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A table of contents for *Journal of Biblical Literature* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jbl-01.php

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Torah: A Word-study in the Old Testament¹

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WHEN a person gets far enough along to understand that the word *torah*, law, is sometimes used to designate the Pentateuch as distinguished from those parts of the Old Testament that are commonly called the Prophets and the Hagiographa, he is in danger of assuming that Pentateuch and *torah* are convertible terms. As a matter of fact this assumption is very common, and leads to many blunders. A study of the usage of the word *torah* is not superfluous.

In five places in the New Testament, including nearly a dozen instances in all, non-pentateuchal passages are cited as written in the law (John 10³⁴ 15²⁵ 12³⁴ Rom. 3¹⁰⁻¹⁹ 1 Cor. 14²¹). Proverbs, Isaiah in two places, and several psalms are thus cited. In these citations the term "law" is clearly used to denote a wider body of literature than the Pentateuch, evidently the Old Testament. Inasmuch as whatever is in the Pentateuch is also in the Old Testament, it is impossible to tell, in many instances, which conception of the law the New Testament writer had in mind. It is therefore impossible to tell which is the prevailing usage in the New Testament. A similar double use of the word appears in

¹ President's Address at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, December 27, 1904.

other literature from the time of the New Testament to the present day. The current explanation of these phenomena is that the term *torah* originally denoted the Pentateuch, and came to be applied to other writings by a process of extension. A good many important positions held by scholars of different schools depend on this assumption. Whether the assumption will stand, is a question of some importance, and one which can be settled only by a study of the term as used in the Old Testament.

We need not delay over the derivation of the word. It comes from *yarah*, which denotes the act of shooting arrows or hurling a javelin. All that we need attend to at this point is that *torah* is from the hiphil of the stem, and that the verb in the hiphil is strictly cognate in use to the noun, so that the two ought to be studied together. In this paper we will study them together. Ordinarily we will transfer the noun into English, instead of translating it, and will translate the verb by the corresponding phrase "to give *torah*."

The usage is abundant for the purpose of ascertaining the meaning, the noun occurring more than two hundred times and the verb in the hiphil more than sixty times in the different parts of the Old Testament. This paper is based on the study of all the instances, though its limits restrict it to comparatively few actual citations.

1. In studying the usage, note first that the law or the teaching denoted by *torah* or *horah* is divine law or teaching. To this there are only a very few exceptions in the case of the verb, and probably none in the case of the noun.

In a few instances the hiphil *horah* retains the meaning 'to shoot.' Once it is used of Judah going in advance of his father to Goshen "to give *torah*," that is, to give orders (Gen. 46²⁸). In Prov. 6³⁸ it is said concerning the "man of iniquity":

"He winketh with his eyes, he talketh with his feet,
He giveth *torah* with his fingers."

But in most of the instances where the verb is used, the directions or teachings in question are either given directly

by Deity, or are given by one who speaks in the name of Deity.

A few times the subject of the verb is a false Deity, or simply some Deity or other. In Habakkuk the men are scored who appeal to a molten image to give lying *torah*, or who look to a dumb stone to give *torah* (2^{18, 19}). In Isa. 28²⁶ the husbandman's Deity is said to give him *torah*. But commonly the subject of the verb is either the one true God or some representative of the true God.

In perhaps one third of the instances the subject is directly either *Elohim* or *Yahaweh*. *Yahaweh* gives Moses and Aaron *torah* as to what they should say and do before Pharaoh (Ex. 4¹²⁻¹⁵). He gave Moses *torah* concerning a tree for healing the bitter fountain (Ex. 15²⁶). At the dedication of the temple he is asked to give Israel *torah* concerning "the good way" (1 Ki. 8²⁶). He gives various persons *torah* "in the way," "in that way thou shalt go," "in a way that he shall choose" (Ps. 25⁸⁻¹² 32⁸). He gives the nations *torah* "out of his ways" (Mic. 4³ Isa. 2⁸). The name *Elohim* is less used in this way, but the verb appears twice in Job with *Elohim* for subject (34²² 36²²).

