using Samaritan (Paleo-Hebrew) script. The text is divided into paragraphs. The end of a paragraph is frequently marked by a “-:” sign followed by a blank space. Within a paragraph, a “:” sign is used to separate between sentences. A single “.” level with the letters is used to separate words. Scribes were at liberty to create visually interesting patterns within the text by aligning letters in a column on a page or by decorating margins in some manner. (See figure 2, p. 13.)

Although pre-twentieth-century SP manuscripts are scattered around the world, substantial collections are in the Samaritan synagogue at Nablus, the John Rylands Library of the University of Manchester, the British National Library in London, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the State Public Library in St. Petersburg, and the Michigan State University Library in East Lansing. The manuscripts in these collections not only contain the text of the SP; scribes usually included valuable information concerning the production of the scroll or codex. Many of the manuscripts contain scribal colophons, cryptograms, honorific titles given to the buyer or commissioner of the manuscripts, or bills of sale. These notations are useful in dating the manuscript and identifying the scribe who prepared it and the manuscript’s place of origin. It turns out that many of the manuscripts existing today were copied between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, with production reaching its peak in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.³⁴ Whether an accident of history or a result of the tumultuous times, there are no extant manuscripts produced between 1231 and 1321.

The majority of the pre-twentieth-century manuscripts in these collections come from four centers of manuscript production: Damascus, Egypt, Shechem (Nablus), and Zarephath.³⁵ Shechem, as a site for manuscript production, is quite understandable, as it is the Samaritan holy place, nestled in the valley between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal. Damascus

³⁴Robert T. Anderson, *Studies in Samaritan Manuscripts and Artifacts: The Chamberlain-Warren Collection* (Cambridge, Mass.: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1978), 10.

³⁵Robert T. Anderson, “Samaritan Pentateuch: A General Account,” in *The Samaritans* (ed. Alan D. Crown; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1989), 395.

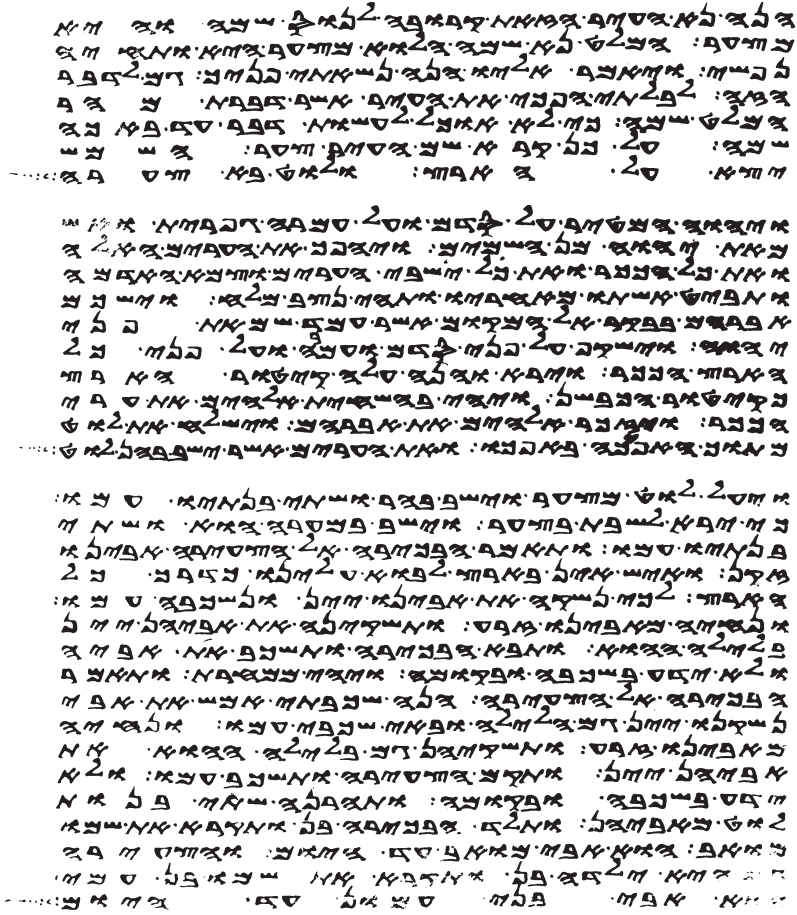


Figure 2. Genesis 19:20–38 in the fifteenth-century manuscript CW 2473 in the Chamberlain-Warren collection at Michigan State University. There are several examples of skipped spacing to align similar letters in a vertical column. Four alefs are aligned in the last four lines of the first paragraph along with two ayins in the last two lines. Toward the end of the last paragraph, four vavs are seen and two bets are columned in the last two lines. Courtesy of Special Collections, Michigan State University Libraries.

must have been favored as a secure and relatively peaceful location, for about twice as many of the manuscripts come from there as from any other center of production. Those originating from Zarephath all come from a sixty-five-year span and may reflect the vicissitudes of the family of scribes settled there, although its beauty and pleasant coastal location certainly

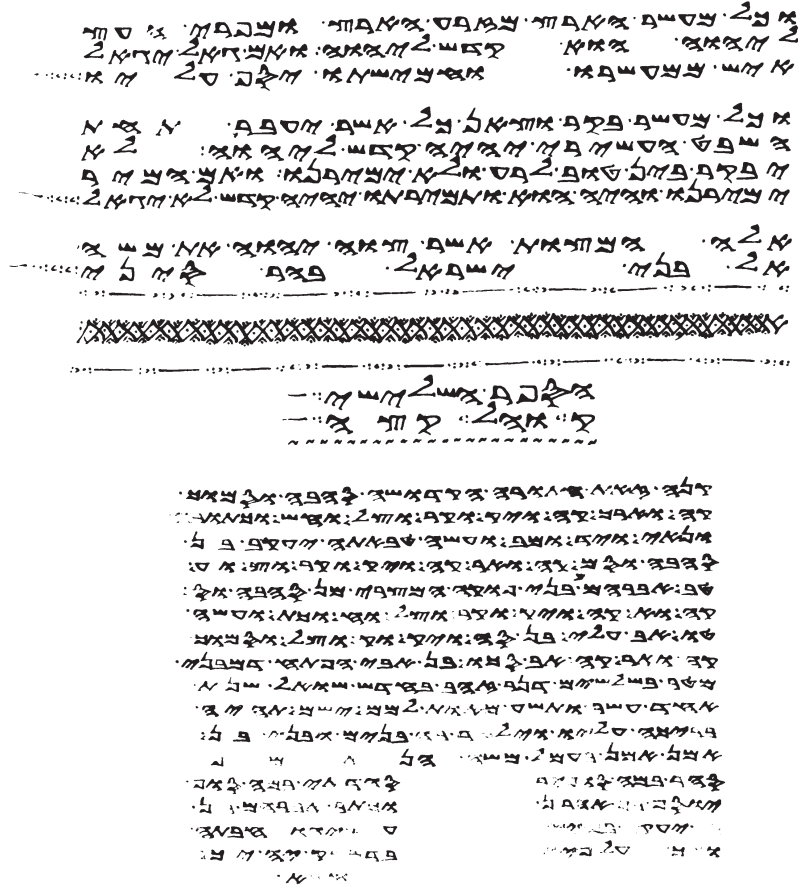


Figure 3. The last page of Leviticus in CW 2473, illustrating Samaritan decorative patterns and a bill of sale. *Courtesy of Special Collections, Michigan State University Libraries.*

make it an attractive spot. The manuscripts coming from Egypt attest to the wide dispersion of the Samaritan community and must have been intended to meet the needs of these Samaritans to the far south. (See figure 4, p. 15.)

Some of the information provided by the scribes is presented in the form of acrostics woven into the text of the scroll or codex. The Abisha Scroll has such an acrostic woven into the text of Deut 6:10:

I am Abisha son of Pinhas son of Eleazar son of Aaron the priest; on them be the favor of the Lord and his glory.

