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A. T. Chapman

Excerpt

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH.

### PART I.

*The following sections contain a statement of facts concerning the Pentateuch and book of Joshua, and the criticism which has been directed towards them, which will serve as an introduction to the investigation which follows in Part II.*

#### § I. NAMES AND TITLES.

THE tripartite division<sup>1</sup> of the Jewish Canon into the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings indicates three stages in the

<sup>1</sup> This division is as follows:

1. The Law, or *Tōrah*, comprising Genesis—Deuteronomy.
2. The Prophets, or *Nebhī'im*; which are divided into
  - (a) the Former Prophets, comprising Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings,
  - (b) the Latter Prophets, comprising Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve Minor prophets (Hosea—Malachi), reckoned as forming one book.
3. The Writings or *Kethubim* (Hagiographa), comprising
  - (a) Psalms, Proverbs, Job.
  - (b) The five Rolls, or *Megilloth*, viz. Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther.
  - (c) Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles.

Though MSS. and printed books present some variation in the order of the books in division (2) and a greater variation in division (3),

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history of its formation<sup>1</sup>. The five books which occupy the first place in the Hebrew Bible, as well as in all versions of the O.T., owe their position to the fact that they were the first books read in public assemblies, and recognized as Canonical by the Jews. In the English and some other modern versions they are called 'Books of Moses,' but this description is not found in the original Hebrew, nor in the Greek and Latin versions. The title given to them by the Jews is *Tōrāh*, or Law, because of the legislation contained in them. The division into five books is older than the LXX.<sup>2</sup>, and may have been made when the yet 'the books belonging to one division are never (by the Jews) transferred to another' (Professor Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, eighth edition, 1909, p. i).

A different arrangement of the books is found in our English Bibles. After the Pentateuch, all the historical books are grouped together (Joshua—Esther), Ruth being placed after Judges. The poetical books follow, arranged in accordance with the traditional view as to their date, the three books ascribed to Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon) being placed together. The prophets form the last division, Lamentations being placed after Jeremiah, as being traditionally his work, and Daniel after Ezekiel. It will be observed that the variation of the order is caused by rearranging the books of the second and third Jewish divisions. This order is due to the influence of the LXX. version in which the books were rearranged (with the so-called apocryphal books intermixed) substantially according to subject matter; first history, then poetry, lastly the prophetic writings. This order, transmitted through the Vulgate, is found in English and other modern versions, only with the removal of the 'apocryphal' books to a class by themselves.

<sup>1</sup> The statement in the text may be verified by reference to works on the Canon of the Old Testament (see a list in *LOT*<sup>8</sup> p. i), especially that by the Bishop of Winchester, *The Canon of the Old Testament*, second edition, 1895, who says (p. 221) 'that "the tripartite division" gives no arbitrary grouping but is a trustworthy witness and an invaluable memorial of the historical growth and gradual development of the Canon.' Cf. Art. 'Canon' in *DB* vol. I. p. 349, and 'Old Testament Canon' in vol. III. p. 604.

<sup>2</sup> The LXX. translation was begun early in the 3rd century B.C.

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Pentateuch assumed its present form. Each book was called a *hōmesh* or 'fifth part<sup>1</sup>, and the whole *Torah* was called *hāmishshah hum<sup>s</sup>shē thorah*, 'the five fifth-parts of the law<sup>2</sup>.' The Greek title, ἡ πεντάτευχος (βιβλος) the five-volumed (book), refers to the same division; whence the Latin Pentateuchus and the word Pentateuch in English and other modern languages.