The most prominent use is that in which a prophet or priest gives *torah* as the representative of God. Instances of this are needless, though many are given in the course of this paper. In other instances the subject of the verb is indefinite, or is some person or object, but the teaching given is of the nature of revelation from God. Bezalel is to give *torah* concerning the tabernacle work (Ex. 35³⁴). One of the *toroth* in Leviticus (14⁵⁷) is for the purpose of giving *torah* concerning the clean and the unclean. In the forty-fifth Psalm the king's right hand gives him *torah* in "terrible things." In various places in the Wisdom books, the fathers or the beasts or the earth or "my father" or Job's friends are said to give *torah*. In some of these places it is clear that the speaker had a divine revelation in mind, and in none of them is it clear that he had not.

So much for the verb. So generally does it denote requirement or teaching that is thought of as coming from

Deity, that this is presumptively its meaning in all cases except where the context clearly shows the contrary. And if this is true of the verb, it is more decidedly true of the noun. There are probably no exceptions to the rule that the Old Testament men think of *torah* as coming from Deity. If there are any exceptions, they are seven or eight of the thirteen instances in which the word occurs in the book of Proverbs, and these, although the revised English version annotates them with the alternative "or, teaching," are not real exceptions. There is nothing to prevent the phrase "the law of thy mother" (1^s 6²⁰) from meaning 'Yahaweh's law as taught thee by thy mother.' Similar statements might be made concerning the phrases "my law" (3¹ 4^s 7^s), "their law" (6²⁸, if one accepts the emendation), "a wise man's law" (13¹⁴), "a law of loving kindness" (31²⁶). It is easy to understand these to mean simply 'thy mother's teachings,' 'my teachings,' 'the teachings of thy parents,' 'the teachings of a wise man,' 'teachings concerning loving kindness'; but it is just as easy to understand them to mean 'God's revealed will as made known to thee by thy mother, by me, by thy parents, by a wise man, by the "virtuous woman."' Either we must thus interpret these phrases, following the use of the word elsewhere, or we must regard them as a group of exceptions. Elsewhere, at least, the usage is uniform and *torah* is represented as of divine origin.

2. A second point follows from this, or it might be independently made out by reëxamining the instances: *torah* always denotes authoritative command or information. The idea of authority is inseparable alike from the noun and from the verb.

In the English versions the verb is commonly translated "teach." In the revised versions the noun is sometimes annotated with the alternative, "or, teaching." Authors frequently tell us that the noun denotes instruction, and they draw important inferences from this weakened meaning of it. This is commendable so far forth as it is an attempt to disentangle the Old Testament term from misleading associations with the English word "law" or its equivalents in

other languages; but we must limit the attempt carefully, or in rescuing the word from uncongenial company we shall lead it into company that is less congenial. *Torah* and *horah* are never used of teaching or instruction merely in the sense of giving information. They always denote authoritative teaching. With the few exceptions already noted, they denote teaching that is regarded as divinely authoritative. Not that they always express commands; the thing expressed by them may be information and not command; but it is information that is thought of as authoritative, and ordinarily as of divine authority.

3. A third point in the usage concerns the relation of *torah* respectively to the prophets and the priests.

Since these were thought of as in a special sense the representatives of Deity, we should expect that they would be particularly concerned with *torah*, and this expectation is met in the record. According to the record the prophets are the medium through whom *torah* is given from Deity; the priests are the official custodians and administrators of *torah*; the prophets and the priests are, in their respective spheres, the interpreters of *torah*.

a. The prophet is the person through whom Yahaweh reveals his *torah* to Israel.

There are certain general statements to this effect. In Daniel we find the phrase:

"His *torah*, which he gave before us by the hand of his servants the prophets" (9th).

