



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A FURTHER FRAGMENT OF BEN SIRÁ.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE fragment reproduced in the following pages, line by line and page by page, was discovered lately in the Cairo Collection of Cambridge University Library. The MS. (called for convenience sake MS. C) consists of two leaves, paper, measuring 14.3 × 10 cm. The middle sheet or sheets have gone, and a part of the second leaf is torn off; this defect is indicated by dots. The writing is in a large hand, but its decipherment is sometimes rendered difficult by the fact that the sign ם may stand for *vaw*, *yod*, and even *resh*. There is also no sufficient distinction between *beth* and *kaph* and between *resh* and *daleth*. The number of lines on each page and of words in each line is very small; thus the fragment covers on the whole not more than some twenty-five verses. Yet the MS. is not without its interest for students of the Apocrypha. In the first place it bears evidence to the existence of a third MS. of Ben Sirá. This fact adds a further proof of its authenticity; for it is not to be supposed that the Jews would apply themselves to the preparation of so many copies of a fresh translation of a book which was already for centuries under the cloud of heresy¹. This can only be explained on the hypothesis that there still lingered a few copies of Ben Sirá dating from the times when the fatal sayings of R. Akiba (second century) and R. Joseph (fourth century), relegating Ben Sirá's work to the class of ספרי מינים, had not yet acquired general force.

¹ Since the above lines in the text were written two more leaves of Ben Sirá have been discovered by Prof. I. Lévi of Paris, one of which probably comes from MS. A of the Cambridge edition, whilst the other seems to come from the same codex which is the subject of this article.

This prestige of antiquity not only protected the old codices themselves, but also encouraged the bolder spirits to prepare new copies. And these have come down to us in the shape of the three MSS. which we now possess.

More important even is the fact that the fragment testifies to the diversity of the MSS. of Ben Sira in the original language. Such a possibility was suggested by me in my introduction to the Cambridge volume of the Ben Sira fragments, where I wrote: "It is also to be noticed that MS. A shows a closer agreement with the Syriac than MS. B, whilst the latter in many cases corresponds with the Greek as against the Syriac, we have very few instances of this kind in MS. A, which fact points to various classes of MSS. existing in the Hebrew itself" (p. 11). MS. C confirms this hypothesis. For, as will be seen, the first leaf of MS. C overlaps a portion of MS. A. But whilst the latter (MS. A) agrees in most cases with the Syriac against the Greek, the former (MS. C) corresponds largely, as pointed out in the notes, with the Greek against the Syriac. The doublets, as well as many of the glosses, in MS. B will now be easily accounted for by these two families of MSS., with which the scribe of that MS. was thoroughly acquainted, and the differences between which he carefully noted and inserted in his copy. The assumption of a Persian version, with a whole string of romantic incidents accompanying the scribe who constantly corrected himself, will now, I hope, die for good. But it will also be seen that the variants of the two families of MSS., the one mostly followed by the Greek the other by the Syriac, went further than offering mere differences of a single letter or a word. In some instances they involved whole verses or lines, giving, as in the case of v. 11 (see note *ad loc.*), such different wording as to present almost a new meaning. This is to be ascribed to the arbitrary manner of the older scribes, who unfortunately were, as it would seem, not only mere copyists, but occasionally tried their hands also at composition, altering or re-casting, for reasons of style or

of a more suitable metaphor, now and then a word or even a whole verse.

Interesting, however, as these divergences are, the two MSS. are even more remarkable for their points of agreement, which show that they all spring from the same source. For of the fourteen verses which MS. C gives us on the first leaf, and which also occur in MS. A, only three (iv. 30, 31, and v. 11) materially deviate from each other, whilst in the remaining eleven the wording and the whole phraseology are almost everywhere the same, only offering such slight verbal differences as are unavoidable in two MSS. Had we here to deal with different translations, it is impossible that they should agree as closely as they do. Those who are inclined to doubt this obvious fact, should take the trouble to compare these same fourteen verses in the three Hebrew versions we possess of Ben Sira, viz. by Ben Zeeb, Fränkel, and Joshua Duklo, and he will see at once the difference between independent translations and families of MSS. differing but descendent from the same common origin. In the first case he will, before a closer reading, hardly be aware that they represent the same work, whilst in the latter it will take him some time before he detects their differences¹.