The Hebrew, Greek, and Latin titles of the books are given in the following table:—

HEBREW	ENGLISH RENDERING OF THE HEBREW	GREEK	LATIN
1. <i>Bērēshīth</i>	'In the beginning'	Γένεσις	Genesis
2. <i>Vē'ēlleh shēmōth</i> , usually abbreviated to <i>Shēmōth</i>	'And these are the names,' or 'Names'	Ἔξοδος	Exodus
3. <i>Vay-yīqrā</i>	'And he called'	Λευ(ε)ιτικόν	Leviticus
4. <i>Bammidhār</i>	'In the wilderness'	Ἄριθμοι	Numeri
5. <i>Elleh hadd'bhārīm</i> , usually abbreviated to <i>D'bhārīm</i>	'These are the words,' or 'Words'	Δευτερονόμιον	Deuteronomium

The Hebrew titles consist of the opening word or words of each book, as will be seen by comparing the English renderings in the second column with the English versions. From the first words of Numbers, 'And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai,' the Hebrew word corresponding to 'in the wilderness' has been selected as the first distinctive word, and as descriptive of the contents of the book, but the book was

<sup>1</sup> Exodus is referred to as the second *hōmesh* in the Jerusalem Talmud, *Sotah* 7. 4 (21 d, line 24 of the Krotoschin edition).

<sup>2</sup> Jerus. Talm. *Sanh.* 10. 1 (28 a), *Ḳohēleth rabba* on Eccl. xii. 11, in many other places, and in printed editions of the Hebrew Bible.

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also sometimes called *Vay'dhabber* from the first word of the book, the English of which is 'and he spake<sup>1</sup>.'

The Greek translators gave a name to each book, indicating its contents, or some important event described in it. The name generally occurs in the Greek version. Thus *Genesis* (Γένεσις) refers to the creation of the world (Γ. κόσμου in A), and the word is found in Gen. ii. 4; *Exodus* (Ἔξοδος) to the departure from Egypt, and the word is found in Ex. xix. 1; *Numbers* (Ἀριθμοί) to the numberings of the people, and the word is found in Num. i. 2; *Deuteronomy* (Δευτερονόμιον) to the law contained in the book, and the word is found in Deut. xvii. 18. The title

<sup>1</sup> According to Jerome in his prologue. This great Biblical scholar and critic, after some years spent in revising the Old Latin version, began his new translation of the O.T. from the Hebrew in A. D. 391, and finished it about 404. He composed by way of preface what he styled 'a Helmed Prologue' (Prologus Galeatus), in which he gave an account of the Canonical Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible. The exact meaning of this remarkable phrase has been variously explained; yet it seems tolerably certain that Jerome intended to signify that this Preface was to be his general apology for limiting his special work to the books of the Hebrew Canon, a limitation which would expose him to the assaults of many in the African Churches. By slow degrees his work, variously modified, became the 'Vulgate'—the *common* Version—of the Latin Churches. (Abbreviated from Westcott's *Bible in the Church*, p. 181.) This preface is still printed at the beginning of ordinary editions of the Vulgate, but in some earlier editions (e.g. that of 1498) it occupies its original place before the books of Samuel, as *præfatio in libr. Samuel et Malachim*. It is given in Excursus D to Ryle's *Can. of O.T.*<sup>2</sup> p. 299.

The part referring to the Pentateuch is as follows:

Primus apud eos liber vocatur *Bresith* quem nos *Genesim* dicimus. Secundus *Ellesmoth* qui *Exodus* appellatur. Tertius *Vajecra* id est *Leviticus*. Quartus *Vajedabber* quem *Numeros* vocamus. Quintus *Elleaddabarim* qui *Deuteronomium* prænотatur. Hi sunt quinque libri *Mosi* quos proprie *Thorath* id est *legem* appellant.

Jerome himself describes his prologue as follows: Hic prologus Scripturarum, quasi galeatum principium omnibus libris, quos de Hebraeo vertimus in Latinum, convenire potest.

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of the third book, *Leviticus*, has been chosen with a view to describe the ordinances contained in it, but these ordinances apply mainly to priests, and there is no mention of Levi or Levites in the book. The name given to it by Jewish writers, *Tōrath Kōh<sup>n</sup>nīm*, 'the priests' law,' is more appropriate.

The Latin names are transliterations of the Greek. The title of the third book in Greek is a neuter adjective, and some MSS. give the Latin name *Leviticum*, but the masculine form of the adjective (suggesting 'liber' as the unexpressed substantive) has been generally adopted. A transliteration of the name of the fourth book<sup>1</sup> occurs in Tertullian<sup>2</sup>, but by the time of Cyprian it has been replaced by the translation *Numeri*. The fifth book preserves in Latin the neuter form of the Greek.