The record of the downfall of northern Israel says:

"And Yahaweh testified with Israel and with Judah by the hand of every prophet of his, every seer, saying, Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments, my statutes, according to all the *torah* which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent unto you by the hand of my servants the prophets" (2 Ki. 17th).

And Jeremiah uses this language:

"Thus saith Yahaweh, If ye will not hearken unto me, to walk in my *torah* which I have given before you, to hearken unto the words of my servants the prophets whom I send unto you" (26th).

Such general statements are frequent and they are supported by particular instances in abundance. It was through Nathan the prophet that "the *torah* of mankind" was announced to David (2 Sam. 7¹⁹). Sealed written *torah* was given through Isaiah the prophet (8¹⁶⁻²⁰). The various *toroth* of the Pentateuch are represented to have been given through Moses the man of God, the greatest of the prophets.

Passages of still a different class give us the same result by suggestion. The confession in Nehemiah's time is that Israel has "cast thy *torah* behind their back, and murdered thy prophets" (Neh. 9³⁶). In Lamentations we read:

"Her king and her captains are among the nations; there is no *torah*, also her prophets have not found vision from Yahaweh" (2⁹).

And in Isaiah we read of

"lying sons, sons that are not willing to hear the *torah* of Yahaweh; who say to the seers, Ye shall not see," etc. (30⁹⁻¹¹).

Instances like these, in which it is either expressed or implied that the prophet is the man through whom Deity reveals *torah*, might be multiplied, but that is needless. I add only two or three in which the verb is used, not the noun. Manoah desired that the Angel, whom he supposed to be a "man of God," might be sent again to give *torah* concerning the son that was to be born (Judg. 13⁹). That is to say, he regarded the giving of *torah* as the function of the man of God. Isaiah says that the prophet who gives false *torah* is the tail in Judah (9¹⁶). Samuel the prophet, after Israel had made a king, promised nevertheless not to cease giving them *torah* (1 Sam. 12²³).

b. So much for the prophets. The priests are the guardians of *torah*, but are not its revealing agents.

They are as prominently mentioned in connection with *torah* as are the prophets, but their functions are different. In conjunction with the elders and with the judges or kings, they are the custodians and administrators of the *torah*. Like the prophets they are the interpreters of the *torah*, but they are not law-bringers like the prophets. The conception

is that certain aggregates of *torah*, brought from Deity by men who had prophetic gifts, were placed in the hands of the priests for use.

What the priests had to do with *torah* in general is fairly represented by what they had to do with the so-called "book of the *torah*." The record is that this was written by the prophet Moses and put into the keeping of the priests and elders. They were to keep it safe, and once in seven years were to teach it by public readings (Deut. 31⁹⁻¹³). They were to have charge of the *torah* in the place which Yahaweh should choose, and were to administer it in cases of appeal. The king was to have a copy of the *torah* made from the one that was before "the Levite priests" (Deut. 17^{8-12. 18}). We are told that Jehoshaphat had priests who went through the land on a mission of reform, carrying with them "the book of the *torah* of Yahaweh" (2 Chron. 17⁹). The prophet Haggai sends men to the priests to ask questions as to a point in the ceremonial *torah* (2¹¹⁻¹³).

The verb *horah* is much used in connection with the priests. They are to teach the people, give the people *torah*, concerning leprosy (Deut. 24⁸). That is, they are to make known and enforce the law on this subject, as it has been committed to them. Aaron and his sons are to teach the sons of Israel, to give the sons of Israel *torah*, all the statutes which God gave by Moses (Lev. 10¹¹). Here their *torah* is the statutes which have already been given through the prophet Moses. Ezekiel says of the priests (44²³):

"And they shall give *torah* to my people between holy and profane,
And between clean and unclean they shall give knowledge to them."

We are told that the king of Assyria sent the Israelite priest to the foreign populations which he had placed in Samaria,

"that he might give them *torah*, the usages of the God of the land, . . . how they might fear Yahaweh" (2 Ki. 17²⁷⁻²⁸).