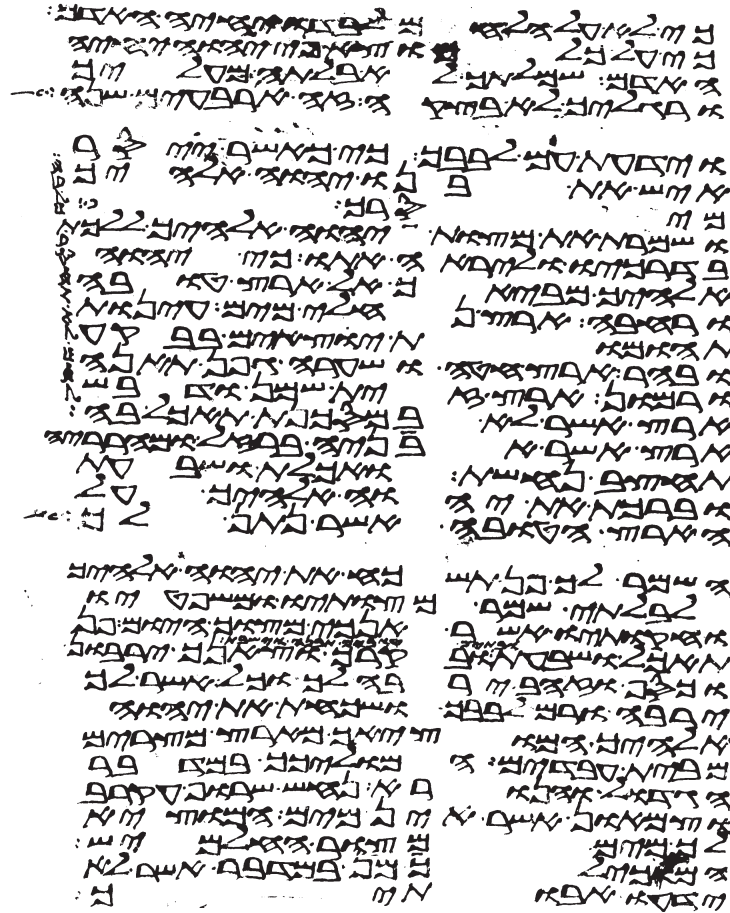


Figure 4. Deuteronomy 8:3–16 in CW 2484, a fifteenth-century manuscript in the Chamberlain-Warren collection at Michigan State University. A central vertical channel has been created into which the scribe has dropped letters from the horizontal biblical text to create a vertical text describing himself. The vertical text on this page identifies the scribe’s family (Munes) and the fact that he copied the manuscript in Egypt. Courtesy of Special Collections, Michigan State University Libraries.

I wrote this holy book at the door of the tent of meeting on Mount Gerizim in the year thirteen of the reign of the children of Israel in the land of Canaan to all its boundaries round about. I praise the Lord. Amen.³⁶

³⁶Anderson and Giles, *The Keepers*, 111.

Likewise, bills of sale also provide information regarding the circumstances of the manuscript's production. The following is found at the end of the book of Exodus in CW 2478a:

This Holy Torah was bought by (..) (..) (..)
 (..) Joseph son of (..) (..) (..) (..) (..)
 Obadiah son of Abd Hehob of the family Iqara from (..)
 (..) (..) (..) (..) (..) (..) (..)
 Obadiah son of (..) (..) (..) (..) (..)
 Abd Hehob son of Sedaqa of the family Remach, all of them from among
 the inhabitants of Egypt, for 24 dinars in the month of Rajab in the year 892
 [C.E. 1487].
 May there be a blessing upon it. Amen.
 Abraham son of Ab Uzzi son of Joseph son of Jitrana of Damascus
 wrote this.³⁷

In an effort to group the manuscripts into families related by common place of origination, scribal affiliation, and chronology, scholars have considered information provided by acrostics, bills of sale, and other incidental pieces of information included in the manuscripts, along with stylistic characteristics. Anderson's work in the 1980s, which established early criteria for "clusters," was successful in placing several of the manuscripts used by von Gall into three clusters.³⁸

Limited access to the collections of manuscripts afforded to scholars have, however, handicapped Samaritan studies. The geographical distances between the collections and the fragile condition of some of the scrolls and codices have prevented a thorough comparison of manuscripts. There have been notable attempts to overcome this dilemma. A. D. Crown has made extensive use of microfilm to record images of the manuscripts and so retain access to the valuable materials even when thousands of miles removed from the collections themselves. The publication of an updated critical edition and text-critical inquiries that investigate the history and relationships between the various SP manuscripts will be aided by efforts to electronically disseminate photographic images of the scrolls and codices.

³⁷(..) indicates an honorific title.

³⁸Robert T. Anderson, "Clustering Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuchal Manuscripts," in *Études samaritaines: Pentateuque et targum, exégèse et philologie, chroniques* (ed. Jean-Pierre Rothschild and Guy Dominique Sixdenier; Louvain: Peeters, 1988), 57–66.

A new generation of communication technology promises to remove the barrier of limited access altogether. The Rare Collections division of the Michigan State University Library is conducting a pilot project aimed at digitizing images of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Chamberlain-Warren scrolls. The plan is to preserve these images on a specially designed Web site hosted by the university and available to any interested scholar. The images are clear and sharp and can be manipulated to reveal even more detail than what is available to the naked eye when examining the manuscripts in person. This project may well be a harbinger of a developing trend.

CHARACTERISTICS

Early in the last century, the influential Samaritan scholar James Montgomery wrote that the SP's "variations will never be of interest to more than the textual scholar."³⁹ Montgomery here clearly missed the mark, for in recent years scholars have recognized the SP as an important participant in the literary milieu of the Hellenistic Levant. But Montgomery could not have foreseen the recovery of the DSS, nor could he have imagined that those materials would, because of similar readings to the SP, cast new light not only upon the Samaritans and their text but upon text transmission as a whole in the Hellenistic Levant.

The SP is commonly characterized in terms of its variations from other textual traditions, primarily the MT. At times, this tendency to compare the SP with only the MT has obscured the fact that the SP is actually closer to the MT in its readings than it is to the LXX. Further, with the widespread publication of the DSS, it has become obvious that a simple comparison with the MT is inadequate, for the SP shares a considerable part of its textual tradition with the tradition represented by the collection of materials recovered at Qumran. Nevertheless, ever since Gesenius, it has been customary to describe the variations between the MT and the SP in terms of Gesenius's eight groupings.⁴⁰

³⁹James Montgomery, *The Samaritans, the Earliest Jewish Sect: Their History, Theology, and Literature* (Philadelphia: Winston, 1907; repr., New York: KTAV, 1968), 290.

⁴⁰Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi samaritani origine*. Recent comparisons with the materials from Qumran, especially 4QExod, are refining Gesenius's categories. See Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 17–52.

Scribal Errors

Many of the approximately six thousand variations between the MT and the SP are a confusion of letters that when spoken sound very much the same, for example, between labials, gutturals, dentals, or palatals; such as between ם (s) and ש (sh, sometimes s), or between צ (ts) and ז (z), or a confusion between letters that sound different but in writing appear similar such as between ד (d) and ר (r), or between י (y) and ו (w).

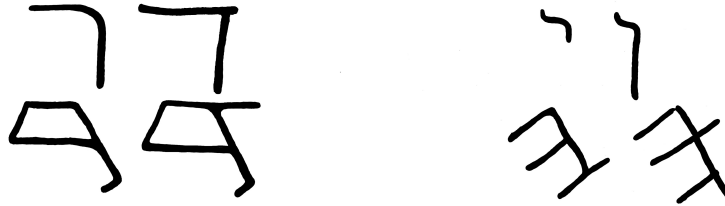


Figure 5. Hebrew characters “r,” “d,” “y,” and “w” (reading left to right) with SP equivalents below. A careless or idiosyncratic hand in either script could produce confusion between *resh* and *dalet* or *yod* and *vav*.

Often the confusion results in a nonsensical construction that is easily remedied:

In Gen 10:27 the SP reads א (the glottal stop) in אדורם for the ה (h) in the MT rendition, הדורם.

The SP of Gen 31:40 reads a nonsensical חרף, having placed a פ (p) for the ב (b) in חרב (“harvest”) as found in the MT.

A common scribal error is illustrated in Gen 14:2, where a ד (d) has become substituted for ר (r) in the SP reading שמאבר for the MT reading שמאבר.⁴¹

There are probably several reasons for confusions between letters. At times, the confusion seems to be between letters that sound the same (ם [s] and ש [sh, sometimes s]). At other times, the confusion seems to be a result of a mix-up between letters that appear the same (ד [d] and ר [r]). These mixtures

⁴¹ See also Gen 47:21 and Num 24:17.

of letters with the same sound and of letters with similar appearance may provide insight into the scribal means for copying manuscripts. On occasion, the scribe may have been copying from an original that was being read to him aloud whereas at other times the original was copied by sight. If the original was being copied as the scribe heard, confusion between letters with the same sound may appear more frequently, but it is likely that errors in grammar would be minimized. The scribe may not remember the correct spelling for a particular word, but the scribe would have understood the sentences that were being read to him, and grammatical forms such as agreement between verbs and subjects and pronouns would more likely be written correctly. If the scribe was copying by sight from an original presented before him, confusion of letters with the same sound would not be expected as frequently as confusion between letters of similar form. Further, that scribe would not need to understand the text that was being copied, but only have a commitment to faithfully transcribe the forms of the letters. In this case, grammatical errors could be expected much more frequently, and there would be little to prevent nonsensical renditions as in Gen 31:40 above.

Grammatical Variations Prescribed by Samaritan Grammar

Attempting to explain the grammatical differences between the SP and the MT, Gesenius was of the opinion that “the Samaritan scribes [acted] according to the norms of an unlearned and inaccurate grammar.”⁴² This evaluation will no longer do. Instead several theories have been developed that attempt to explain the grammatical differences evident in the MT and the SP. Some scholars have thought that the differences reflected a northern dialect whereas others have considered the differences to be chronological, either preceding or, more recently, following the tradition resident in the MT.⁴³ Ben-Hayyim, in his most helpful discussion of the grammatical differences between the SP and the MT, concludes that the

SP, the sole literary source extant among the Samaritans that dates from the First Temple period, is presented to us in a linguistic redaction that

⁴²Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi samaritani origine*, 26.