The English names are identical with the Latin for the first three books, but following the example of the Latin, *Numeri* is translated 'Numbers,' and the ending of *Deuteronomium* is modified<sup>3</sup>.

Besides the Hebrew titles given in the table, other expressions are used by Jewish writers to denote certain books or portions of books. *Tōrath Kōh<sup>n</sup>nīm* as a name for Leviticus has already been mentioned. Deuteronomy is often referred to as *Mishneh Tōrah*, 'repetition of the law,' and the Greek *Δευτερονόμιον* expresses the same idea<sup>4</sup>. According to Origen, quoted in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* VI. 25, the Hebrew name of Numbers was Ἀμμοσφεκοδείμ, which seems to represent ḥōmesh [חַפ] ḥōdīm<sup>5</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> A variation in the order of the books may be noted: Melito, Leontius, and the Cheltenham list reverse the common order of Leviticus and Numbers. Swete, *Intr. to O.T. in Greek*, p. 226, and Sanday, *Studia Biblica*, III. p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> *adv. Marcionem*, IV. 23, referring to the Nazirite vow (Num. vi.), and IV. 28, referring to Balaam (Num. xxii.—xxiv.), as 'in Arithmis.'

<sup>3</sup> In German Bibles the Latin names are unaltered; in French Bibles the Latin endings are dropped, as 'Exode,' 'Deuteronomie'; and 'Nombres' is a translation.

<sup>4</sup> See note B at end of this section p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> So in the Mishnah, *Joma* vii. 1, where Num. xxix. 7 is referred

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i.e. 'the fifth-part [of the law] of [i.e. relating to] the numbered ones.' This title, like the Greek, refers to the numbering of the children of Israel.

Philo speaks repeatedly of the Pentateuch as 'the Legislation'; and in one passage<sup>1</sup> he quotes Josh. ii. 11 as included in this title. He also frequently refers to the Pentateuch as 'the Law,' and in one passage<sup>2</sup> as 'the Laws.'

For other titles see the lists in Prof. Swete's *Introduction to the O.T. in Greek*, pp. 198—216, and Bp Ryle's *Philo and Holy Scripture*, p. xix ff., and *Can. of O.T.*<sup>2</sup> Excursus D and E and p. 306.

## NOTE A. THE NAME HEXATEUCH.

The book of Joshua is the first in the second division of the Hebrew Canon. But though this arrangement draws a very definite line between the book of Joshua and those that precede it, a close connexion both in structure and subject matter exists between them. The first stage in the history of God's dealings with His chosen people ends with their settlement in the Promised Land, rather than with the death of Moses. The promise is made to Abraham 'To thy seed will I give this land' (Gen. xii. 7) and frequently repeated to him and his descendants in the book of Genesis. The rest of the Pentateuch records the development of the nation, and its discipline preparatory to entering the Land. This record is incomplete without the book of Joshua in which the fulfilment of the promises is recorded.

'People and Land are the two leading ideas which beginning in Genesis are never lost sight of till they culminate in Joshua. Hence instead of the Greek name Pentateuch given to the *Five Books*, modern critics have adopted the name Hexateuch for the *Six Books* including the book of Joshua<sup>3</sup>.'

to as **ובעשור שלחומש הפקודים**, 'And on the tenth' (the first Heb. word of xxix. 7) belonging to the fifth-part of the numbered ones, i.e. of the book Numbers.

<sup>1</sup> *De Migrat. Abrah.* § 32.

<sup>2</sup> *De Spec. Legg.* § 1.

<sup>3</sup> The late Bp Perowne in *Camb. Comp. to the Bible*, p. 93.

