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A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

CRITICAL NOTES

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST OF THE NEGEB

IN approaching this subject it is necessary once more to lay stress on two outstanding points. No nation would invent to its own disadvantage a story, that, on attempting an invasion, it had been defeated so crushingly, and with such heavy casualties, as to be compelled to wander in a wilderness for thirty-eight years before embarking on any further undertaking. Once this is realized we are compelled, on *any* critical view, to accept the defeat recorded in Deut. i. 43 ff., ii. 14, as absolutely historical. It must be realized as the dominating and all-important fact in the early military history of the people, and it fully explains the retirement from the Negeb after the earlier victory (Num. xxi. 1-3).

Secondly, emphasis must be placed on the close parallelism between the Hebrew and Egyptian accounts. According to the Pentateuch, Israel built Pithom and Raamses as store cities for the Pharaoh in one reign of long duration. In the opening years of the next they were decisively defeated with heavy casualties in the south of Canaan by vassals of Egypt. As a result the country enjoyed a lasting peace from the Israelite menace. According to Egyptology, Pithom and Raamses were built as store cities for the Pharaoh in the reign of Rameses II., which lasted for 66 or 67 years. In the opening years of his successor, Merneptah, the people of Israel was decisively defeated with heavy casualties in or near Canaan, and a triumphal hymn celebrates the lasting peace that this and other events have given the country under Egyptian suzerainty. These two records are much more alike than the accounts given of the same event by warring nations nowadays, and we need have no hesitation in recognizing their correspondence. There cannot have been two peoples of Israel trapesing about, both defeated in Canaan with heavy casualties in Merneptah's opening years in such a way as to

give the country durable peace. The details have been worked out in "The Date of the Exodus."¹ Here it is sufficient to recall these salient points.²

When we pass to the narratives of the conquest, we find ourselves confronted with three questions which are closely related. What happened? How was it narrated? How did that narrative reach its present form? Generally the answer to any one of these questions helps us to find the replies to the others.

Even a cursory glance at the conquest narratives shows that they have passed through the same sort of vicissitudes as has the Pentateuch. Once more we have evidence of a library of short writings surviving in a fragmentary condition and placed in erroneous order. For instance, in Josh. v. 13-15 we read of an interview with the captain of the host of the Lord, but his message is missing. The beginning of the Bochim narrative (Judges ii. 1-5) is wanting. Careful examination shows that verses 2 ff. postulate an account of some episode which called for the rebuke and consequent weeping. Other instances might be cited. It is as easy to show that the order of the narrative is faulty in Joshua as in the Pentateuch. How, for example, did Joshua get from Gilgal, where we find him in chapter x., to a spot so near the waters of Merom that he could fight there "to-morrow"? (xi. 6). Or from Shiloh, where the preceding chapters leave him, to Shechem in chapter xxiv.? These narratives all require the same kind of critical examination and piecing together as those of the Pentateuch. The editorial methods, too, appear to have been similar. Thus in Judges ii. 1 it is generally allowed that "Bochim" of M. T. is a substitution for an earlier reading "Bethel" (still preserved in a conflate Greek rendering), and that it is due to the treatment of verse 5 as a canon of emendation.

¹ Bibliotheca Sacra Company. 20 cents, postpaid.

² See now Holzinger's reluctant admission in reviewing "The Date of the Exodus": "Darüber, dass Nu xiv 40 nicht den Pharao als Gegner rennt, wird sich reden lassen — warum soll ein solcher sich nicht den Sieg eines Vasallen gut schreiben?" (*Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1918, No. 6-7, col. 76).