In these and a large number of like passages the relation of the priest to law is very explicitly defined. He does not, like the prophet, receive *torah* by direct revelation from Deity; but he has charge of *torah* which has already been

revealed, to administer and interpret it. The only sense in which he gives new *torah* is by interpreting the old, answering questions concerning it, making decisions upon it, establishing precedents and usages from it. In these ways he had, of course, a lawgiving function that was of considerable importance.

Some scholars are accustomed to speak of a priestly *torah* and a prophetic *torah*, as if the two differed in their contents. There is no ground for this. There may be passages that are capable of being understood in this way, but there are none that necessarily give this meaning, and none that with any strong probability imply it. The representation rather is that the prophets and the priests had a common body of *torah*, to which they stood in differing relations. They were both expounders of the *torah*, but the prophet was, except as already noted, the sole agent through whom *torah* was revealed.

4. The consideration of these three points prepares us for a fourth, the different forms which *torah* assumed, as indicated by the variant uses of the word.

a. *Torah* was sometimes oral and sometimes written.

We need not take the trouble to prove that the prophets gave *torah* orally, or that they and the priests gave oral interpretations and oral decisions on questions that arose. It is equally needless to prove the existence of written *torah*. But we have to note that at this point the element of time becomes more important than it has been in the matters thus far discussed. Written *torah* began at an early date. In Isaiah we have an account of *torah* written and sealed (8^{16. 20}). Hosea, in a passage that has been much discussed (8²), says of Ephraim :

"I write for him the ten thousand, my *torah*,
As a stranger they are accounted."

That there was written *torah* from the time of Moses is the testimony of all the numerous passages that speak of Moses writing the law, or of the book of Moses, or of the book of the law; and I suppose that even the scholars who reject

this testimony nevertheless hold that the writing of *torah* was a part of the earliest literary writing in Israel, no matter how many centuries after Moses they may date this.

b. Again, the noun *torah* is subject to the variety of uses which we should expect in the case of a term that was so frequently employed. It is used in the singular, in the plural, collectively, abstractly; it is used definitely or indefinitely, with a subject genitive, with an object genitive. Certain particulars in its use are significant:

First, the term *torah* is applied to any particular divine requirement or other message. It is thus employed indefinitely in the singular, for example (Isa. 8¹⁶):

“Bind thou up a testimony, seal a law, among my disciples.”

The context shows that the *torah* in this case is a particular message given in writing. The term is also used indefinitely in the plural, for example, “They have transgressed laws” (Isa. 24⁵). Oftener, however, this sense is expressed by the plural used definitely. In connection with the visit of Jethro, Moses is spoken of as making the people to know the *toroth* of Deity (Ex. 18^{16, 20}). Abraham is commended for keeping Yahaweh’s *toroth* (Gen. 26⁵). At the giving of the manna, Yahaweh rebukes Israel for not keeping his *toroth* (Ex. 16²⁸). Later instances are abundant. For this purpose of denoting a particular message the word is also used definitely in the singular, with the article or with an objective genitive. This is especially frequent in literary titles or subscriptions. “Moses began to declare this *torah*.” “This is the *torah* of the burnt-offering.” “The *torah* of the plague of leprosy” (Deut. 1⁶ Lev. 7³⁷ 13⁴⁶). Possibly also the term is used to denote a particular message in some instances where it is defined by a subjective genitive. Take, for example, Isaiah’s exclamation (1¹⁰):

“Hear ye the word of Yahaweh, ye officials of Sodom!

Give ear to the *torah* of our God, ye people of Gomorrah!”

Here it is possible, though not necessary, to hold that the *torah* to which the prophet refers is the message which he is in the act of uttering.

This usage, we should note, is found in the records concerning the exodus and concerning Abraham, in the writings which the older tradition attributes to Moses, and in sections which the analytical critics assign to E and to J. That is to say, you find it, no matter to what critical school you belong, in the earliest extant Israelitish literature as well as in all subsequent periods.

