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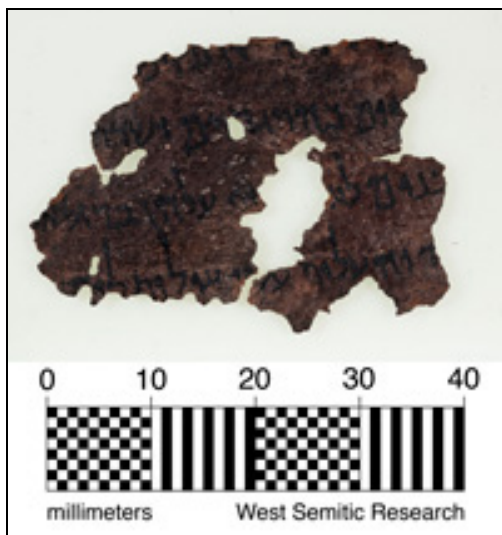
[provisional research; for additions and corrections please contact:

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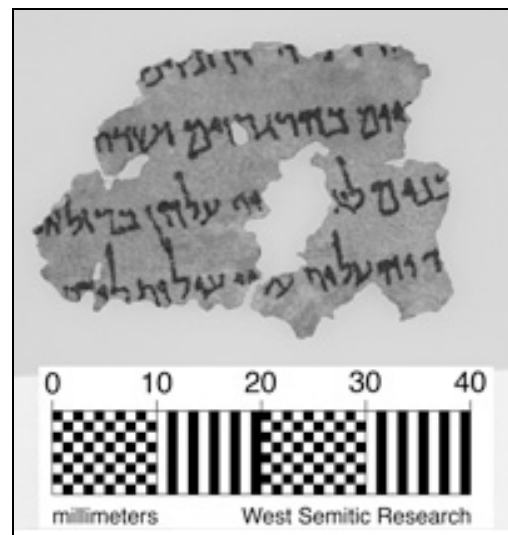
What is a Variant?

Announcing a Dead Sea Scrolls Fragment of Deuteronomy

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Deuteronomy



Deuteronomy - In Infra Red

The above imaged Dead Sea Scroll fragment is published with the permission of Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, California. The IR image is the product of the unusual skills of Bruce and Ken Zuckerman and Marilyn Lundberg of West Semitic Research in Rolling Hills Estates, California.

Transcription: See next page. The alignment approximates the arrangement of consonants on the leather and the margins for the edges of the fragment.

Pentateuch Fragment

Deut 27:4^b-6

1	בעברכמ]ה ¹ את הי[ר]דן תקימו]
2	[היום בהרגרזים ² וּשְׁדָתָ]
3	א[בנים לא [תנ]יף ³ עליהן ⁴ ברזל אב[נים
4	אלוהיכ]ה ⁵ והעלית עליו עולות ⁶ ליהו[ה אלוהיכה

¹ MT and 4QDeut^f: בעברכמ.

² SP: בהרגר(י)זים; MT (and St. Petersburg Codex; Aleppo Codex begins at Deut 28:7): בהר עיבל; LXX: Γαιβαλ; Peshitta: ܒܗܪܥܝܒܠ. In Targum Onkelos: בטורא דעיבל.

³ Tear in the leather.

⁴ MT: עליהם; many MT and SP texts also have עליהן.

⁵ MT and 4QDeut^f: אלהיך. Note most likely the long form of the personal suffix, as often in the *Temple Scroll* 48:7, 10; 53:8; 54:16; 55:10, 14; 60:21; 63:8.

⁶ SP and MT: עולת. Note the use of *matres lectionis* in this line.

Codicology: width: circa 38 millimeters, four lines of text, black ink on brown leather, holes, especially a tear from above line three through line four. There are no visible margins and no horizontal or vertical lining visible. There is no writing on the back. There is no division indicated before the beginning of verse six (end of line three).

Date: The fragment is too small to be cut for AMS C-14 analysis. While there are few consonants, one can judge the work to be mostly in a late Hasmonean Book Hand.