Another curious instance of editing occurs in Josh. xv. 63. The difficulty here is part of a larger question raised by the various notices of Jerusalem, and historical and textual considerations are closely interwoven. Did the Israelites capture Jerusalem or not? Did the tradition assign it unanimously to Benjamin, or was there a second version, giving it to Judah? In Josh. xv. 63 the R. V. has: "And as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwelt with the children of Judah at Jerusalem, unto this day"; but Armenian codices read "children of Israel," for "children of Judah," in the first part of the verse. "Israel" is to be preferred, for we should regard the alterations as due to a reader who thought of the period of the divided kingdom, and made the substitution because Jerusalem was in Judah, not in Israel. Further, the words "with the children of Judah" were unknown to the original LXX, and added by Origen under an asterisk. With these corrections the trouble disappears. In the corresponding verse in Judges i. 21 the words "in Jerusalem" are not in A glnqw Arm-codd, Eth. "The Jebusite dwelt with the children of Benjamin till this day," but not in Jerusalem; for it is obvious, from Josh. xv. 63 and Judges xix. 11 f., that the Israelites had not effected a settlement there.¹ In Judges i. 8 we read: "And the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and took it," etc. As the statement is plainly unhistorical, it is generally assumed that the verse is due to an editor. A more probable suggestion, however, lies at hand. There is abundant evidence that the text of this chapter has depended on a damaged MS. Now a₂ omits the name Jerusalem. It is likely that originally some other name stood there, but was lost, owing to injury to the archetype, which will then have read, "fought against . . . and took it." To repair the injury, Jerusalem was erroneously added in most copies, on the basis of the preceding verse. The original text probably named some city

¹ The notice thus appears to have been written before David's conquest (2 Sam. v. 6 ff.); notice "till this day."

that was captured before Hebron (cp. Josh. x. 29 ff.).

Longer commentary and rewriting, as well as glossing, have played their part in the formation of the present Hebrew text of Joshua, as anybody who reads the book carefully can see for himself. The LXX often enables us to recover a purer text; and in some of its readings it suggests that our difficulties may be partly due to the collation of two Hebrew MSS., variants from one having been entered in the margin of the other, and then unfortunately incorporated with the text in error and at unsuitable points.¹

¹ Here are the two forms of Josh. viii. 11-13, given by B and M. T., respectively:—

B

11 And all the people, the men of war with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city *on the East*.

12 And the ambush of the city [was] on the west.

13 *Vacat.*

M. T.

11 And all the people, [even] the [men of] war that were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, *and pitched on the north side of Ai: now there was a valley between him and Ai.*

12 *And he took about five thousand men, and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city.*

13 *So they set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liers in wait that were on the west of the city; and Joshua went that night into the midst of the vale.*

In ver. 13, fifteen Hebrew MSS. read וַיָּלֵן, 'and he lodged,' for וַיֵּלֶךְ, 'and he went.' The last half of this Hebrew verse, then, differs from the last half of ver. 9 by a single letter, Joshua lodging in the midst of the valley הַעֵמֶק, which is distinguished from the Hebrew for 'the people' only by its final letter. Similarly the last portion of ver. 12, "between Bethel and between Ai, on the west side of the city" (הַעֵרִי) is a variant of the corresponding words in ver. 9, where "on the west of Ai" lacks the last letter of the Hebrew word for "city," but is otherwise absolutely identical. These, then, are different readings, and the codex that preserved them apparently read 5 thousand for the 30 thousand of the Hebrew, and the 3 thousand of dpt in ver. 3, and seems to have located the attack on the north, not on the east, side of the city.

If, in the light of these observations, we ask, What was the course of events in the conquest of the Negeb? we shall have little difficulty in finding a satisfactory answer. When the Israelites were at Kadesh, they won a considerable victory in the Negeb, and, in accordance with their vow, devoted a place and called it Hormah (Num. xxi. 1-3). After the subsequent rout compelled their retreat, the place was naturally known once more by its earlier name. Of this process the history of our own time supplies abundant examples. Thirty-eight years later the Israelites invade from the East. Jericho and Ai are taken, and Gibeon makes its peace with the invaders. A coalition takes the field against Joshua and the Israelites, and it is important to note that it includes the king of Hebron (Josh. x.). This shows that the subsequent battle is earlier in time than Caleb's capture of Hebron. Had the city already fallen, there could have been no king of Hebron. Much unnecessary difficulty has been created by the failure to recognize the character of the tasks that lay before the invaders. They fall into three categories: (1) the defeat of the field armies of the nations; (2) the capture of the walled cities; and (3) the conquest of the level country, where chariots could operate. In the third task they were usually unsuccessful, the battle of the waters of Merom (Josh. xi. 1-9) being the only recorded victory during this period over forces with chariots (contrast Josh. xvii. 16; Judges i. 19). So far as the Negeb was concerned, the battle of Beth-horon was decisive (Josh. x.). In those days most campaigns culminated in a single pitched battle. The forces of the period had neither the discipline nor the reserves to enable them to continue a campaign in the open after a defeat. The survivors of the beaten Canaanites consequently dispersed immediately to their walled cities (Josh. x. 20). That enabled the various tribes to overrun

Clearly we have to do, not with two accounts of the same occurrence, but with two forms of the same account; and our trouble has arisen through variants having been noted in the margin and subsequently been mistaken for part of the text.

the open hill country, where chariots could not operate, and to win such successes as they could against the fortified towns. It must always be borne in mind that a defeated field army in that epoch promptly ceased to exist as an effective campaigning force; so that after the victory, the work of occupation would be carried out by smaller tribal detachments operating separately, not by the united forces of Israel.