Second, the word *torah* in the singular is used to denote an aggregate of divine messages or requirements. A more specific use with the article, or with a defining subject genitive, will be considered later. For the present we note that this use occurs when the noun has no article, or when the article only indicates that the *torah* spoken of has been defined by the context. An instance without the article occurs in the prayer of Nehemiah:

"And commandedst them commandments and statutes and a *torah*, by the hand of Moses thy servant" (Neh. 9¹⁴).

Here, clearly, *torah* denotes the aggregate of the Mosaic requirements or revelation. There are many similar instances, some referring to Moses and some not (*e.g.* Deut. 33⁴ Ps. 78⁶ Mal. 2⁶). Instances with the article, some of them relatively early, will be hereafter mentioned, especially in connection with the book of the law.

Third, this indefinite general use easily passes over into an abstract use. This is generally concealed in the English versions, which render in such cases with the article, but the usage is abundant. It occurs sometimes in plain prose. In Asa's time, says the Chronicler, Judah was "without law-expounding priest and without law," and he says that Jehoshaphat's judges were to be faithful "between law and commandment" (2 Chron. 15³ 19¹⁰). But the usage is more frequent in poetry, and is to some extent a matter of poetic diction.

"For out of Zion *torah* shall go forth,
and the word of Yahaweh from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2³ Mic. 4²).

"*Torah* will go forth . . . for a light of peoples" (Isa. 51⁴).

"Her priests have done violence to *torah*" (Zeph. 3⁴).

“ Forsakers of *torah* praise a wicked person,
 While observers of *torah* contend with them.”
 “ He that guardeth *torah* is a discerning son.”
 “ He turneth away his ear from hearing *torah*,
 Also his prayer is an abomination ” (Prov. 28⁴⁻⁷.)

Fourth, among the uses of the word *torah* one in particular is significant — that in which the definite phrase “the *torah*” designates a certain definite and recognized aggregate. The phrase may of course appear in variant forms: “the *torah* of Yahaweh,” “the *torah* of our God,” “my *torah*,” “thy *torah*,” “his *torah*,” “the *torah*,” “this *torah*.” Before discussing this use of the term, let us complete our list of uses.

Fifth, there remains one more case to be noted. It is a matter of natural variation in the use of a word that any part of the *torah*-aggregate may sometimes be called by the name that properly belongs to the whole. For example, the deuteronomic book of the *torah* might by itself be called the *torah*. The relatively brief section inscribed on the altar at Ebal is called “all the words of this *torah*.”

Such are the five uses of the term. It is used of a single divine requirement or other message, of an undefined aggregate, in an abstract sense, of the recognized definite aggregate, and, by synecdoche, of the parts of this aggregate. The validity of the general classification is not changed by the fact that the assignment of certain instances would be affected by the critical theories held. Take, for example, “the *torah*” introduced in Deuteronomy 4⁴. Did the writer intend to intimate that what follows is a single prophetic message, or a relatively brief aggregate of such messages, or a section of the well-known *torah*-aggregate? Your answer to this question will affect your classifying of the passage, but not the categories of the classification itself.

5. With these five uses of the term in mind we take up the question of the nature of “the *torah*” regarded as a single aggregate.

a. The word *torah* might supposably denote the formally recognized aggregate of the *toroth* that have been received

from Deity, whenever it has the definite article or is made definite by some designation of Deity used as a subject genitive. In fact, however, there are several limitations. For, first, the definite phrase may be used of some particular *torah* somehow indicated by the context. Or, second, it may be used of some section or some other lesser aggregate of *toroth*, instead of denoting the great aggregate. Or, third, it may be used vaguely. Or, fourth, it is wide enough to include oral as well as written *torah*; though we must here note that it has especial affiliations with written *torah*, and unquestionably connects itself with the traditions of writings laid up before Yahaweh.