Palaeography: The scribal hand represents archaic forms that can be dated perhaps to 175 BCE and later forms that date from around 50 and even conceivably to 30 BCE (but we cannot ascertain when such forms first appeared).¹

- *alep*: three examples. In line three there are two examples. The second *alep* has two strokes and a straight left leg as in the late Hasmonean book hand of c. 50 BCE (it is strikingly similar to 4QEn^g ar [4Q212] and similar to 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b). The first *alep* is difficult to date but is much older. It seems semicursive and idiosyncratic; it is written with a line that begins on the top left and curves downward to the right, two strokes (one to the top right and one to the bottom left complete the form); the form is reminiscent of the Nash Papyrus (c. 150 BCE).
- *bet*: four examples, two strokes, concave top, sloping lower horizontal line (similar to 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b).
- *gimel*: one example, two strokes, bent initial vertical line (as in 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b).
- *dalet*: two examples, two strokes, squared tops (as in 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b).
- *he*: eight examples (not identical forms), two or three strokes, thick horizontal line that sometimes extends to the left with higher right shoulder (as in the Hasmonean Script of c. 125-100 BCE; cf. 4QDeut^e and 1QIsa^a).
- *yod*: nine examples.
- *waw*: seven examples.
- *waw* and *yod*: the *waw* is often longer, but both have a triangular head (as in 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b).
- *lamed*: seven examples; one stroke. It begins above the imaginary line at the top, descends to form a flat horizontal line to the right, and curves downward. The form is similar to the palaeography of 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b (it continues in the later 1QM).
- *mem*: four examples, three are in final form; two forms, similar to 1QIsa^b.

- *‘ayin*: four examples that are different, two strokes showing a full form (not the small *‘ayin* of earlier scripts), curved and sloping initial stroke as in 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b (but also similar to 4QDeut^e and 1QIsa^a).
- *resh*: three examples, a distinguishing consonant with one flowing curved stroke as in the Hasmonean semiformal script of c. 175-125 BCE (slightly later than 4QQoh^a).
- *sin*: one example, three strokes, curved right vertical form as in the Hasmonean Script (somewhere between 4QDeut^e or 1QIsa^a and the later 4QSam^a and 1QIsa^b).
- *taw*: four examples which are not identical. The final example has two strokes; the first horizontal stroke curves downward and a second stroke begins above the first and descends and curves to the left, as in 4QDeut^e and 1QIsa^a.²

It is conceivable that an old scribe, using archaic forms learned or seen in his youth, copied this text sometime shortly after the middle of the first century BCE.

The scribe uses a mixture of *scriptio continua* and separated words. Visible are examples of final forms: three instances of a final *mem*, two of a final *nun*, and one of a final *pe*. The *waw* and *yod* along with the *resh* and *dalet* show distinguishable features for dating. Against both so-called SP and MT, the author employs *scriptio plena* in line four: ערליות. Thus, in contrast to the biblical manuscripts found at Masada, our scribe did not observe the prescribed norms for copying a sacred book (b*Shabbat* 103a-105a).³

Provenience: The Arab who formerly owned the fragment belongs to the family through whom the Dead Sea Scrolls have come to scholars. He claims it is from Qumran Cave IV. The fragment appears to be genuine for the following reasons: The source is the same as that for almost all the Qumran fragments in the Shrine of the Book. The patina sparkles in the ink and in the leather. My attempts to prove that the fragment is a fake failed.⁴

Text: Deut 27:4b-6. The only Qumran fragment that witnesses to Deut 27:1-10 is 4QDeut^f Frgs. 32-35; but it has a lacuna where the mountain (Ebal or Gerizim) would have been mentioned.⁵

Translation (line numbers denote the extant line, not the beginning of a line):

Line

- 1 (4) “[when] you [have crossed] the Jo[r]dan, you shall set u[p] these stones, about
- 2 [which I charge you] today, on Mount Gerizim, and coat [them with plaster. (5) And there, you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of]
- 3 st]ones. [You must] not wield upon them an iron (tool). (6) [Of unhewn] st[ones you must build the altar of the LORD]
- 4 your [God], and you shall offer upon it burnt offerings to the LOR[D your God.]”