With one exception (Josh. x. 28 ff.) the narratives of the occupation of the South country are then in harmony. After the battle of Beth-horon, Caleb receives a formal title to Hebron from Joshua at Gilgal (Josh. xiv. 6 ff.). Caleb, Judah, Simeon, and the Kenites invade the South country, as narrated in Judges i. (cp. Josh. xv. 13 ff.),¹ their expeditions being based on Jericho (Judges i. 16 f.); and when Hormah is recaptured, the Israelite name is naturally reconferred.²

That leaves the problem presented by Josh. x. 28 ff., where Joshua and all Israel take various towns and exterminate all the souls therein. The stereotyped formulæ suggest an editor; but, as Dr. G. A. Cooke³ remarks on verse 33a: "The monotony is here broken by what looks like an early piece of detail." In this respect the section recalls the editorial rewriting practiced in the Pentateuch in cases where the narrative was too fragmentary to be perpetuated in the form in which it had survived.⁴ I sug-

¹Judges i. 20 should, however, perhaps stand between i. 10 and 11.

²We do not know whether a change of name in such a case involved a religious ceremony; but, in any case, a name conferred by an invading people would be valid only where it remained in control of the place. Compare Isaac's renaming of Abraham's wells (Gen. xxvi. 18).

³The Book of Joshua (1918). This is a clear and up-to-date summary of the views of the documentary theorists, and is the most helpful book they have produced in English on this period, largely because the editor candidly states objections to his own views.

⁴See BS, April, 1919, pp. 193 ff. Joshua xi. 21-23 is wanting in h, and appears to be the addition of a late commentator.

gest, therefore, that this may have been the origin of the section, and that we owe its present form to an editor who found his materials in tatters, and pieced them together as best he could in his own language. Unfortunately he assumed that Joshua and all Israel were present on occasions when, in reality, only detachments were operating, and butchered all the inhabitants of the country in accordance with his reading of Deut. vii. 2. If these two features be eliminated, the basis of the narrative harmonizes with our other information and may well be historical.

A few words may be added as to a curious theory that has received wide currency, viz. that Judah, Caleb, and the Kenites effected their settlement in the South as the result of a successful invasion from Kadesh-barnea. This is flatly contradicted by the whole tenor of the Pentateuch, according to which all Israel wandered for forty years, and invaded as a united confederacy from the East. It is incompatible with the sweeping disaster narrated in Deut. i. 43 ff.; with the narrative of Judges i. 16 f., which shows that Hormah was finally occupied by an expedition moving from Jericho; with all the narratives of Caleb's conquests; and with the presence of a king of Hebron among the allied powers defeated by Joshua at Beth-horon.¹

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NOTES ON THE EXODUS

FURTHER research enables me to supplement "The Date of the Exodus"² with a few notes on the history of the period of the Exodus and the wanderings.

In Exodus xiii. 17 we read: "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent

¹ Cp. Cooke, *op. cit.*, pp. xxvi f., xxix, xxxi.

² *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1916, pp. 454-480, republished in pamphlet form by *Bibliotheca Sacra Company* (20 cents, post-paid), cited as DE.

when they see war, and they return to Egypt." The expression "see war," naturally interpreted, can only mean that war was in progress in Philistia.¹ A good example of what the text does *not* say is provided by Driver's note *ad loc.*: "Because the Philistines were a warlike and aggressive people it was feared that Israel might be alarmed at meeting them." There is nothing about meeting or fighting them. The phrase used implies that military operations were actually pending at the time, — not that they would result if Israel took the road through Philistia and were refused peaceful passage. Now the Israel stele also refers to military operations of some sort in Philistia. "Carried off is Askalon" (DE, p. 457). These two references appear to me to relate to the same event and to supplement each other. The carrying off of Askalon was thus contemporaneous with the Exodus, and must be assigned to the same year, i.e. the second year of Merneptah. So we have independent evidence, from other sources, of at least three of the matters to which the final stanza of the triumphal hymn relates. There is an allusion to the treaty with the Hittites, a mention of a capture of Askalon, and a reference to Israel's defeat by Amorites. These fall at different times, and exclude the theory that the stanza relates to a campaign, i.e. to a connected series of operations. It is rather a sort of omnibus clause relating to a number of miscellaneous incidents, which together ultimately helped to bring about the grand result of a general peace that was satisfactory to Egypt. This view is confirmed by another consideration. It has been thought that the phrase "binder of Gezer" in a titulary refers to a personal exploit of Merneptah's. Whether this be so or not, its presence, *taken in conjunction with the absence of any similar title relating to the other events mentioned in the stanza* (the peace with the Hittites, the carrying off of