The new MS. presents a good many difficulties. A point requiring special study is that of the various omissions in it, which fact makes it widely different from all the known versions, as well as from the Hebrew original. Particularly strange is the sudden transition from chap. v. 13 to xxxvi. 19. This phenomenon could only be accounted for by assuming that the codex from which these leaves come never represented a complete MS. of Ben Sira, but merely formed an abridged collection of extracts from Ben Sira, prepared by the scribe for some special purpose of his own. That such Ben Sira extracts existed is clear from

¹ See also the symposium of the various attempts at reconstructing the original of Sirach given by Messrs. Cowley and Neubauer in their edition of the Oxford Fragments (p. xviii).

the only long continuous quotation from Ben Sirá in the Talmud (*Sanhedrin*, 100 b), consisting of verses distributed in our versions in the following way: xxvi. 1-4, ix. 8, 9, xi. 29-34, and vi. 10. These verses belonged to "the good things" of Ben Sirá which one might "interpret" or "use for homiletical purposes" (see JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, III, pp. 692 and 701 n. 52). And thus it is not impossible that an "interpreter" prepared another collection of "the good things" of Ben Sirá, with similar disregard of order and sequence.

This is the only answer suggesting itself to me at present. Since we can still hope for more discoveries of leaves from the same MS. we may safely defer the further discussion of this problem to some future occasion. I will, however, use the present occasion for the purpose of reproducing some of the contents of two Genizah fragments discovered lately, and having some bearing upon the Ben Sirá question. The one consists of two leaves, paper (21 × 18 cm.), written in an ancient hand. It is provided with vowel points and represents a collection of proverbs and sayings. The style is highly Paitanic, and it is composed in rhymes. I am unable to identify it, but it can hardly be doubted that the author was acquainted with the Wisdom of Ben Sirá. This will easily be seen by a comparison of the page given here with the contents of Ben Sirá xii. 2-5 and xiii. Of course, the language is almost obliterated in the production of our Paitan, with whom, as it seems, rhyme and elegance of language were of supreme importance. He also interspersed it with verses of Proverbs, which he likewise gives in his own language, but his use of Ben Sirá is evident in many a line to every careful reader. The text runs as follows:—

אל תהי בקהל ראשון למדברים : ואל תרבה דברים בְּשִׁתְּךָ בֵּין חֲבֵרִים :
 הקופץ כפו ויש לאל ידו : גחלי אש יהיה הונו על קדקדו : עצה טובה תחיה
 המון רב : וטובה בעת צרה מכל זני קרב : עשיר יקשה נאום והכל יכבדוהו :
 הרל יתן קול והכל ימאסוהו : עשיר מתרחק ו[הכ]ל יקרבוהו : והרל מתקרב

והכל ירחקוהו: [עשיר מקולקל ובפי כל מהולל: והדל מפלס צעדיו והוא נקרא מהולל: עשיר מעביד לרע ומקובל באהבה: והדל עובד לרע הוא לו לתועבה: העשיר עושק ואתו מצדיקים: והעני מעושק ואתו מרשיעים: אוהבי העשיר פניו יהדרו: ואוהבי העני פניו יחורו: עחרי העש[יר]בלא משא ומתן: והדל לא נעזר ואם שכר יתן: ויש מתנה מעוטה והיא נמנית כמתנות רבות: ב'ר'ך ברוחב יד נתון[נו]ת' ראשית הטוב שנוא את הרעים: וראשית הטאה לכת את רשעים.

The second fragment consists also of two leaves, paper, written in all possible hands, and containing jottings from all departments of Bible and Talmud, and its commentaries (Arabic). It further gives various titles of books, Midrashim, Halachoth, and Responsa of the Geonim which seem to have been in the possession of the writer. The largest entry is a long passage from B. T. *Megillah*, 16 a and b. Those concerning us in this place are (1) the words משלי בן סירא כל המשלים המחוקנים המתוכנים דברי אשר אני / תמונתה (in a different square hand) בנשם / ומי ערוך יערוך / מן כוכבי ניה כי יי הכמום ראוה וחסון מוסר Then come two lines from the first Mishnah in *Berachoth* followed by the words הכהנים תמונתה בנשם הכהנים / דברי ספר הגלוי הכמום ראוה וחסון מוסר אמרי / צחות הם אוצרי: אין למלאות התבונה בכל פניני הדר / [לעזה אצלה וישת לנאונו את מעונתה / תמונתה בנשם כבוק אור ברוח יום] / תמונתה בנשם תמונתה / כבוק אור ברוח יום בנשם. The words in square brackets are in cursive. The writer of these lines evidently possessed the ס' הגלוי (see Harkavy's edition of this work in his *Studien und Mittheilungen*, V, p. 180), and I have no doubt that an examination of the Arabic fragments in the Cairo collection will greatly enrich our knowledge of the Saadya literature in general, and perhaps even restore to us the missing portions of the ס' הגלוי.