This text diverges from the MT: “(4) upon crossing the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I charge you this day, on Mount Ebal, and coat them with plaster. (5) There, too, you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. Do not wield an iron tool over them; (6) you must build the altar of the LORD your God of unhewn stones. You shall offer on it burnt offerings to the LORD your God, (7)... .” [TANAKH]

Preliminary Reflections: If this copy of Deuteronomy is indeed from a Qumran Cave, then we have additional evidence of the importance of this biblical book at Qumran. The three books most popular at Qumran, according to statistics, are the Psalms (37 mss), Deuteronomy (30 mss [not counting the present fragment and the massive re-writing of Deuteronomy in the *Temple Scroll*]), and Isaiah (21 mss [but there are some fragments not yet announced]). When one recognizes that Deuteronomy is the only book in the Pentateuch that claims precisely that it is a record of Moses’ laws (viz., Dt 1:5; 4:8), gives prominence to the Torah (Law) and its interpretation, and mentions God’s covenant with Israel 26 times, one can readily comprehend why the scroll was popular to the Qumranites who stressed the interpretation of Torah (esp. in the Pesharim) and God’s “New Covenant” with them alone.

Text Type: Either Samaritan Pentateuch (unlikely) or Text with the Original Reading (likely). The fragment preserves four variants to the so-called MT [see transcription and notes].

Two categories should be distinguished: Fragments of the Samaritan Pentateuch and fragments of Pre-Samaritan manuscripts. One should distinguish between a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch and Old Readings (known in the Samaritan Pentateuch and reflected often in the LXX and elsewhere) that appear in pre-70 Hebrew Scrolls. Hence, “Proto-Samaritan Texts” should be defined as manuscripts preserving textual traditions that are not caused by Samaritan editing and appear not only in the Samaritan Pentateuch but also in some Qumran biblical manuscripts, namely 4QpaleoExod^m,⁶ 4QNum^b,⁷ 4Q158, and 4Q364.⁸ These manuscripts are not portions of the Samaritan Pentateuch, because they do not contain the striking Samaritan features of the Pentateuch.

The close relation between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the received Pentateuch (the so-called MT) – especially in textual tradition and sense divisions – indicates that the Samaritans and Judeans (and conceivably some Jews in Lower Galilee) separated late (perhaps during, or after, the time of John Hyrcanus). The study of the transmission of the Pentateuch indicates that Samaritans and other early Jews shared an early stage of traditions and Scripture. We should keep in focus the possibility that a manuscript with a reading found in the Samaritan Pentateuch may not be the result of editing by Samaritans; it may represent the original reading. Thus, the MT and other related text types may represent redaction by others, notably Jews in Judea, especially after the burning of the Samaritan “altar” by John Hyrcanus in the late second century BCE.

How are we to discern the text-type of this fragment of Deuteronomy? Two hypotheses seem apparent. First, *prima facie*, it is conceivable that the manuscript is a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch. In favor of this hypothesis are the following four observations: (1) The fragment preserves the reading found in the

Samaritan Pentateuch of Deut 27:4: One is to build an altar on Mount Gerizim. (2) The Samaritans consider it a commandment (*mizwot*) to write “Mount Gerizim” with seven letters, as in this fragment (*hrgrzim*); and to worship on Mount Gerizim is the so-called eleventh commandment in the Samaritan Decalogue which now appears in early lapidary inscriptions.⁹ (3) A study of the recently discovered inscriptions in Samaria, especially on Mount Gerizim, indicates the existence of a Samaritan community with priestly institutions, and the preservations of the paleo-Hebrew script during the Hellenistic and later periods.¹⁰ (4) One might then add that it is impressive that the scribe wrote *bhrgrzim* and not *bhr grizim*. The *scriptio continua* clashes with the scribe’s practice of separating most words. On Masada, a Paleo-Hebrew papyrus scroll, inscribed on both sides, preserves [הרגריזים]; that is “Mount Gerizim” appears as one word. S. Talmon and A. Ben-Tor conclude that a Samaritan, fleeing the Roman armies, probably bought the scroll to Masada.¹¹