¹The mention of the Philistines here and in Genesis has been wrongly supposed to be an anachronism. There is archæological evidence of the presence of Philistines on the coast strip in the first half of the second millennium B.C. See F. M. Th. Böhl, *Het Oude Testament* (1919), p. 107 (a very good book).

Askalon, etc.), shows that for some reason it was on a different footing from them.¹ Accordingly they must not all be lumped together as forming part of a single connected design.

On page 461 of DE I expressed the view that the word "returned," in the border commandant's journal, probably meant "returned to Egypt." Since that was written I have had official experience in government departments. Coming back to the study of the journal in the light of this, I am definitely of the opinion that the difficulties of the modern reader are due to the fact that the tabular form had not been invented. When we throw the information into the shape a modern official would give it, everything becomes clear. Now, as then, the prepositions would be omitted, but the document would be called by some such name as register, and the facts would be set out in ruled and headed columns. It is evident that it relates to the journeys not of private messengers, but of royal dispatch bearers, going to or from the court. That is why the name of the sender is omitted when the couriers "went up," i.e. made the journey outwards, but expressed when they "returned," i.e. homewards.² Royal couriers traveling outwards necessarily came from the court. Here are two specimen entries, taken from Breasted's translation in his "Ancient Records":—

"Year 3, first month of the third season (ninth month), fifteenth day:

"There went up the servant of Baal, Roy, son of Zeper of Gaza, who had with him for Syria two different letters, to wit: (for) the captain of infantry, Khay, one letter; (for) the chief of Tyre, Baalat-Remeg, one letter."

"Year 3, first month of the third season (ninth month), —th day:

¹ Possibly this achievement alone, of those here mentioned, was due to native Egyptian troops. Compare the observations of Naville quoted *infra*.

² Similarly the addressee is omitted in the case of homeward messengers, but expressed where the dispatches are traveling outward.

"There returned the attendant, Thuti, son of Thekerem of Geket; Methdet, son of Shem-Baal (of) the same (town); Sutekhmose, son of Eperdegel (of) the same (town), who had with him, for the place where the king was, (from ¹) the captain of infantry, Khay, gifts and a letter."

Nowadays such information would be recorded somewhat as follows:—

REGISTER OF ROYAL COURIERS

Date	Direction	Name and description of courier	Destination	Nature of package	Sender when other than the Government	Address when other than the Government
15 ix 3	Outwards	The servant of Baal, Roy, etc.	Syria	Two letters, viz. 1. One letter 2. One letter		1. The captain of infantry, Khay 2. The chief of Tyre, Baal-at-Remeq
- ix 3	Homewards	The attendant Thuti, etc. Methdet, etc. Sutekhmose, etc.	The place where the King was	Gifts and a letter	The captain of infantry, Khay	

It will be seen that, in spite of the omissions of the prepositions, this record is entirely unambiguous and businesslike. It is only necessary to restore the background.

I have now seen a paper by Professor Naville, entitled "Did Menephtah invade Syria?" in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. ii. (1915) pp. 195-201. This was unknown to me when I wrote DE. The following confirmation of the view I reached may be cited from page 201:—

"Thus the last lines of the stele show that the safety of the king is complete. . . . There is no indication whatever that this state of things was due to the victories of the king. He is not mentioned as conqueror; it is not said that personally he did anything in the destruction of Ashkelon or Inuamma. It would be quite contrary to Egypt-

¹Breasted (AR, vol. iii. p. 272) supplied "for," but note the verb "returned" (to Egypt). Khay was in Syria.

tian inscriptions such as we know them, to forget in that way the great deeds of their king. Every victory, every contest, is due to the king himself. . . . No more than the day-book of the official does this inscription record a conquest of Menephtah in Palestine. The successful campaign attributed to him is a mere hypothesis resting on two texts neither of which gives any indication whatever of this war, and still less a positive proof. It must therefore be entirely struck out of the annals of Menephtah."