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## THE NAME HEXATEUCH

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Combinations of the books of the Pentateuch with other books of the O.T. were not unknown in the Christian Church. The name Heptateuch was given to the first seven books of the Bible, and these books together with the book of Ruth were designated the Octateuch. Nestle in the Article 'Septuagint,' *DB* IV. 447 note, observes: 'Greek MSS. mostly count Gen.—Ruth as books 1—8, as ὀκτάτευχος; the Latin MSS. Gen.—Judges as *Heptateuchus*.' The eighth of the Latin lists given by Swete, *Introd. to O.T. in Greek*, p. 212, has a note after Judges—'Fiunt libri VII vēr. XVIII c<sup>1</sup>.' On this list see Sanday, *Studia Biblica*, III. p. 222 f., and other works cited in Swete, *loc. cit.* and pp. 123, 227, 346. Another list given by Turner in *J. Th. S.* II. p. 239 has after Judges—'hi sunt VII libri legis quos greci Eptatheuchos appellant...'<sup>2</sup>. Ambrose in his commentary on Ps. cxviii. (cxix. Heb. and Eng.) 162, 'I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil,' refers to the Canonical Books as spoil found 'sine labore meo.' 'Inveni Heptateuchum, inveni regnorum libros....' Migne *P. L.* vol. xv. col. 1584.

The eighth of the Greek lists given by Swete, *op. cit.* p. 205, groups together Gen.—Ruth as ἡ ὀκτάτευχος; and the ninth, p. 206, from Lagarde, *Septuagintastudien*, II. p. 60, has in a separate line after the Pentateuch and Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Τέλος τῆς ὀκτατεύχου. Another list (*J. Th. S.* II. p. 238) has after Gen.—Ruth, 'hii libri VIII habent versus numero XX̄I CCCCXIII.' Other versions as the Armenian and Ethiopic have traces of the same grouping. No ancient precedent has yet been found for the name Hexateuch, but a close relation between the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua is implied in the words of the Talmud (*Nedarim* 22), 'If Israel had not sinned, they would be reading only the five books of the Law and the book of Joshua.' The ideal Israel has the Hexateuch for its Bible.

<sup>1</sup> This note gives the number of verses in the Heptateuch. See Swete, *op. cit.* p. 346.

<sup>2</sup> On the Lyons old Latin Heptateuch see *J. Th. S.* II. p. 305.

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### NOTE B. ON JEWISH TITLES OF THE BOOKS OF THE LAW.

These titles are of two kinds; either taken from the initial words of a book, or descriptive like the Greek titles. Which of these two methods of naming the books is the older? Descriptive titles seem more natural, and in accordance with the general method of naming books. The titles of the books following the Hexateuch (Judges, Samuel, Kings) are descriptive and in the N.T. a portion of the *Torah* is referred to as 'the Bush.' The method of initial words seems more artificial; but as it is found in the Mishnah, it was employed at least as early as the second century A.D. From a comparison of Origen's list, with its descriptive title for Numbers (see p. 5), with that of Jerome (p. 4 note), it might be inferred that initial words gradually supplanted descriptive titles, and that the process was not complete in Origen's time.

According to Ben Asher in *Dikduke haṭṭe'āmīm*, p. 57 (ed. Baer and Strack), the name *Sepher yōzī'ath Mizraim*, i.e. the book of the going out from Egypt, was applied to Exodus.

Philo (*de Migr. Abr.* § 3, l. 438, Mangey's ed., § 14 Wendland and Cohn) states that Moses gave to Exodus the title Ἐξαγωγή (a bringing out, or going out) and commends it as suitable. Philo did not mean that Moses gave the *Greek* name to the book; but Ἐξαγωγή is the Greek translation of some *Hebrew* title which was of sufficiently venerable antiquity to be regarded by him as Mosaic. He may be cited as bearing testimony to the existence of a Hebrew descriptive title for Exodus, which was considered very ancient in his day. Was it the same as that given above from Ben Asher? It is not probable that the Jew borrowed his descriptive titles from the Greek, but it may be that Greek titles are due to Jewish tradition.