Are there problems with this hypothesis? Yes. First, the spelling of “Mount Gerizim” as one word and in a form with only seven consonants (*hrgrzim*) is clearly a Samaritan practice; the Hebrew form is also mirrored in Greek in the two Delos stelae that praise the “holy Argarizein.” But, as S. Talmon points out, the form also appears in scrolls and texts that are not Samaritan: “Agarisin” in the Latin of 2Mac 5:23 and 6:2, “Argarizin” in Josephus’ *War* 1.6, “Mons Agraris”¹² in Pliny’s *Natural History* (V.14.68).¹³ Thus, the presence of this form – one word with seven consonants – does not prove that the scroll is a Samaritan text.¹⁴

Second, it would be surprising to find that the Qumran Library, located in eleven caves, preserved copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch. It seems representative to refer to the Qumran Scrolls as belonging to a “Library;” this library contained differing traditions (as in Princeton’s many libraries) and yet is characterized by a concentration of texts that reflect a distinct type of sectarian Judaism (as most scholars now conclude, related somehow to the Essenes of Philo and Josephus). The Qumran Library is selective; as far as we can discern, it contained neither a copy of texts that are clearly pro-Hasmonean (as with 1 Mac) nor a copy of the Pharisaic-like *Psalms of Solomon*.¹⁵ Third, as already stated Samaritan Texts should not be confused with Proto-Samaritan texts; as far as I know, the only scholar who argued that fragments of the Samaritan Pentateuch were found at Qumran is M. Baillet.¹⁶ Such fragments seem to be Proto-Samaritan text types.

The second hypothesis is markedly different. The original reading of Deuteronomy, “on Mount Gerizim,” is preserved in this fragment.¹⁷ Thus, it should not be labeled “a variant;” the MT and related texts preserve the “variant” and it looks redactional and later. Here are the reasons for this suggestion.

1) Most importantly, the text of Deuteronomy mentions two mountains: the Mountain of the Curse or Ebal and the Mountain of Blessing or Gerizim: “You shall pronounce the blessing at Mount Gerizim and the curse at Mount Ebal” (Deut 11:29 TANAKH). One would expect, therefore, that the author or compiler of Deuteronomy wrote that Moses conveyed the instruction to build God’s altar on Mount Gerizim and not Mount Ebal as in the MT and LXX text of Deut 27:4¹⁸ (which influenced the Vulgate, Syriac, and Coptic traditions).¹⁹ Moreover, just a few lines later we hear the following: “After you have

crossed the Jordan ... stand on Mount Gerizim when the blessing for the people is spoken” (Deut 27:11 TANAKH). One would have expected the author or compiler of Deuteronomy to have quoted Moses as exhorting the building of an altar (27:5) on Mount Gerizim (as in this fragment) and not on Mount Ebal (as in the MT and related texts).

2) Sacred texts often refer to specific locations as hallowed; scribes who copied these passages sometimes lived and worked among Jews who challenged (or even rejected) the honor bestowed on the place mentioned. These scribes might have assumed that the correct reading may not be in a manuscript available for copying. They certainly knew about numerous versions of a biblical book and might have imagined the reading they wanted was in one of them. Regarding the reading in our fragment of Deuteronomy, after John Hyrcanus destroyed the Samaritan places of worship on Mount Gerizim, it is conceivable that a Jew, especially one in Judea, in the middle of the first century BCE – or less than one hundred years after Hyrcanus’ destruction of the buildings on Mount Gerizim about 112 BCE²⁰ – would have thought that Moses had intended to have God’s altar built on Mount Ebal and not on the Samaritan’s Mount Gerizim which lay in ruins and belonged to the Samaritans. Copying scribes in Judea, and especially in Jerusalem, would have copied Deuteronomy in the first century BCE with a hatred of Samaritans. Perhaps the copyist even imagined that the Samaritans were not “Jews” but belonged to the “many nations” that were to be obliterated from the Holy Land. He may have thought that God ordered their “altars” to be destroyed (Deut 7:1-5).²¹ This speculation is supported by the vast evidence of numerous text types of biblical texts that circulated in the late first century BCE; each text type was probably deemed sacred by the circle of those who heard the text. Our scribe may not have seen “Mount Ebal” in his exemplar or copies but he may well have imagined that this meaning must have been implied by the author of Deuteronomy.