⁴³For the opinion in favor of a northern dialect, see D. W. Thomas, “The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament,” in *The Old Testament and Modern Study* (ed. H. H. Rowley; Oxford: Clarendon, 1951), 238–63. For the opinion that the differences preceded the MT tradition, see Paul Kahle, “Die überlieferte Aussprache des Hebräischen und die Punktation der Masoreten,” *ZAW* 39 (1919): 230–39. For the opinion that it followed, see Ze’ev Ben-Hayyim, *A Grammar of Samaritan Hebrew* (rev. ed.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 3.

reveals, to the extent possible, features particular to the Hebrew of the Second Temple period, even though its external appearance, the formation of the letters, and the divisions of words by means of a dot, antedates that of the Jewish Pentateuch.⁴⁴

Some of the linguistic characteristics that were previously thought to be peculiar to the SP tradition are, in fact, features of the language from the Second Temple times. The SP reflects a vocalization later than the Tiberian (i.e., MT) tradition but nevertheless incorporates elements (particularly in morphology) of an older stage.⁴⁵

Several examples of the types of grammatical difference between the SP and MT follow:

1. In the SP, all vowels in open syllables are long whereas vowels in closed syllables are short, except for those closed at a late stage of linguistic development. Final closed syllables, which may contain long vowels in the MT because of the stress on the final syllable, will be short in the SP because the stress is there placed on the penultimate, or next-to-last, syllable.⁴⁶ The SP will avoid consonant clusters either at the beginning or at the end of a word.⁴⁷
2. Morphological differences occur as well. Generally, the MT prefers a “long” form of 2ms (second person, masculine, singular) and 3fs (third person, feminine, singular) pronominal suffix endings whereas the SP shows a preference for the “short” form, that is, a form without a final vowel. In verbal forms, differences occur as well. For instance, the 2fs (second person, feminine, singular) perfect performative form of the verb as appears in MT is xxxת (t—), whereas the SP consistently uses xxxת׳ (yt—).
3. Certain particles, for example, SP ך (kn) for the MT ך (ʔm), the SP ך (lʔ) and ך (l) for the MT ך (lʔ) and ך (ʔl), prepositions, and nominal forms vary (typically, the vowels of a word tend to remain constant throughout its declension in SP).⁴⁸

⁴⁴Ben-Hayyim, *Grammar*, 4.

⁴⁵Ze’ev Ben-Hayyim, *The Literary and Oral Tradition of Hebrew and Aramaic amongst the Samaritans* (5 vols. in 6; Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1957–1962), 3:7; Purvis, *Samaritan Pentateuch*, 71.

⁴⁶Waltke, “Prolegomena,” 283.

⁴⁷Ben-Hayyim, *Grammar*, 60–61.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 314–22, 239.

4. Sentence syntax in the SP is at times different from that found in the MT. As noted by Ben-Hayyim, the differences at times seem to be the result of differences of interpretation, but at other times, the different readings may have given rise to differences in interpretation (Gen 42:22; Deut 24:5).⁴⁹

Modernization of the SP through Updated Philology in Comparison with That Found in the MT

Distinct from the types of variation mentioned above, this group of grammatical variations between the SP and the MT can with certainty be accounted for by recognizing in the SP an “updated” form of the Hebrew linguistic tradition when compared with that of the MT. Ben-Hayyim’s observation has ample support: “SP . . . is presented to us in a linguistic redaction that reveals, to the extent possible, features peculiar to the Hebrew of the Second Temple period.”⁵⁰ The grammar of the SP is closer to the Mishnaic Hebrew than is the Tiberian (i.e., MT) tradition. A great many of the differences between the SP and the MT are a result of this linguistic leveling. One interesting example of the leveling process involves the 3ms (third person, masculine, singular) pronominal suffix (the vowel sound long “o”). In early Hebrew a final ה (h) was used to mark this “o” sound instead of the later and more common use of a final ו (w). There are rare instances where the older form for marking this sound is preserved in the MT (Gen 9:21; 49:11; Exod 22:26). In all of these, the SP replaces the ה with the more typical ו. Other examples of modernization include the following:

1. The SP demonstrates a preference for full spelling rather than the defective or short spelling frequently used in the MT.
2. The SP occasionally replaces a *waw*-consecutive (conversive) with the normal verb tense (Gen 27:22; Exod 8:12, 23).⁵¹
3. The SP uses the internal *matres lectionis* י (y) and ו (w) more frequently than does the MT and occasionally uses א (glottal stop) as an internal *mater*.⁵²

⁴⁹Ibid., 328–29.

⁵⁰Ibid., 4.

⁵¹See *ibid.*, 169–72, for a discussion of differences between Tiberian Hebrew and Samaritan Hebrew tenses and moods.

⁵²See, however, M. Cohen, “The Orthography of the Samaritan Pentateuch: Its Place in the History of Orthography and Its Relation with the MT Orthography,” *Beth Miqra* 64 (1976): 50–70; 66 (1976): 361–91.

4. SP replaces the infinitive absolute with an imperative or finite verb form (Num 15:35; 25:17; Gen 8:3, 5, 7).
5. The SP uses the long form of the imperfect rather than the MT preference for the short form with *waw*-consecutive (Num 16:10; 31:50).
6. The SP eliminates the rare MT use of the indefinite pronoun with more customary forms (Deut 33:11; Exod 15:16).
7. The SP eliminates the rare form of **נַחֲנוּ** (*nḥnw* = “we”) of the MT, found only in Gen 42:11; Exod 16:7, 8; Num 32:32.⁵³
8. The SP is inconsistent in its use of the locative (a particle used to show direction) **ח** (-h) as in Exod 10:19; 33:9; 37:24.⁵⁴

Removal of Grammatical Difficulties Found in the MT

Consistent with the process of “updating” mentioned above, the SP also eliminates some of the grammatical difficulties found in the MT. These variations include a more consistent presentation eliminating the differences between full and defective spelling (i.e., Gen 1:14, 15, 16), correction of a verbal form to agree with noun (Gen 13:6; 49:20; 49:15) and subject (Gen 30:42; Exod 4:29; Num 9:6) and with other syntactically related verbs (Exod 39:3; Lev 14:42; Num 13:2; 21:32). The SP regularly replaces passive verbal constructions with active ones (Exod 27:7; Num 3:16; 28:15, 17; Lev 11:13). The SP also tends to even out various forms of spelling. Where the MT may render the same word with two different spellings, the SP opts for a single rendition (Gen 1:14, 15, 16; 7:2; 8:20).

Removal of Objectionable Passages of Historical Difficulties

The variations resident in this category are interesting, for they seem to be guided by the scribe’s sense of propriety. Several examples will suffice.

MT Gen 50:23 [NRSV]: Joseph saw Ephraim’s children of the third generation; the children of Machir son of Manasseh were also born on Joseph’s knees. (עַל־בְּרֵכֵי יוֹסֵף)

⁵³Bruce Waltke (“Samaritan Pentateuch,” *ABD* 5:936) supports Ben-Hayyim’s observation with his own conclusion, “The Samaritan text-type is clearly modernized relative to the MT.”

⁵⁴Ben-Hayyim, *Grammar*, 326.

SP Gen 50:23: Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; the children of Machir son of Manasseh were also born in Joseph's *days*.
(בימי יוסף)

In MT Gen 50:23 the births of Joseph's grandchildren are described as occurring on *Joseph's knees*. The SP changes "knees" to "days." The reason for the change is unclear. Perhaps, as some have suggested, the verse was considered unseemly for the Patriarch, and so the change was made. Or perhaps the verse refers to an adoption custom that placed the children of Machir in a special position of privilege with the patriarch, and this position of privilege was not wanted by the Samaritan scribe.⁵⁵

MT Deut 25:11 [NRSV]: If men get into a fight with one another, and the wife of one intervenes to rescue her husband from the grip of his opponent by reaching out and grabbing his *genitals* (במבשיו).

SP Deut 25:11: If men get into a fight with one another, and the wife of one intervenes to rescue her husband from the grip of his opponent by reaching out and grabbing his *flesh* (בשריו).

A sense of propriety must have guided the Samaritan scribe writing Deut 25:11. Considering it improper to describe a brawl in which a woman became involved and grabbed her male opponent's genitals (MT), a simple substitution rendered the verse more appropriate.

MT Gen 2:2: And God completed on the seventh day the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had done.

SP Gen 2:2: And God completed on the *sixth* day the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had done.

A similar sense of what was right may have guided the Samaritan scribes in Gen 2. Verse 2 of this chapter in the MT is so worded that it may lead to confusion about the divine creative activity. One might get the idea that God concluded his work on the seventh day, finishing up perhaps by midmorning or a little later, and then took the rest of the day off and so finished the seventh day at rest. The SP scribes apparently wanted no such confusion to take place and so made it clear that the divine labor was concluded on the sixth day.

⁵⁵A similar episode is recorded in Gen 30:3, where Rachel seeks to establish a special closeness to the anticipated child of Bilhah.