But after eliminating all the instances possible, the use of the phrase to denote one especial aggregate still remains. Necessarily it was a growing aggregate. On this point there should be no difference of opinion between men of differing critical schools, however they might differ in regard to the details of the growth. The *torah* was a body of literature when the term first began to be used in this way, and it enlarged its boundaries afterward.

b. Let us look at a few instances.

First, take a group from the records of the early part of the public career of Moses, from writings which the older tradition ascribes to Moses, and which the analysis now current ascribes to J or E. We have already found these writings mentioning *toroth* in the plural, but they also use the definite phrase in the singular. Israel is to teach the children concerning the passover,

“that the *torah* of Yahaweh may be in thy mouth” (Ex. 13⁹ J).

Giving the manna, Yahaweh chides Israel for not keeping his *toroth* (Ex. 16²⁸), but tests them

“whether they will walk in my *torah*” (Ex. 16⁴ J).

At Sinai Yahaweh says,

“And I will give thee the tables of stone and the *torah* and the commandment which I have written” (Ex. 24¹³ E or E⁹).

In the first two of these instances and probably in the third also, "the *torah*" is an aggregate. In the third instance, and possibly in the other two, the *torah* is in writing. The men of that generation thought of Yahaweh's requirements not merely as so many *toroth*, but also as a unit, *torah*. Of course, the unit is not here the Pentateuch or the Old Testament; but the mental habit of thinking of Yahaweh's communications to men as aggregated then already existed in Israel; and, since this habit existed, it certainly fastened itself to any written *torah* which they might possess. Whatever be one's critical point of view, this habit was prevalent in Israel in the times of the earliest records.

Second, the conception of "the *torah*" as an aggregate is frequent in Deuteronomy and in the scriptures which presuppose Deuteronomy. Conspicuous here are the passages that speak of the "book of the law," but the conception is also abundantly presented in other passages.

"What great nation is there that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this *torah* which I set before you this day?" (Deut. 4^b).

It is evident that "this *torah*" here denotes an aggregate of "statutes and judgments," a recognizable, well-known aggregate. And this is the beginning of a line of presentations, extending through the prophets and psalmists and other writings. We read of "the *torah* . . . which Yahaweh commanded the sons of Jacob" (2 Ki. 17²⁴); "the *torah* . . . which he wrote for you" (17³⁷); "the *torah* of Yahaweh" in which Jehu failed to walk (10³¹), in which the sons of David were to walk (2 Chron. 6¹⁶), which Rehoboam forsook (12¹), in which the perfect man meditates day and night (Ps. 1²), which is perfect (Ps. 19⁷), which is better than thousands of gold and silver (Ps. 119⁷²), which Yahaweh will write within his servants (Jer. 31³³), which Judah has despised, but for which the coastlands wait (Isa. 42^{24. 4}), which is in the heart of those who know righteousness (Isa. 51⁷); "the *torah* of Moses my servant" (Mal. 4⁴).

The basal conception in these deuteronomic and post-

deuteronomic utterances is that of "the *torah*" as the aggregate of the *toroth* that have been revealed from Deity. In many of the instances the term has literary implications, and the aggregate it denotes either is or includes an aggregate in writing. It is less easy to prove that this aggregate was a canon, or even physically a collection; but it is recognized, in thought at least, as a known unit. The term "the book of the *torah*" may supposably denote this aggregate, or may denote some section of it, or may denote sometimes the one and sometimes the other, but in any case this idea of the *torah* as a literary aggregate is in familiar use. This was the case from the time when deuteronomic writing began to the close of the Old Testament.

In the present state of criticism it seems convenient to recognize as a third group of instances those found in Hosea and Amos and the first half of Isaiah. In these writings *torah* is mentioned many times, and the definite phrase occurs not less than seven times.

"And thou hast forgotten the law of thy God." "They have transgressed my covenant and trespassed against my law." "I write for him the ten thousands of my law" (Hos. 4^s 8^l 12).