This strikingly agrees with the conclusions of DE.

In Num. xx. 1, B* (*vid.*) p make the children of Israel reach the desert of Zin in the *third* month, not, as does the M. T., in the first.¹ "Third" might possibly be a Greek mistake for "first" (TPI for ΠΠΩ), but this is improbable. Historically "third" is an admirable reading. It would mean the third month of the second year, which is the last mentioned in the preceding narrative. That fits the thirty-eight years of Deut. ii. 14 better than the first month of the third year. Moreover, the incidents after leaving Sinai are inadequate for ten months' work. After the departure on the twentieth of the second month, the narrative tells of a three days' journey, the Taberah incident (which is perhaps out of position²), Kibroth-hattaavah, and Hazeroth. Then they pitched in the wilderness of Paran (Num. xii. 16). The next event is the arrival at Kadesh; for, as we have seen,³ the intervening chapters are misplaced. The embassy to Edom (Num. xx. 14 ff.) should precede the command to compass Mount Seir (Num. xiv. 25); and the reference to the failure to enter the promised land (Num. xvi. 14) is later than the defeat, which in turn followed the command to compass Mount Seir (Num. xiv. 45). There is nothing in the history that would create

¹The matter is complicated by the fact that the two MSS. do not agree in the order of the phrases. B* apparently had "into the desert of Zin in the third month"; p, "in the third month into the desert of Z." Such variations usually mean that a phrase has been inserted (in this instance "the desert of Z."); and it is, in fact, very likely that the verse has grown in transmission.

²EPC, p. 96, note.

³EPC, pp. 114-138; BS, Oct. 1918.

any difficulty for the view that the arrival at Kadesh took place at some time in the third month of the second year, but, as we see, much to support it.¹ Moreover, the absence of any mention of the year in Num. xx. 1 tells in its favor. This is natural in the case of a month of the year last named in the narrative, but impossible on any other dating; and modern commentators who accept the month of the M. T. have accordingly been driven to suppose that the year has been cut out of the text.

Thus, if we ask, What happened? we get a satisfactory reply. The Israelites left Sinai in the second month, i.e. about May, and reached Kadesh² in the third (about June). We find the spies at Eshcol in July. The defeat which forced the evacuation of the Hormah is then to be placed about August of the second year. Thirty-eight years later, in the fortieth year, the brook Zered is crossed. Unquestionably that is a much less artificial interpretation of the expression "thirty-eight years" than any other that can be suggested. Further, we understand why the history of the thirty-eight years is so largely a blank. All preparations had been made for a successful invasion in the second year. The failure entailed the long period of wandering till a new generation of better morale had more than made good the heavy casualties sustained in the defeat. But just because it had been intended to make the entry earlier, there was nothing left to do in the way of preliminary organization and legislation. The long era of renewed growth and preparation was consequently marked by no new developments, for no fresh needs of importance could arise in the desert to give occasion for additional

¹This would not affect the dating of the Exodus and make Merneptah's third year a possible date for that event, since the occurrences from the death of the Pharaoh of the oppression are insufficient to fill a space of over two years.

²At this point it may be mentioned that the identification of Kadesh-barnea with Ain Kadels, which at one time seemed certain, appears to have been rendered very difficult by C. Leonard Woolley and T. E. Lawrence's volume on *The Wilderness of Zin* (Palestine Exploration Fund Annual, for 1914-15).

institutions. Little if anything can be referred to this period because of its character.

Our second test is, How was it told? This question, too, admits of a completely satisfactory answer. In the ordinary course of the narrative a reference to the third month following on one to the second month of the second year is natural and needs no explanation. This is much less artificial than to suppose that the year once stood in Num. xx. 1 and has been cut out.