There are two passages in the LXX. where the word *δευτερονόμιον* occurs: (a) Deut. xvii. 18; *mishnēh hattorah hazzoṭh* is here rendered τὸ δευτερονόμιον τοῦτο. As most commentators have pointed out, the Hebrew words must be translated 'a

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repetition (i.e. a copy) of this law,' and by 'this law,' the law contained in the book of Deuteronomy is implied; (*b*) Josh. viii. 32 (ix. 5 in cod. B); *mishneh torath Mosheh* is here rendered τὸ δευτερονόμιον, νόμιον Μωσῆ. Here the Hebrew words must be translated 'a copy of the law of Moses,' and by 'the law of Moses' in this passage the law in the book of Deuteronomy is implied. The LXX. rendering of both these passages is inaccurate. But it may be asked, what led the LXX. translators to coin this compound word? If the title *mishneh torah*, given to the fifth book of the law in the Talmud and elsewhere, were an *old* designation, then Δευτερονόμιον, which is a good rendering of it, may have been adopted by Greek-speaking Jews as a name of the book, and a reason for the employment of the word in these two passages is apparent. The juxtaposition of the two words *mishneh* and *torah* suggested the word Δευτερονόμιον which was already known to them. If the LXX. translators, by using Δευτερονόμιον in these passages, intended to make reference to the book known to them by that name, then their translation, though not grammatically defensible, conveys the meaning of the original, for in both passages the law contained in the book of Deuteronomy is referred to.

It appears then that Jewish descriptive titles of the last four books of the Pentateuch can be traced; and the question may be asked, What descriptive title (if any) was given to the book of Genesis?

The work of Creation is often referred to in Talmudic literature as *mā'aseh bereshith* (i.e. the work (done) in the beginning<sup>1</sup>), and more briefly as *bereshith*<sup>2</sup>. Hence the book of Genesis, as

<sup>1</sup> See Mishnah, *Chagigah*, ii. 1. Dr Streane in his English translation of this treatise (Camb. Univ. Press, 1891) explains how the approximate date of passages in the Talmud, an important element in estimating its testimony, may be determined (see Introduction, p. vii, and Glossary; also Strack, *Einleitung in den Talmud*, ed. 4, 1908, pp. 81—112, and Mielziner, *Introduction to the Talmud*, 1903).

<sup>2</sup> Mishnah, *Berachoth*, ix. 2, 54 a, and 59 b. These benedictions are probably very old.

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containing the account of the Creation<sup>1</sup>, came to be called *B'reshith*, a title which referred to a portion of its contents as the Greek title Genesis does, but was also the opening word of the book. It is not improbable that a precedent was thus made for naming other books by their initial words.

### § 2. PLAN AND CONTENTS OF THE HEXATEUCH.

The Hexateuch in its present form contains a history of the chosen People up to the time of their settlement in the Promised Land. The history is not continuous; some portions are treated fully while others are passed over with only brief comment. It may be summarized under the following heads<sup>2</sup>:

#### (1) *The ancestors of the nation.*

The book of Genesis may be regarded as an introduction, dealing with the period before the existence of the nation. A brief sketch of primitive history (Gen. i.—xi.) serves to connect Israel with the beginning of all things, and with the surrounding nations of the earth. It sets forth God as the Maker and Ruler of the world and of man, blessing the race in Adam, punishing disobedience by driving Adam and Eve from the garden, and, when the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, bringing the flood upon the ungodly, but saving Noah and his family and

<sup>1</sup> The statement in Ryle's *Philo and Holy Scripture* from Dr Pick, that in *Sanhedrin* 62 b, and the Jerus. Talmud, *Megillah* ch. 7, the history of the Creation in Genesis is called *Sepher Yezirah* rests on a mistake. The Jer. Talm. of *Megillah* has no seventh chapter; and in *Sanh.* 65 b (not 62 b) the reference is not to Genesis, but to a book which the context shews was of a mystical character. The error (which is due originally to Fürst, *Kanon des A.T.* p. 5) was pointed out by Blau, *Zur Einleitung in die heilige Schrift*, 1894, p. 47. It is doubtful whether the book Genesis was ever called *Sepher yezirah*.

<sup>2</sup> As the introduction to each book will contain a full analysis of its contents, it will be sufficient to indicate here the main outlines of the whole.