For at least fifty years, scholars have stated that before 70 CE copying scribes did not consider the Hebrew text of Scripture to be unalterable, because the text’s consonantal form was still fluid.²² Copying scribes altered the text in good faith in the attempt to restore the correct reading and to remove possibilities of misunderstanding. They sought to serve the circle of Jews for whom the copy was intended. I suggest that our fragment preserves the original reading and indicates that the MT and related textual traditions reflect alterations.

3) To me, this second hypothesis is persuasive, indeed confirmed, because of the reading of the Old Latin: *garzin* (Latin Cod. 100).²³ It is unlikely that the Old Latin is dependent on the Samaritan Pentateuch. It is conceivable that a Latin scribe knew the *Tendenzen* of Deuteronomy and changed the text. It is more likely, however, that the Old Latin reading derives from a lost Greek manuscript or even a Semitic manuscript (perhaps like the one now announced).²⁴ In any case, the reading of Old Latin Codex 100 seems to clinch the argument that our manuscript preserves the original reading and is not a portion of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Most likely the Samaritans followed an old reading that originated in the North and is Samarian (not Samaritan). All of us need to reconsider what we mean by “Samaritan,” “Proto-

Samaritan,” and similar terms; the “new” fragment challenges us to improve our perceptions of tensions between Judeans and Samaritans and to refine our nomenclature.²⁵

Of interest to Christians is Jesus’ comment in the Gospel of John: “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem’” (Jn 4:21 NRSV). Jesus is speaking to a Samaritan woman in Samaria at Jacob’s well which is near Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal.²⁶

¹ The script is not similar to the Aramaic script of the Mount Gerizim Inscriptions; see the chart of these inscriptions in J. Dušek, “Ruling of Inscriptions in Hellenistic Samaria,” *MAARAV* 14.2 (2007) 43-65; see esp. pp. 46-47.

² Our fragment cannot be a portion of 4QDeut^e; the scribal hands are very dissimilar.

³ Though they date from the same period, our text of Deuteronomy is dissimilar to the copy of Deut 33:17-34:6 found on Masada; and the Masada Deuteronomy is identical to the MT. Amnon Ben-Tor, *Back to Masada* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2009) see esp. pp. 190-94 and Fig. 184.

⁴ I spoke with Bruce and Ken Zuckerman; they agree with me that the fragment is similar to the authentic fragments.

⁵ See J.A. Duncan in E. Ulrich, F.M. Cross, et al., *Qumran Cave 4.VII: Genesis to Numbers*, p. 53 and Plate XV. Also, see E. Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls* (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 134; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010) p. 227.

⁶ See J.E. Sanderson, *An Exodus Scroll from Qumran: 4QpaleoExod^m and the Samaritan Tradition* (Harvard Semitic Studies 30; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986) and P.W. Skehan, E. Ulrich, and J.E. Sanderson, with P.J. Parsons *Qumran Cave 4.IV: Palaeo-Hebrew and Greek Biblical Manuscripts* (DJD 9; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) pp. 53-130.

⁷ See N. Jastram in E. Ulrich, F.M. Cross, et al., *Qumran Cave 4.VII: Genesis to Numbers* (DJD 12; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) pp. 205-67. Also, see Jastram, “A Comparison of Two ‘Proto-Samaritan’ Texts from Qumran: 4QpaleoExod^m and 4QNum^b,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 5 (1998) 264-89.

⁸ I am grateful to J. Dušek for helping me refine this aspect of my research. Most likely 4QDeutⁿ is not to be included among the Proto-Samaritan Texts, because the method of interpolation differs from that in the SP. See E. Owen, “4QDeutⁿ: A Pre-Samaritan Text,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 4 (1997) 162-78.

⁹ See F. Dexinger, “Das Garizimgebot im Dekalog der Samaritaner,” in *Sudien zum Pentateuch: Walter Kornfeld zum 60. Geburtstag*, edited by G. Braulik (OSB; Vienna, Freiburg, Basel: Herder, 1977) pp. 111-33. Also, see G. Braulik, *Die deuteronomischen Gesetze und der Dekalog* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1991).

¹⁰ See J. Dušek, *MAARAV* 1.2 (2007) 43-65; and esp. pp. 64-65.