The genealogies of Gen 5 and 11:10–26 are well known for the problems they pose. The systems of reckoning that were used to construct the genealogical tables found in Gen 5 and 11:10–26 as presented in the MT, LXX, and SP are not the same and, at least according to Gesenius, seem to operate according to their own patterns of “physiological and chronological knowledge, which were sometimes similar and sometimes contradictory to each other.”⁵⁶ Whatever the “patterns of knowledge” were that the editors of the MT, LXX, and SP each tapped into, it is evident that the end result is different for each tradition. The reasons for the differences are yet to be explained.⁵⁷

MT Exod 12:40:

וּמוֹשֶׁב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יָשְׁבוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וָאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה

And the time that the people of Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt was 430 years. (RSV)

SP Exod 12:40:

וּמוֹשֶׁב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאַבְתָּחָם אֲשֶׁר יָשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וּבְאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וָאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה

The time that the children of Israel and their fathers dwelt in the land of Canaan and the land of Egypt was 430 years.

Another chronological notation that has caused considerable debate is that found in Exod 12:40. The LXX agrees with the SP except that it reverses the order for “the land of Canaan” and “the land of Egypt.” Attempts to account for this variation frequently assume that the SP and the LXX represent a gloss that has as its intent the removal of the difficulty in imagining that this 430-year stay in Egypt consumed only four generations (Exod 6:15–19; Num 26:58).⁵⁸ The tradition of the 430-year stay in Egypt is present also in Ezek 4:5, but the Apostle Paul appears to favor the chronology of the SP and the LXX (Gal 3:17).

Small Variations Clarifying and Interpreting the SP

This category of variant from the MT seemed to Gesenius straightforward and a result of tendentious Samaritan scribal activity. At times, the variants are quite simple—for example, the insertion of a preposition (Gen 48:5; Exod 12:43), a noun (Exod 15:22; Lev 5:4; Num 23:26), the sign of the direct object (Gen 44:26; Lev 4:17), or one of a variety of particles (Gen 2:12, 19; Exod 29:33) in order to render the sentence clearer.

⁵⁶Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi samaritani origine*, 48.

⁵⁷Waltke (“Prolegomena,” 314–15) provides helpful charts showing the differences in the three traditions.

⁵⁸Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi samaritani origine*, 49.

On other occasions, the variations result in the harmonization of parallel passages without altering the meaning of each. For example, SP Gen 18:29 reads *לֹא אֲשַׁחֵת* (I will not destroy) for the MT *לֹא אֲעֲשֶׂה* (I will not do). The SP has imported the reading from verses 28, 31, and 32, thereby harmonizing the entire passage. Similarly the MT reads several names for the father-in-law of Moses whereas the SP consistently refers to him as Jethro (*יִתְרוֹ*).

In SP Exod 21:20, 21 a change in the text compared with the MT clarifies an ambiguity. The paragraph in Exodus concerns capital offenses and considers the appropriate punishment due for injury to a pregnant woman. The MT of verse 20 reads *נִקְם יִנְקָם* (He shall be punished) and uses the verb *יָקַם* (punished) in verse 21 whereas the SP of verse 20 reads *מֵוַת יָמוּת* (He shall be killed) and uses *יָיַמַת* (killed) in verse 21. Although it may be that the SP represents a simple removal of ambiguity, clarifying the intent of the MT, it may also be the case that in removing the ambiguity, the SP goes further than the MT writers intended and began an interpretive trajectory carried further by the LXX.

At other times, the clarifications are even more complex. The Qumran materials have brought a whole new body of literature to bear on the comparison. Sanderson has demonstrated, through her work on 4QExod, that the interplay among the SP, 4QExod, the MT, and the OG predecessor of the LXX is very complex. Her conclusion that 4QExod and the SP coexisted for a time within a common textual tradition after the MT and OG had begun their own trajectories suggests that only some of the clarifying and interpretive variants in the SP are a result of Samaritan sectarian scribal activity.⁵⁹

On several occasions, the insertion of an introductory sentence or phrase renders the clarification. In Exod 24:1 and 24:9, Aaron's sons Eleazar and Ithamar are introduced as accompanying the procession summoned to meet the Lord. The inclusion of these two sons of Aaron is not found in the MT.

MT Exod 24:1: And he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel." (NRSV)

SP Exod 24:1: And he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, *Eleazar and Ithamar*, and seventy of the elders of Israel."

MT Exod 24:9: Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up. (NRSV)

SP Exod 24:9: Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, *Eleazar and Ithamar*, and the seventy elders of Israel went up.

⁵⁹Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 85–88.

It is significant that the SP and 4QExod share both of these variations as opposed to the MT and the LXX, which read the same to the exclusion of Eleazar and Ithamar. This expansion seems intent on making sure that these younger sons of Aaron, who would eventually replace the older sons (Nadab and Abihu) in their religious offices (Lev 10:1–7), were present at the great theophany at Sinai and so were worthy replacements.⁶⁰

A less understood expansion at the end of Exod 27:19 is found in the SP:

ועשית בגדי תכלת וארגמן ותולעת שני לשרת בהם בקדש

And you will make garments blue and purple of fine linen for their holy service.

The reading seems oddly out of place. It follows a lengthy discussion about the tabernacle and its measurements and utensils (27:9–19) and is positioned to introduce a paragraph describing the oil used to keep the lamp in the tabernacle continually burning. It is only in Exodus 28:2 that the paragraph discussing the priestly vestments begins. Consequently, the expansion of 27:19 appears two verses too soon. Although fragmentary in 4QExod, it seems apparent that this scroll from the DSS collection shares the SP expanded reading. This shared reading thus stands in contrast to the reading preserved in the MT and the LXX.⁶¹

Genesis 22:2 serves as a well-known example of a small variant that results in support of Samaritan beliefs and priorities. The place of Abraham's sacrifice of Issac is rendered in the MT as *המריה* (Moriah) whereas in the SP the place is *המראה* (Morah). The effect of this variant is to change the association of the place of sacrifice from the Temple Mount of Jerusalem (Jerusalem is Moriah) by way of 2 Chr 3:1 to the preferred Samaritan site, Shechem (a city often associated with Morah). On the other hand, 4QExod avoids the dilemma by eliminating the mention of Moriah/Morah altogether.⁶²

Interpolations from Other Texts

Perhaps the most intriguing and significant variations between the MT and the SP are the occasions where the redactors of the SP interpolate into the text selections culled from other passages of the Pentateuch. When compared

⁶⁰Sanderson (*ibid.*, 213) uses these two insertions of Exod 24 to make a convincing argument for the literary affiliation between the SP and the 4QExod text.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 209–10.

⁶²Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996), 262–63.

with the MT, many of these interpolations have the effect of altering the *structure* of the text but not its *words*. The technique is also evident in some of the DSS and accounts for some of the shared readings between the SP and the DSS.⁶³ The expansions unique to the SP give the text a distinct theological and literary focus. Presumably for political or sectarian reasons, they were accomplished to set forth more clearly the group's agenda without altering or violating reverence to the sacredness of the words of the received text. One of the key passages to invoke this interpolation technique is the Decalogue of Exod 20.⁶⁴ The following is a sampling of some of the other passages where the interpolations are found; interpolations are in italic in this section.

Gen 30:36 Adding Gen 31:11–13

And he set a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob was pasturing the rest of Laben's flock. (NRSV) *And the Angel of God said to Jacob in a dream and he said, "Jacob," and Jacob replied, "Here I am." He said, "Lift up your eyes and look, all the goats that leap on the flock are striped, speckled or spotted for I have seen all that Laben is doing to you. I am the God of Beth-El where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. And now rise up and leave this land, return to the land of your father, to the land of your birth."*

Gen 42:16 Adding Gen 44:22

"Let one of you go and bring your brother, while the rest of you remain in prison, in order that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you; or else, as Pharaoh lives, surely you are spies." (NRSV) *And they said to him, "The boy cannot leave his father, for if he leaves his father, his father will die."*

In a number of instances, text from Deuteronomy is inserted into Numbers. The insertion has the effect of expanding or amplifying the corresponding story in Numbers. Several examples follow.⁶⁵

Num 10:11 Preceded by Deut 1:6–8

And the LORD God spoke to Moses saying, You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Resume your journey, and go into the hill country of the Amorites as

⁶³For a summary of the 4QExod scroll, see Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 312.

⁶⁴The Exod 20 passage is dealt with separately because of its importance and relative length.

⁶⁵In addition to the examples cited above, the reader may also consult Num 21:12, followed by Deut 2:17–19; Num 21:20, followed by Deut 2:24–29, 31; Num 27:23, followed by Deut 3:21–22; and Num 20:13, followed by Deut 3:17–18.

well as into the neighboring regions; the Arabah, the hill country, the Shephelah, the Negeb, and the seacoast—the land of the Canaanites and the Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. See I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land that I swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their children after them. In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, the cloud lifted from over the tabernacle of the covenant. (NRSV)

This example of interpolation also contains several other editorial marks. In both the MT and the SP versions of Deut 1:6, God speaks to the people, not to Moses, and identifies Horeb as the location of the camp. In the interpolated version that finds its way into SP Numbers, God speaks to Moses and there is no mention of Horeb.