There remains only the question, How did the narrative reach its present condition? And this, too, we shall be able to answer if we compare the other passage in which the number of the month has suffered. In Num. xxxiii. 38 Aaron dies in the fifth month according to M. T., but in the first according to the Syriac and Sahidic.¹ Obviously, then, the Sahidic here presents the original reading of the LXX. Otherwise it would not agree with the Syriac against the M. T. Now if we examine the two passages *in their present positions*, we shall see that, according to these variants, Aaron dies in the first month of the fortieth year; while, according to Num. xx. 1, the Israelites do not reach Kadesh till the third month of an unspecified year. It was only necessary for an editor to come to a conclusion that this year was the fortieth—a view which has been held by many modern commentators—for him to infer that the text was wrong, since Aaron could not have died a couple of months before the arrival at Kadesh. Emendations in the light of the principles of those days followed, with the result that the double error was introduced. Fortunately not all our authorities have suffered in either passage, so that it is possible, with the assistance of Deuteronomy, to restore the true readings in the light of historical textual criticism.

My attention has been drawn to a little slip on page 469 of DE. I there stated that the significant part of Y-sh-p-'r had only one letter (y) in common with Joseph. The Egyptian p, however, usually corresponds to the He-

¹ The Bohairic omits "on the first of the month."

brew p, so that the identification is impossible only on the ground of the difference in the sibilant.

In view of the extraordinary persistence of the error which identifies Hebrews with the Habiru (DE, pp. 471 ff.), it is well to return to the subject. The Assyriologists now admit that the two words cannot correspond.¹ Dr. C. F. Burney writes: "Habiru is not a gentilic form like Hebrew sing. עִבְרִי plur. עִבְרִים (the Babylonian gentilic form would be *Habirâ*), but a substantive form like עִבְרִי with the nominative case-ending" (Israel's Settlement in Canaan [1918], p. 69). But Eber is a personal name like Snooks. One wonders, therefore, whether the Assyriologists who still insist on the identification have been through the passages where the word occurs, and have tested their theory by seeing whether a personal name could be substituted in each case without damage to the sense. Are the gods

¹ Professor Luckenbill puts some of the arguments quite clearly: "It is noticeable, however, that since a reference to the 'gods of the Habbiri' was discovered on one of the Boghaz-Keul documents it has been found more necessary than ever to insist that the Hebrews could have been only a *part* of the Habiri mentioned in the Amarna Letters. This became imperative when it developed that SA-GAZ people were mentioned as early as 2000 B.C. in a letter of Hammurabi to Sin-idinnam. The fact is that *habbiri* seems to have been one of two (the other was *habbatu*) words meaning 'plunderer,' or the like, which might be written ideographically in the Babylonian as SA-GAZ. Furthermore it seems evident that this ideogram and its phonetic equivalents were used to designate from at least 2000 B.C. the nomadic tribes living to the west of Babylonia, whose depredations no doubt warranted the application of the name 'plunderer' to them. The writer is of the opinion that the linguistic difficulties in the way of identifying *habbiri* with 'Hebrew' are much more serious than is usually supposed" (Am. Jour. Theol., vol. xxii. pp. 36 f.). In a footnote he adds: "The word *habbiri* is probably a *kattil*-form, like *habbatu* (*kattal*), not = 'äbir' > 'öber (participle), as Böhl thinks (*Kanaanäer und Hebräer*, p. 89). Besides, the gentilic 'ibri = 'Hebrew' can hardly have come from the participial form 'äbir. The Old Testament is right in regarding 'eber, 'Heber,' as the name from which the gentilic is derived. No more could the gentilic be formed from a *kattil*-form like *habbiri*."

of the Habbiri to be conceived as the equivalents of the gods of the Snookses? Or is amélûtú Hâbiru a phrase of the same character as Snooks men? Further, when we are told that the correspondence of Habiru with Eber is "perfect," we must be careful to remember what this really means. If we *assume* that the word Habiru is a transliteration from Hebrew—of which there is not a particle of evidence—then one of *eight* sets of Hebrew consonants which it may represent is formed by the consonants of Eber. In other words, on a purely consonantal basis, there are *seven* other equivalents just as "perfect" as Eber. If we ask the advocates of the theory for any evidence that the Habiru were Semites at all, they have none to offer. Indeed, we know of two men who are described as Habiræans (which would be the gentilic of Habiru) and who bear Cassite names. The Cassites, however, were not Semites. These facts, therefore, so far as they go, create a slight presumption that the Habiru were not Semites. For the identification of the Hebrews with all or a part of them there is neither evidence nor probability. If Habiru is a proper name, it is not Semitic: if it is a word meaning "plunderers" (which seems probable), there is nothing very extraordinary in the fact that one of eight possible transliterations of its consonants into Hebrew should give us the consonants of the name Eber. That is the sole basis of the literature which has arisen on the identification.¹