¹¹ S. Talmon, *Hebrew Fragments from Masada* (Masada VI; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999) p. 146. Ben-Tor, *Back to Masada*, p. 208.

¹² Pliny must not have known the meaning of the *nomen proprium*, since he adds “mons.”

¹³ S. Talmon, *Hebrew Fragments from Masada*, p. 146.

¹⁴ See R. Pummer, “ΑΠΓΑΠΙΖΙΝ: A Criterion for Samaritan Provenance?” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 18 (1987) 18-25. I am grateful to J. Dušek for drawing my attention to this important publication by one of the leading scholars on the Samaritans.

¹⁵ H. Eshel and E. Schuller both have identified anti-Samaritan passages in writings found at Qumran. See H. Eshel, “Prayer of Joseph from Qumran,” *Zion* 56 (1991) 134-35. And E. Schuller, “4Q372:I: A Text About Joseph,” *RQ* 14 (1990) 349-76. The Qumranites were clearly anti-Hasmonean; given their origins in the Jerusalem Temple, many of them may have been anti-Samaritan.

¹⁶ Emanuel Tov confirms my opinion (*viva voce*). See M. Baillet: “certain Qumran manuscripts contain not only intermittent Samaritan elements but the Samaritan text itself (mais le texte samaritain lui-même).” M. Baillet, “Le texte samaritain de l’Exode dans les manuscrits de Qumran,” in *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer*, edited by A. Caquot, et al. (Paris: Andrien-Maisonneuve, 1971) pp. 363-81; the quotation is on p. 380. Again, I am indebted to J. Dušek and his research that he sent to me. My research is deeply indebted to many scholars.

¹⁷ Long ago, before the present fragment was known, F. Dexinger (a leading expert in Samaritan studies) opined that the MT of Deut 27:4 was not original and “Mount Gerizim” was the original reading. Now we have evidence of that reading in a Hebrew pre-70 manuscript. See Dexinger in *Studien zum Pentateuch*, pp. 111-33.

¹⁸ In the LXX, the spelling reflects the *‘ayin* grapheme. See J.W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy* (SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 39; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995) p. 417.

¹⁹ See the *apparatus criticus* to my transcription. Jerome supplied *in monte Hebal*; see R. Weber, et al., eds., *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1969) p. 270. As expected, the Coptic follows the Greek; see M.K.H. Peters, *An Analysis of the Textual Character of the Bohairic of Deuteronomy* (SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies 9; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979) p. 327.

²⁰ See Y. Magen, H. Misgav, and L. Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004) vol. 1, p. 13.

²¹ At Qumran there was some variety; but it was defined by the Community. On Masada much more heterogeneity prevailed. As Talmon states: “In the face of the imminent final attack of the Roman army, the barriers between the various socio-religious groups broke down to a certain extent: members of the main-stream community, Zealots, Sicarii, adherents of the ‘Community of the Renewed Covenant’, and Samaritans hoped to find safety on Masada.” Talmon in *Masada VI*, p. 149.

²² For example, see the reflections by E. Würthwein in *The Text of the Old Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1957) p. 74.

²³ See the *apparatus criticus* in J. W. Wevers, ed., *Deuteronomium* (Septuaginta 3.2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977) p. 287. Professor E. Ulrich rightly states (in an email of 8 Aug 08) that the many so-called SP readings in LXX mss are more widespread than we think, and most are in fact “Jewish.” For the *Vetus Latina* of Deuteronomy, see vol. 4 of the *Stiftung Vetus Latina* (Vetus Latina Institut, D-88631 Beuron).

²⁴ *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)* was originally composed in Hebrew; the Latin seems to be translated from Greek, but the many errors and Semitisms may have come directly from a Hebrew manuscript [see the comments by Harrington in *OTP* 2.298-99].

²⁵ I am indebted to E. Ulrich for a discussion on these issues. He drew my attention to G. Knoppers, “Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Zion,” *SR* 34 (2005) 309-38.

²⁶ I am pleased to acknowledge insight from many scholars, including E. Tov, E. Ulrich, K. Winslow, and especially a detailed response to my initial reflections from J. Dušek. I also appreciate the insights of Benyamim Tsedaka, the editor of *A.B. –The Samaritan News-Weekly*.