Num 13:33 Followed by Deut 1:27–33

There we saw the Nephilim (the Anakites descend from the Nephilim). And the children of Israel grumbled before God and they said, “It is because the LORD hates us that he brought us from the land of Egypt to give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us. And now, where are we going? Our brothers have made our hearts melt by saying, ‘The people are greater and more numerous than we are. The cities are greater and fortified up to the heavens. And also, the sons of the Anakim we saw there.’” And Moses said to the sons of Israel, “Do not have dread or be afraid on account of them. The LORD your God who goes before you will fight for you just as he did in Egypt before your eyes and in the wilderness where you saw the LORD your God carried you just as a man carries his son all the way that you traveled until you reached this place. But still you do not trust the LORD your God, who goes before you in the way to seek a place for you to camp in fire by night and in a cloud by day to show you the route to take.”

Num 14:41 Preceded by Deut 1:42

The LORD said to Moses, “Say to them, ‘Do not go up and do not fight, for I am not in the midst of you; otherwise you will be defeated by your enemies.’” But Moses said, “Why do you continue to transgress the command of the LORD? That will not succeed.” (NRSV)

The interpolation is not always from Deuteronomy to Numbers. Sometimes Deuteronomy seems to borrow from Numbers.

Deut 2:8 Preceded by Material from Num 20:14–18

And I sent messengers to the king of Edom saying, “Permit us to pass through your land. We will not trample your field or vineyard or drink from your well. We

will go along the King's Highway, not turning aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your borders." And he said, "You may not pass through or we will come against you with the sword." We passed by our relatives, the sons of Esau who live in Seir, leaving the way of the Arabah that comes from Elath and Ezion Geber. And we headed out along the route of the wilderness of Moab.

Deut 10:6–8 Incorporating Material from Num 33:31–38a

The Israelites journeyed from Moserah and came to Bene-Jaakan. From there they journeyed and came to Gudgodah. From there they journeyed to Jotbathah, a land with flowing streams of water. From there they traveled and came to Abronah. From there they traveled and came to Ezion Geber. From there they traveled and came to the wilderness of Zin, that is, Kadesh. From there they traveled and came to Mount Hor. There Aaron died. There he was buried. And Eleazar was made priest after him.

A large harvest of these additions is found in Exodus, where the redactor has added passages taken from elsewhere in Exodus or from another book in the Pentateuch.⁶⁶ The added passages are still found in their original sites. The insertion of passages from one part of the Pentateuch into another effects a change in the emphasis of the modified text.

Exod 6:9 Adding Exod 14:12

Moses told this to the sons of Israel, but they would not listen to Moses because of their broken spirit and their cruel slavery. And they said to Moses, "Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians. It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

There are several instances where the text of SP Exodus includes passages found in both the SP and MT versions of Deuteronomy. Two examples will illustrate this practice.⁶⁷

Exod 18:25 Incorporating Deut 1:9–18

Appropriate changes in verbal forms and other small variations are made, allowing a smooth narrative.

Moses said to the people, "I am unable by myself to bear you. The LORD has multiplied you so that today you are as numerous as the stars of the heavens. May

⁶⁶Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi samaritani origine*, 45.

⁶⁷Perhaps the best-known example of this interpolation appears in the Exod 20 rendition of the Decalogue. The Exod 20 text will be dealt with separately.

the LORD God of your fathers increase you a thousand times more and bless you as he has said. How can I by myself bear the burden of your disputes? Choose for each of your tribes men who are wise, discerning, and knowledgeable to be your leaders." They replied and said, "What you have said is good." He took the leaders of the tribes, men who were wise and knowledgeable, and gave them as leaders over them, officers of thousands, officers of hundreds, officers of fifties, officers of tens, and officers throughout the tribes. He made them judges and said to them, "Listen fairly between your brothers and judge righteously between a man and his brother and between the citizen and the sojourner. Do not be partial in judgment between the small and the great. Do not fear any man because judgment is God's. If a matter is too great for you, bring it to me and I will hear it." He commanded them at that time all that they should do.

Exod 32:10 Including a Portion from Deut 9:20

"Now therefore let me alone that my anger may burn against them and I will consume them. But of you I will make a great nation." The LORD was very angry against Aaron and was ready to destroy him, but Moses prayed for Aaron.

As mentioned, many of the alterations, insertions, or expansions noted above may have been made with the goal of enhancing the narrative in some way.⁶⁸ Often the purpose of the alteration is to make more explicit some valued idea or belief and so produce text more suitable for sectarian purposes.⁶⁹ This is the effect created in Exod 32:10 above. Aaron is cast in a role quite dependent on Moses. By extension, the expected prophet, the Taheb, because of his connection to Moses, is to be preferred over a priesthood that relies upon its Aaronic descent.

One type of interpolation consists of a repeating phrase that does not occur in the corresponding MT text. A fascinating example of such repetition occurs in the plague narratives of Exodus, in 7:18, 29; 8:19; 9:5, 19; and 10:2. Although constructed with variations, all of these repetitions contain a description of Moses and Aaron (although the verbal forms are at times awkward) approaching Pharaoh and pronouncing a message from the Lord, כה אמר יהוה ("Thus says YHWH"). The pronouncement is a repetition of the command

⁶⁸Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 313.

⁶⁹Jeffrey H. Tigay ("An Empirical Basis for the Documentary Hypothesis," *JBL* 94 [1975]: 327–42, here 334–35) notes that the interpolation of Deut 1:9–18 into Exod 18:21–27 allows the redactor to "preserve the version of Deuteronomy and drop that of Exodus."

given by God and issued earlier to Moses. The expansion commands the release of the Hebrews, the people of God, so that they may go and serve the Lord (sometimes in the desert and sometimes under threat of retribution from the hand of the Lord). The elements of the repeating insertion seem to be rehearsals of the formula found in Exod 7:16: “The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you saying, ‘Let my people go that they may serve me in the wilderness: and behold you have not yet obeyed me.’” Sanderson makes the point that the nature of these expansions is to emphasize the conflict between the Lord and Pharaoh.⁷⁰

As in other Exodus readings, the expansion found in the SP shares characteristics with readings preserved in 4QExod. Sanderson argues that this reading shared by SP and 4QExod was made by a single author before the separation of these two text traditions, and she suggests that they may have been intended to assist in a dramatic recitation of the text or its liturgical use.⁷¹

Changes Advancing the Theology of the Samaritans

Several significant variations in the SP from the MT support the sectarian theology of the Samaritans. Conventional wisdom indicates that the changes were made in order to legitimize the theological distinctiveness of the Samaritans. Examples of the five most widely recognized theologically motivated variations appear here.

Legitimizing Gerizim as the Proper Place of Worship

MT Deut 12:5: But you shall seek the place that the LORD your God *will* choose out of all your tribes as his habitation to put his name there. (NRSV)

SP Deut 12:5: But you shall seek the place that the LORD your God *has* chosen out of all your tribes as his habitation to put his name there.

Perhaps the best-known variant fitting into this category is the group that, like Deut 12:5, renders a past tense of one verb and thereby elevates Gerizim as God’s chosen site.⁷² The SP affirms God’s past choice, Gerizim, as identified in 11:29–30, and so removes the future “will choose,” reading instead “has chosen.” The implication is that Jerusalem is not a legitimate location for the proper worship of God, as it was not “chosen” before the crossing of the Jordan by the wandering Israelite nation.

⁷⁰Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 204.

⁷¹Ibid., 203–4.

⁷²There are twenty-one such instances: Deut 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14:23, 24, 25; 15:20; 16:2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16; 17:8, 10; 18:6; 26:2; 31:11.

MT Exod 20:24: You need make for me only an altar of earth and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your fellowship offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in *every place* where I *will cause* my name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you. (NRSV)

SP Exod 20:24: You shall make for me an altar of earth and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your fellowship offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in *the place* where I *have caused* my name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you.

Exodus 20:24 presents a variant that has much the same effect as that found in Deut 12:5. The variants are relatively simple—**במקום** (“in the place”) for **בכל-המקום** (“in every place”) and **אזכרתי** (“I will cause to remember”) for **אזכיר** (“I will remember”)—but make quite plain that there is one proper place of worship and it is there that God’s blessing can be expected. The act of remembering is not simply bringing to mind but constitutes a dedication or commitment.

MT Deut 27:4: So when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I am commanding you today, on Mount *Ebal*, and you shall cover them with plaster. (NRSV)

SP Deut 27:4: So when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I am commanding you today, on Mount *Gerizim*, and you shall cover them with plaster.

Deuteronomy 27:4 is a classic example of a variation made for sectarian purposes. The verse reads the same in the SP except for the all-important change from Ebal to Gerizim. If the tradition represented by the MT is the variant, then it was intended to detract from the Gerizim site, but if the SP is the variant tradition, then this change must have been made by Samaritan scribes in order to emphasize the priority of Gerizim against all competing places of worship.

MT Lev 26:31: I will lay your cities waste, will make your *sanctuaries* desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing odors. (NRSV)

SP Lev 26:31: I will lay your cities waste, will make your *sanctuary* desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing odors.

Likewise Lev 26:31 seems to point to a variation designed to substantiate a theological bias. Here the point of a single, divinely approved place of worship is made by a simple change of a plural form, “sanctuaries,” to the singu-

lar form, “sanctuary.” Even in the midst of threatened divine punishment, the text asserts only one place of legitimate and actual worship—Gerizim.⁷³

MT Deut 11:30: As you know, they are beyond the Jordan, some distance to the west, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moriah. (NRSV)

SP Deut 11:30: As you know, they are beyond the Jordan, some distance to the west, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moriah *opposite Shechem*.

