

you must remember that among them are spellings, propernames, substitute particles, etc. In the places where we may study it, the DSS does not seem to be totally one way or the other. At times it sides with the LXX and at times with the MT. Frequently it differs from both. A final statement of the situation confronting this matter is not yet to be made. Students who want to do this work more particularly should obtain a 7th edition BH in which the Qumran variations, in the main, are listed.

7. The Samaritan Pentateuch

This is a non-masoretic rescension of the Pentateuch. It is now part of the Samaritan community where it has been held for a long time. Apparently its concepts, as it disagrees with the accepted Hebrew text, were known to the woman of the well in John 4. Its own claim is to that of being the copy of the law taken to Samaria by a priest in the days of Esarhaddon (ca 680 BC) although others believe the original is no later than the time of Nehemiah (no earlier, that is). The present copy is only a middle age document. It is, however, an independent witness to the Hebrew text, increasingly interesting since the community sustaining it was not on good terms with Jerusalem. The article in INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPAEDIA is worth reading.

The western world has gone to extremes on the Sam Pent. It has variances with the MT in about 6,000 points and most of them are in simple orthography. Wurthwein (p. 81 ff) suggests that in about 1900 places the MT opposes both the Sam Pent and the LXX when they agree. It seems to me that the Sam Pent is very supportive of Qere readings and this helps me to feel that the original document is ancient. Beyond that we shall not go at this time.

8. Present State of the Old Testament text

Regarding the whole of the OT, Roberts (TEXT AND VERSIONS) suggest that there are about 17,000 textual variations and about 15,500 thousand suggested emendations of greater or lesser strength. That seems to be a very large number but if one computes the number of possibilities, one will see that it is really but a fraction of the potential divergency. Most of these are painfully minute and few, if any, alter any substantial understanding of the total text. Most of the "important" ones occur in the historical narratives and in the events related to the movements of the kings. The conjectural emendations are legion, of course, but these are speculative and have no evidential grounds in the text other