One other matter. An attack has been made on the char-

¹ On pp. 469 f. of DE it was pointed out that Eerdmans (Vorgeschichte, pp. 65–67) had disproved the identification of a district mentioned in Egyptian texts with Asher. As his work is not available in English it may be desirable to say something more of his arguments. In the first Anastasi papyrus we read: "Thy name becomes as famous to them as the name of Qad'ardey, the prince of 'Esaru" (A. Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt* [E. T. 1894], p. 382). That is the only name we have of an inhabitant of the country, and it is *not Semitic*. Its first two syllables would correspond to a Hebrew קָר or קָרַר (cp. also M. Burchardt, *Die Alt Kanaanäischen Fremdworte und Eigennamen im Ägyptischen II*

acter of the Biblical narrative on the ground that the Pharaoh's name is omitted. Ed. König (Die Genesis eingeleitet, übersetzt und erklärt [1919]) points out that this is in accordance with contemporary Egyptian custom, the name being at that time omitted where the title "the Pharaoh" was used (p. 90). According to Böhl (*op. cit.*, p. 106), the Egyptians avoided uttering the name of the king without need. He compares the modern Turkish use of the Sublime Porte with the practice of employing the phrase "Pharaoh" (lit. great house).

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THE TEXT OF EXODUS XVIII. 10 F.

THE M. T. of Ex. xviii. 10 f. exhibits a corruption of considerable palæographical interest. Literally it runs as follows: "[10a] And Jethro said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of Egypt, and out of the hand of Pharaoh; [10b] who hath delivered the people from under the hand of Egypt. [11a] Now know I that the LORD is greater than all gods, [11b] for in the matter which they acted presumptuously against them." As they stand, both verses are meaningless. Verse 10b cannot possibly be right after 10a, and 11b makes no sense whatever.

An earlier stage of the text can, however, be recovered from the old authorities. The LXX lacks 10b. For 11b the Latin had "qui liberavit famulos suos de manu eorum [1910], p. 49, No. 960). There are *no* Semitic names beginning thus.

Further, the natural Egyptian transliteration of the A of Asher would not be i, which is what we find, and the e of Asher does not appear in the i-s-rw of the Egyptian word. As we see, Erman makes the name 'Esaru, not Asher at all. The Egyptian consonants may correspond to a Hebrew אַשֶׁר or אַסְרָר, neither of which is at all like Asher. The presumption, therefore, is entirely *against* the identification. Eerdmans also shows that the position of the district is quite uncertain. The contention that it corresponds with the territory of the tribe Asher consequently breaks down. History is not to be rewritten on the basis of such data.

qui deprimebant illos.”¹ This makes excellent sense; but it is curious to find part of 10b followed by something like 11b as one continuous passage, and it is necessary to inquire how the one text could have arisen from the other. The crux of the matter seems to lie in the apparent correspondence of עבדיו (his servants) in the one text with העם (the people) and the mysterious ברכר (in the matter) in the other. It looks as if the word for servants had got divided after the first letter. Perhaps אשר הציל את ע was inserted above the line in a carelessly written MS. and ברוי was taken into the next line thus:—

ע
 עתה ידעתי כי גדל יהוה מכל האלהים
 ברוי ו'²

Subsequently the supralinear words were mistaken for a part of the preceding verse and incorporated in it, the ע being regarded as an abbreviation of העם (the people), and the phrase being rounded off from the context. The ברוי and words following were converted into what we have, ברוי becoming ברכר (in the matter). Then כי was inserted to make the passage read, and consequential alterations were made; “from the hands of those who acted”² being changed into “which they acted,” etc. This leads back to a text in which 10a was followed by “Now know I that the LORD is greater than all gods, for that he hath delivered his servants from the hand of those who acted presumptuously² against them.”

If this is approximately correct, it is important to note that it gives us an idea of the length of a line of Hebrew writing in one of the ancestors of the M. T. [“Now know I” down to “gods.”]

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¹The whole clause is omitted by p. The explanation may be as follows: In an ancestor the original LXX which the Latin renders was deleted, and a translation of the present Hebrew inserted as a correction in the margin. A scribe then copied the mutilated text, but omitted to take in the marginal addition.

²The verb is uncertain. *Deprimebant* may stand for some Hebrew word for “oppress.”