This one last example illustrates the concern that was expressed about making sure that the right location for worship was preserved. Once again the verse is repeated in the SP except for one important addition. After “Moriah” and to make sure that the location is clear to all is added the phrase “opposite Shechem.” The association of Moriah and Jerusalem is not given any opportunity to flourish here.

Avoidance of Plural Predicates to elohim

Occasionally, plural verbal forms are used with the noun *elohim* in the MT. The SP tends to avoid these verbal forms, using singular forms and so asserting the singularity of God. For example, Gen 20:13 reads in the MT התעו (third person, plural), “caused to go.” The SP eliminates the plural, using instead the third person, singular התעה. Similar occurrences are found in Gen 20:13, 31:53, and 35:7 and Exod 22:8.

Avoidance of Anthropomorphisms

Anthropomorphic presentations of God are shunned in Samaritan theology, and in a manner consistent with that theological sensibility, anthropomorphic representations of God are avoided in the SP as well. A favorite text with the Samaritans, used in liturgies and appearing on stone inscriptions, Exod 15:3, also serves as an example of anthropomorphic avoidance.

MT Exod 15:3: יהוה איש מלחמה יהוה שמו

The LORD is a man of war. The LORD is his name. (RSV)

SP Exod 15:3: יהוה גבור במלחמה יהוה שמו

The LORD is mighty in warfare. The LORD is his name.

⁷³A similar change occurs in Exod 20:24 for the same reason as in Lev 26.

Other examples of this kind of anthropomorphic avoidance can be found in (1) Exod 4:22, which reads in the SP, “my own people,” instead of the MT’s “my first born son,” (2) Exod 15:8, which reads in the SP, “breath from you,” instead of the MT’s “breath from your nostrils,” (3) Deut 32:8, which reads in the SP, “your creator,” instead of the MT’s “your father,” (4) Deut 32:36, which reads in the SP, “he forgave,” instead of the MT’s “he repented.”

The Agency of the Angel of the Lord Preserving the Transcendence of God

In certain episodes of the SP, the angel or messenger of the Lord appears as the actor where in the MT the Lord acts or speaks directly without the benefit of mediation (Num 22:20; 23:4, 5, 16). This presentation of the transcendent God is in accord with the theology of the Samaritans.

Protecting the Honor of Moses

Samaritan theology holds Moses in the highest regard. The SP, by a subtle change in word order in Deut 34:10, enhances the status of Moses by asserting his lasting uniqueness.

MT Deut 34:10: ולא־קם עוד נביא בישראל כמשה

Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses. (NRSV)

SP Deut 34:10: ולא־קם עוד נביא בישראל כמשה

Never again will there arise a prophet in Israel like Moses.

The SP projects the special position of Moses into the future. Not only does this rendition of Deut 34:10 enhance the stature of Moses; it presents a trajectory for the future. The Taheb, the one who will restore divine favor to the Samaritans, will be in the tradition of Moses but not replace Moses. All others, prophets, priests, and kings alike, regardless of their stature and influence, must assume secondary positions in light of the divinely sanctioned role played by these two: Moses and the “one to come.”

DECALOGUE

The SP Decalogue of Exod 20 is a composite literary piece, inserting into the Exodus text selections from Deut 5, 11, and 27. The resulting rendition of the Ten Commandments accomplishes three important tasks. First, with clarity and geographical precision, Mount Gerizim is identified as the only legitimate and divinely ordained place of sacrifice. Worship on Gerizim becomes the concern of the tenth and final command in the Samaritan rendi-

tion, and in this manner the importance of Gerizim as the distinctive place for Samaritan worship is secured. Second, Moses is elevated to an even higher status than that presented in the MT. Only he can speak with God, and the community grants only to Moses the status of intermediary to the divine. The third accomplishment of this text is to invest the promised prophet to come with all the authority of the ten sacred words. The promise of the prophet in Samaritan theology becomes a significant social construct by which the Samaritans offer critique against the Davidic dynasty and all such social-power structures that detract from the centrality of the one who will restore divine favor, the Taheb. The SP insertions are in italic in this section,

(Exod 20:1) And God spoke all these words saying,

(2) I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

(3) [First command] You shall have no other gods before me.

(4) You shall not make for yourselves a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth below, or that is under the water under the earth;

(5) you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

(6) but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

(7) [Second command] You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

(8) [Third command] Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

(9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

(10) but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates;

(11) for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

(12) [Fourth command] Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God gives you.

(13) [Fifth command] You shall not kill.

(14) [Sixth command] You shall not commit adultery.

(15) [Seventh command] You shall not steal.

(16) [Eighth command] You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

(17) [Ninth command] You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's. [Tenth command] [Deut 11:29] *And when the LORD your God brings you into the land of the Canaanites, which you are entering to take possession of it, [Deut 27:2-7] you shall set up these stones and plaster them with plaster, and you shall write upon them all the words of the law. And when you have passed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I have commanded you this day on Mount Gerizim. And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall lift no iron tool upon them. You shall build an altar to the LORD your God of unhewn stones; and you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God; and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and shall eat there; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God. [Deut 11:30] That mountain is beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh in front of Shechem. (Exod 20:1-17 RSV with SP inserted)*

(18) Now when all the people heard the thunderings and the sound of the trumpet and saw the lightnings and the mountain smoking, all the people were afraid and trembled; and they stood afar off, and said to Moses, [Deut 5:24-27] *"Behold, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have this day seen God speak with man, and man still live. Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, we shall die. For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and has still lived? Go near and hear all that the LORD our God will say, and speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you; and we will hear and do it,*

(19) *but let not God speak to us lest we die."*

(20) And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to prove you, and that the fear of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin." (RSV)

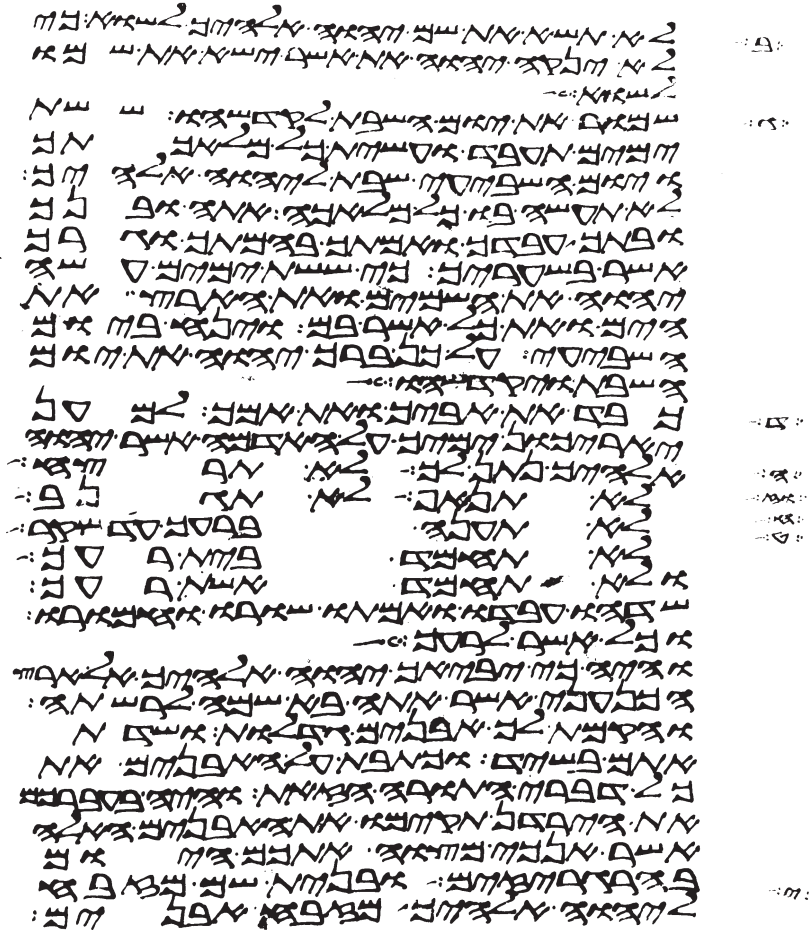


Figure 6. From Exod 20:7 to the end of the Decalogue, including the unique Samaritan addition, in CW 2484. The commandments are numbered in the right margin. Courtesy of Special Collections, Michigan State University Libraries.

(21) And the people stood afar off while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. (RSV)

(22) And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [Deut 5:28–29] “I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you; they have rightly said all that they have spoken. O, that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their children for ever. [Deut 18:18–22] I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to his

words while he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak in my name that which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken presumptuously, you need not be afraid of him. [Deut 5:30–31] Go and say to them, return to your tents. But you, stand here by me, and I will tell you the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances that you shall teach them, that they may do them in the land that I give them to possess."

(23) You shall not make gods of silver alongside me, nor gods of gold shall you make for yourselves.

(24) You shall make for me an altar of earth and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your fellowship offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in the place where I have caused my name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you.

(25) If you make an altar of stone for me, do not make it of hewn stone, for if you use a chisel on it, you profane it.