"Because they have rejected the law of Yahaweh,
and have not kept his statutes,
And their lies have led them astray,
after which their fathers walked" (Am. 2^l).

"The law of our God," "the law of Yahaweh of hosts," "the law of Yahaweh" (Isa. 1¹⁰ 5²⁴ 30⁹).

In one or two of these seven instances "the *torah*" may possibly be something less than the recognized *torah*-aggregate; but in most of them it is clearly that aggregate, more or less definitely conceived. In one of them the aggregate is described as an existing body of literature, and this one must needs have weight in interpreting the others. One's view of the relation of these instances to those of the two groups already cited will depend on his critical position, but whatever that may be, instances of this sort emerge in the

earliest extant Israelitish literature. At the beginnings of the authentic history of Israel, no matter when one dates these, we have glimpses of the *torah* as an aggregate of some sort, and we have glimpses of literary *torah*. The conception of "the *torah*" as a known literary aggregate cannot have been long delayed.

It is evident that the *torah*-aggregate is not exclusively the Pentateuch. We have found that the term is said to have been in use before most of the pentateuchal events occurred. The passages generally speak of *torah* as commensurate with the authoritative teaching of the prophets, and therefore as something much wider than the Pentateuch. The *torah* which is made so prominent in Ezra and Nehemiah and Daniel certainly includes the Pentateuch, but just as certainly includes much more than the Pentateuch. Even when the author of Ezra calls it "the book of Moses" (6¹⁸), he speaks of it as including the ceremonial arrangements of the time of David. Whether the Pentateuch by itself is ever in the Old Testament called "the *torah*" is a matter of interpretation, and is at least doubtful.

It would be more nearly correct to identify the *torah*-aggregate with the Old Testament, though this should not be done without careful definition. Whenever men began to think of the written *torah* as an aggregate, they would naturally apply to it the three names that now denote the three divisions of the Old Testament. They would think of the aggregate as "the Law," the body of *torah* which Deity had given; they would think of it as "the Prophets," because they regarded it as given through the prophets; and they would think of it as "the Writings," distinguishing it from the *torah* that were given orally. They would think thus of the aggregate, even if no physical collection of it had been made; much more would they think thus of it if they possessed it in collected form. It was doubtless "the Law" and "the Prophets" and "the Writings" during the time when it was receiving additions, and, when at length it ceased to grow and thereby became the fixed body of writings which we now call the Old Testament, it was still "the Law," and

also was still "the Law" and "the Prophets" and "the Writings."

The author of the book of Ecclesiasticus had a body of writings that was nearly or exactly the same as our Old Testament. His list of worthies is virtually a table of contents, presenting an arrangement of the books which is mainly that of the events they treat, with no hint of a division into the Pentateuch and the Prophets and the Hagiographa. He has something to say concerning the law of Moses, but his law of Moses apparently included other writings as well as the Pentateuch, and in particular it included the Wisdom books. Two generations later, the translator of Ecclesiasticus emphasizes some sort of a division into "the Law" and "the Prophets" and "the other books," but leaves the matter indefinite. Some generations after him, Philo at last sharply marks off the Pentateuch as "the Law," and perhaps hints uncertainly at a threefold division. Some generations later still, we find contemporaneously the two conflicting theories of a triple division presented respectively by the Masoretes and by Josephus the Palestinian Pharisee. Not till long after this can the division properly be regarded as settled.

These post-biblical facts are in continuity with the biblical phenomena. The order of succession was clearly this: first, concrete *toroth*, regarded as messages from Deity; at a very early date some of these in writing; also from an early date the habit of thinking of Yahaweh's *torah* as an aggregated unit; this habit fixing itself especially upon the written *toroth* and leading to the use of means for collecting and authenticating these; the written aggregate coming to be known as *par excellence* the *Torah*, and also as the *Torah* and the Prophets and the Writings; finally these terms acquiring the secondary sense in which they denote respectively the three divisions of the aggregate.