(26) And do not go up on steps to my altar, so that your nakedness is not exposed on it.

Several interesting observations are evident when a comparison is made between the SP's Decalogue in Exod 20 and Deut 5 and that of the MT.

The commands that prohibit other gods, the vain use of God's name, killing, committing adultery, stealing, and bearing false witness are the same in the MT and the SP renditions. Beyond these instances of exact replication, there are occasions where it seems that the SP has chosen a middle road, negotiating between the differences resident in the MT. John Bowman characterizes the Samaritan treatment of the Ten Commandments as "no more than the result of the application of a general principle which . . . affects the whole Pentateuch. . . . That principle is harmonization."⁷⁴ Although there is certainly harmonization at work, the exact nature and purpose of the harmonization are not as simple as one might suppose. The harmonization is designed to do more than eliminate differences. Further, the harmonizing principle becomes more complex when the SP Deuteronomy and the SP Exodus versions of the Decalogue

⁷⁴John Bowman, *Samaritan Documents Relating to Their History, Religion, and Life* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1977), 16.

are compared. At times, the SP preserves the differences found in the MT versions, and at other times the SP eliminates those differences. Several examples of the various renditions are these: (1) SP Deut 5:8 differs from MT Deuteronomy by inserting ו (“and”) before כל (“all”) and is in agreement with SP and MT Exod 20:3; (2) SP Deut 5:10 agrees with SP Exodus 20:6 and MT Exodus 20:6 מצותי (“my commands”), not מצותו (“his commands”) as found in MT Deut 5:10; (3) SP Deut 5:12 has לקדשו (“to keep it holy”) in agreement with SP Exodus instead of לקדשו (“to keep it holy”) as in MT Deut 5:12; (4) SP Deut 5:14 inserts בו (“in it,” “during it”) in distinction to MT Deuteronomy, MT Exodus, and SP Exodus; (5) SP Deut 5:14 lacks ו (“or”) before “servant” and “donkey,” like SP Exodus and MT Exodus.

The point of these simple comparisons is to demonstrate that there is no consistent agreement in the readings between the SP and the MT. Some of the differences in reading are due to grammatical characteristics of Samaritan Hebrew, and some appear to be the result of scribal preferences for a variety of reasons. The SP makes much use of MT Deuteronomy, but the preference is not consistent.

A comparison of two of the commandments proves especially interesting. The SP Exodus version uses MT Exodus for the Sabbath commandment, but SP Exodus favors MT Deuteronomy in the prohibition against coveting.

The Sabbath Command

This command offers an interesting example of Samaritan scribal editing. Just as in the MT Deut 5:12 command, SP Deut 5:12 inserts כאשר צוך יהוה אלריך (“as the LORD your God commanded you”), not found in SP Exod 20:8 or in MT Exod 20:8. In this instance, SP Exodus and MT Exodus agree. Still, within the same verse, SP Exodus is free to prefer MT Deuteronomy over MT Exodus. The SP Exodus version begins with שמור as does SP Deuteronomy and MT Deuteronomy, but MT Exodus begins with זכור. The preference of שמור (“keep”) over זכור (“remember”) is quite understandable, for שומרים (“Keepers”) is the self-designation of the Samaritans. Is the harmonization in this verse (the use of אשמר [“I will keep”]) nothing more than a device to emphasize the legitimacy of the sect known as the שומרים? If so, this rescension must have followed the formation of the Samaritan sect and been designed to legitimize the sect.

The Covet Prohibition

The second command that shows interesting comparisons is the command not to covet. The following comparison indicates that the relationship

between the Deuteronomy and Exodus renditions of the covet commandment is multifaceted.⁷⁵

SP Deut 5:21: ולא תחמד בית רעך ולא תחמד אשת רעך שדהו עבדו

Do not covet your neighbor's house, do not covet your neighbor's wife, *his field*, or his servant

SP Exod 20:17: לא תחמד בית רעך ולא תחמד אשת רעך שדהו עבדו

Do not covet your neighbor's house, do not covet your neighbor's wife, *his field*, or his servant

MT Exod 20:17: לא תחמד בית רעך לא תחמד אשת רעך ועבדו

Do not covet your neighbor's house, do not covet your neighbor's wife or his servant

MT Deut 5:21: ולא תחמד אשת רעך ולא תתאוה בית רעך שדהו ועבדו

Do not covet your neighbor's wife, do not *desire* your neighbor's house, *his field*, or his servant

Both SP Exodus and SP Deuteronomy present the same reading. And both are at variance with MT Deuteronomy (the ordering of “house” and “wife” and the insertion of תתאוה [“desire”] as the offense against the neighbor's house and property to follow) in the first part of the commandment, agreeing instead with the MT Exodus reading. The MT Deuteronomy version itemizes the neighbor's field as one of the things that should not be coveted. Both Samaritan renditions mention the neighbor's field as well. Apparently, the Samaritan scribe felt free to follow either MT Deuteronomy or MT Exodus when need demanded. Since the SP reading does not appear in any other recovered texts, including the DSS, it is quite probable that this recension is late and took place after the Samaritan sect developed a sense of self-awareness. The appropriate text from the DSS (4Q158, frgs. 7–8) is reproduced below. The lengthy text is presented here to provide a comparison to the SP rendition. These texts provide valuable information for the attempt to understand the development of the SP in its own literary context.

(Honor) your [father] and your mother [so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is about to give to you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall

⁷⁵ Bowman (*ibid.*, 19) is aware of the above differences but does not consider the range of implications that arise from these textual observations.

not bear] false witness [against] your [neighbor]. You shall not covet [your] nei[ghbor's] wife, [male or female slave, ox, donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor]. And the LORD said to Moses, "Go say to them, 'Return to [your tents.] But you, stand here by Me, and I will tell you all the commandments, the statutes] and the ordinances that you shall teach them, so that they may do them in the land that [I am about to give them as a possession.]" . . .

So the people returned to their individual tents, but Moses remained before [the LORD, who said to him, "Thus shall you say to the Israelites,] 'You have seen for yourselves that I spoke with you from heaven. You are not to mak[e gods of silver alongside Me, nor make for yourselves gods of gold. You need make for Me only an altar of earth, and sacrifice] on it your burnt offerings and offerings of well-being, your sheep [and oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. But if] you make for Me [an altar of stone], do not build it of hewn stones; for by [using] a chisel [upon it you profane it. You are not to go up by steps to My altar lest your nakedness be exposed] on it.'"⁷⁶

As shown in these fragments, 4Q158 does not include "field" in its rendition of the Exodus passage but reads much more like the MT rendition.⁷⁷ Later in Exod 20, however, 4Q158 does share substantial agreement with the SP. Does the agreement with MT in the covet command mean that, unlike the Samaritan editors, the Qumran editors felt no such threat to their cherished land holdings? Does deliberate inclusion of "field" in SP Exodus indicate that the SP Exodus recension can be dated to a time when the Samaritans were threatened with losing their property to the hands of pious neighbors and that the specification of "field" is in protest to this threatened loss? If so, is this evidence that the recension of the covet prohibition, like that of the Sabbath command, took place after a sense of self-awareness had developed for the Samaritan sect and not before?⁷⁸

The Tenth Commandment

Following the prohibition on coveting, SP Exodus inserts a lengthy section (in italic) taken from Deut 11 and 27. The reworked material appears

⁷⁶Wise, Abegg, and Cook, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 202.

⁷⁷Nor, because of the lacuna, does the DSS version appear to mention "neighbor's house" but this is not central to the issue.

⁷⁸This argument is provisional, given the partial condition of fragments 7–8.

after verse 17 and forms the tenth commandment in the Samaritan presentation of the Decalogue.

(17) [Ninth command] You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his field, his manservant or his maid-servant, his ox or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's. [Tenth command] [Deut 11:29] *And when the LORD your God brings you into the land of the Canaanites, which you are entering to take possession of it, [Deut 27:2–7] you shall set up these stones and plaster them with plaster, and you shall write upon them all the words of the law. And when you have passed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I have commanded you this day on Mount Gerizim. And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall lift no iron tool upon them. You shall build an altar to the LORD your God of unhewn stones; and you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God; and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and shall eat there; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God. [Deut 11:30] That mountain is beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh in front of Shechem.*

The material inserted from Deuteronomy makes quite clear that Gerizim is the appropriate place for worship. The material identifies the location of Gerizim precisely, thereby eliminating any possibility of rival sites, presumably and particularly Jerusalem. The inclusion of the Deuteronomy material here in the Exodus Decalogue elevates the status of Gerizim by identifying it as the uniquely appropriate place for worship, and it does so with the weight of authority no less than that granted to the ten words spoken directly by God.⁷⁹

It is intriguing to try to reconstruct the origin of the redaction presented in the SP reading of the tenth command. The orthography and script used in the SP point to a production in the late part of the Hasmonean era. It may well be that the SP tradition developed from a Palestinian textual tradition from as far back as perhaps the fifth century but finally underwent a sectarian redaction no earlier than the first century B.C.E.⁸⁰ From a comparison with the DSS, it is clear that not all the changes appearing in the SP were made by the Samaritans, for many of the alternate readings are shared by the Qumran material. This tenth commandment may be one of the best examples for the intermingling of the changes that are both shared with other traditions and unique to the SP.

⁷⁹Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 317.

⁸⁰Purvis, *Samaritan Pentateuch*, 85.

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

Compared with the MT, the SP presents an expanded form that was, before the 1940s, unknown in any other textual tradition. With the recovery and examination of the DSS, however, this all changed. One of the most significant expansions found in the SP is the rendition of the Ten Commandments found in Exod 20. Unexpectedly, the DSS revealed a version of Exod 20 much more like that found in the SP than that found in the MT. The scroll fragment containing Exod 20, 4QExod, with its similarities to the SP, shows that the SP was much more part of the mainstream textual dialogue of the first century than was previously thought. The SP and presumably the Samaritans themselves were part of the cultural conversation within the religious community of Palestine during the two centuries before the turn of the eras. A good illustration of this textual dialogue between the various literary traditions is the tenth commandment, including a description of the prophet to come. The SP version of the relevant portion of Exod 20 is once again reproduced below.⁸¹

(18) Now when all the people heard the thunderings and the sound of the trumpet and saw the lightnings and the mountain smoking, all the people were afraid and trembled; and they stood afar off, and said to Moses, “Behold, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have this day seen God speak with man, and man still live. Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, we shall die. For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and has still lived? Go near and hear all that the LORD our God will say, and speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you; and we will hear and do it,

(19) *but let not God speak to us lest we die.”*

(20) And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; for God has come to prove you, and that the fear of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin.”

(21) And the people stood afar off while Moses drew near to the thick cloud where God was.

⁸¹ Bowman, *Samaritan Documents*, 24–25.

(22) *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you; they have rightly said all that they have spoken. O, that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their children for ever. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to his words while he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak in my name that which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken presumptuously, you need not be afraid of him.*

This text should now be compared with the DSS text appearing below. Even though extremely fragmentary, with substantial elements missing, fragment 6 of 4Q158 does appear to include the promise of the prophet in a fashion very similar to the SP rendition of Exod 20.

[like us, and live? Approach and hear everything that the LORD our God says. Then you can tell us everything the LORD our God says] [to you, and we will listen and obey. But do n]ot let [God] speak to u[s, or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come only to test you] [and t]o put the fear of [Him upon you so that you do not sin." The people stood at a distance, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where] God was.

And the LORD [spoke] to Moses, s[aying, "I have heard this people's words, which they have spoke to you; they are right in all they have spoken. If only] they had such a mind as this, to fear [Me and to keep all My commandments always, so that it might go well with them and with their children forever! Now, as you have heard] My words, s[ay to them, 'I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone] who does not heed the words [that the prophet shall speak in My name, I Myself will hold accountable.

But any prophet who presumes to speak in My name a word that I have not commanded] him [to] speak, or who shall sp[peak in the name of other gods—that prophet shall die. Perhaps you will say to yourself, "How can we recognize a word that the LORD has not spoken?"] If a [prophet]speaks [in the name of the LORD, but the thing does not take place or prove true,

it is a (sig.) not a word that the LORD has spoken. The prophet has spoken presumptuously; do not be frightened by it.”⁸²

As with many of the expansions found in the SP, the expansions found here in 4QExod come mainly from Deuteronomy. The inclusion of the passages from Deuteronomy into the Exod 20 text has the effect of elevating the status of Moses by giving to him greater credibility as a prophet approved by God. Further, the inclusion of the discussion about the prophet gives utmost priority to the expectation of a future prophet following in the footsteps of Moses, while at the same time recognizing that false prophets are a possibility and the community has no obligation to follow their leadership. Preference for one or another of the identified successors to Moses was central to sectarian Jewish groups of Hellenistic and early Roman Judaism, and texts such as this version of Exod 20 helped articulate the perceived differences between the groups.

As pointed out by Sanderson, the 4QExod text of Exod 20 shares all of the major expansions found in the SP, with several minor variants, except that of the peculiarly Samaritan expansion of the tenth commandment, in which the SP adds material gleaned from Deut 11 and 27.⁸³ In particular, 4QExod lacks the peculiarly Samaritan inclusion of Gerizim.

A detailed comparison of the SP and the appropriate DSS will undoubtedly shed additional light upon the recensions of the major textual traditions of the Hebrew Bible. The similarities between the SP and 4QExod lead to two important conclusions: (1) The fact that the text used by the Samaritans was so similar to other texts of the first century helps us to see the sect within the overall umbrella of the Judaism of the first century.⁸⁴ (2) The text that later became identified with the Samaritans has a considerable amount in common with the appropriate DSS material. Still, the instances of unique readings, particularly those that advocate Gerizim and other elements peculiar to Samaritan thought, argue for a community that must have experienced a sense of solidarity and self-awareness before the adoption of the edited text.

Perhaps one of the most revealing conclusions that study of the DSS has produced about the SP and the Samaritan community is the relationship of the Samaritans to other religious groups at the turn of the eras.

In one more way their group [i.e., Samaritans] has been shown to be quite at home in the “rich complex of Judaism.” They were not the only

⁸²Wise, Abegg, and Cook, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 201–2.

⁸³Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 307.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 32.

ones to treat their Scriptures as they did. Or, at very least, even if they were the creators of all of the major expansions, a scroll with all but the Gerizim expansion was accepted and used in a different and very isolationist and hostile group. Even the most tendentious aspect of their Scripture followed a pattern also found at Qumran and, we may suppose, elsewhere as well.⁸⁵

These observations about the SP have led to a general consensus about the beginnings of the Samaritan community. The estimated points of origin range from the second to the first century B.C.E.⁸⁶

SIGNIFICANCE

The text adopted by the Samaritans as their holy book has had a long and influential history. It is no exaggeration to say that the Samaritan community owes its continued existence to the unifying function played by the SP.⁸⁷ The honor given to the Abisha Scroll, kept safe and revered in the Nablus synagogue by the Samaritan community, illustrates the important role played by the SP textual tradition. Quite literally, the SP is the fountain from which flows the religious identity of the Samaritans.

The influence of the SP is by no means limited to the Samaritan community. As early as Origen and Jerome, the SP has been an important part of Hebrew Bible studies. The SP continues to be an important source for the investigation into formation of the Hebrew Bible. Already the SP has provided significant evidential support to the Documentary Hypothesis for the con-

⁸⁵Ibid., 319–20.

⁸⁶James Purvis (“The Samaritan Problem: A Case Study in Jewish Sectarianism in the Roman Era,” in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith* [ed. Baruch Halpren and Jon Levenson; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1981], 333) concludes that the Samaritans must have been “a community whose self-understanding was not clearly defined until around 100 B.C.E.” Morton Smith (*Palestinian Parties and Politics That Shaped the Old Testament* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1971], 182–90) traces the origins of the Samaritans to their refusal to engage in the Maccabean revolt. Richard Coggins (*Samaritans and Jews: The Origins of Samaritanism Reconsidered* [Atlanta: John Knox, 1975]) finds that the religious context of the Hasmonean period is a reasonable time for the Samaritan origin. Ferdinand Dexinger (“Limits of Tolerance in Judaism: The Samaritan Example,” in *Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period* [ed. E. P. Sanders, A. I. Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson; vol. 2 of *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, ed. E. P. Sanders; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981], 108–14) points to the destruction of Shechem under John Hyrcanus as the “breaking point” that resulted in the Samaritan sect.

⁸⁷Reinhard Pummer, *The Samaritans* (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

struction of the Pentateuch.⁸⁸ The SP has contributed to the investigation of other parts of the Hebrew Bible as well. Comparative studies have shown that the pentateuchal text used by the Chronicler in 1 Chr 1–9 has a greater resemblance to the SP than to the MT.⁸⁹

In the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, the SP has played an invaluable role.⁹⁰ Although the SP is of disputed worth for establishing original readings,⁹¹ the SP, in conjunction with the other recovered textual traditions, is helping scholars understand the relationship between text types of the Hasmonean period. Recent research into the readings shared by the DSS and the SP have been especially fascinating. Not only shared readings but editorial techniques employed in the formation of the SP are evident in some of the Qumran scrolls. And together the SP and the DSS may help provide a useful trajectory by which to better understand the literary practices that were used in the formation of some of the Christian New Testament literature from the first and second centuries.

The significance of the SP has reached beyond the world of textual studies. Sociologists and anthropologists interested in understanding the dynamics of the Samaritans as a social group must consider the SP as an integral part of the investigation. The SP gives researchers an important tool in understanding the manner in which a group maintains its identity in the midst of the vicissitudes of cultural change.

Those interested in the history of religions also find in the SP a wealth of information that can be used in understanding sectarian movements. The interaction between text and community, each affecting the expression of the other, forms a vital laboratory in which to investigate a tenacious and enduring textual tradition and its religious community.

⁸⁸Tigay, "Empirical Basis."

⁸⁹Gillis Gerleman, *Synoptic Studies in the Old Testament* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1948), 9–12.

⁹⁰Moshe Goshen-Gottstein, "The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: Rise, Decline, Rebirth," *JBL* 102 (1983): 372–75.

⁹¹Sanderson, *Exodus Scroll*, 58.