Lastly, I give here the contents of a third fragment found only a few days ago. It is written on a scrap of paper (8.7 x 8.7 cm.) in Hebrew letters, but the language is Arabic. Both the copy and the translation were prepared

for me by Mr. H. Pass and the Rev. Dr. Arendzen, to whom I give my best thanks. To judge from the term פִּיסקָא this fragment must come from a MS. containing a commentary to the B. T. *Sanhedrin* (see especially 100 b) composed by one of the "earlier authorities" as R. Isaac of Fez or R. Chananel of Kairowan. As an explanation of the words of R. Joseph the fragment is of little importance. But it is highly interesting on account of the testimony it bears to the existence of two works attributed to Ben Sirā, by the one of which—that containing the "vain stories"—is probably meant the סִירָא רבֵּן אֶלְפַּאבִּיתָא (see A. Epstein, *מקדמוניות היהודים*, p. 119 sq.), whilst the other, the מְשָׁלֵי ב"ם, probably refers to our collection of proverbs known to R. Saadyah under the same title of מְשָׁלֵי (see Harkavy, *ibid.*, p. 200, and Prof. I. Levi, *Revue des Études Juives*, XXXV, p. 22). The word המתוקנים "the proper ones," in connexion with Ben Sirā in the preceding fragment, is probably also meant to differentiate it from the סִירָא בֵּן סִירָא.

פִּיֹס אִף הַקּוּרָא בַּסְפְּרִים הַחִיצוֹנִים • תֵּאנָא בַּסְפְּרֵי מִינִים פִּיר' לֵאנָהּ
מִפְסָדָה לְלֵאעֲתֻקָּאד וּמְטָלָה לְמִן לֹא חִנְכַת לָהּ בְּאֲצוּל עֵלַם אֶלְשְׂרִיעָה קָאֵל
רַב יוֹסֵף וּסְפֵר בֶּן סִירָא אֵינָא לֵאחֻק (?) בַּסְפְּרֵי מִינִים וְלֹא יִגְזוּ קְרֵאָה פִּיהָ
לֵאנָה אִן כֵּאֵן גִּיר מִפְסָד לְלֵאעֲתֻקָּאד פִּהוּ מִשְׁגַּל גִּזוּ מִן אֶלּוּמָאן פִּי
כִּרְאִפְאָתָהּ (?) [פִּ]אנָה לֹא פִּאִידָה פִּיהָ קָאֵל אִן סִפֵּר בֶּן סִירָא גִיר (?) מְשָׁלֵי
בֶּן סִירָא לֵאֵן מְשָׁלֵי בֶּן סִירָא פִּיהֶם אֶדָאב נִאֲפַעָה וְנֵאִיזוּ אֶלְקֵרָאָה פִּיהֶם (?) :

TRANSLATION.

"Because they corrupt faith, and lead astray one who has not understanding in the roots of the knowledge of the law. R. Joseph says: 'Also the book of Ben Sirā is joined to the סִפְרֵי מִינִים, and it is not permitted to read it, because even if it does not corrupt faith yet it occupies part of the time in its vain stories in which (stories) there is no advantage.' He says: 'Behold the סִפֵּר בֶּן סִירָא is different from the סִירָא בֶּן סִירָא, because in the סִירָא בֶּן סִירָא there is profitable doctrine and it is permitted to read them.'"

S. SCHECHTER.

Leaf 1, recto.

iv. 23^b תקפוץ¹ את חנמתך • 30 אל תהי
 כאריה בביתך² ומתפחו בעבודתך •³
 31 אל תהי ירך מושטת לשאת
 ובעת השב קפודה⁴ • 4 v. אל
 תאמר חטאתי ומה יהיה לו⁵
 כי יי⁶ ארך אפים הוא : 5 אל
 סליחה אל תבטח להוסיף עון
 על עון • 6^a ואמרת רבים
 רחמיו לרוב עוונותי יסלח •⁷
 6^b כי רחמים ואף עמו ועל רשעים
 יניח רגו⁸ • 7^a אל תאחר לשוב
 אליו ואל תתעבר מיום ליום •⁹

¹ Cf. Deut. xv. 7. A תצפץ.

² Agrees with the Gr. A נכלב agrees with Syr. B. T. *Pesachim*, 49 b : would suggest that ארי רורס ואוכל אף ע"ה מכה וכו' was the original reading. Cf. כלבים and כארי in Ps. xxii. 17.

³ A ומחירא במלאכתך. The ומתפחו, cf. Diet. s. פחו, may perhaps account for the Gr. *φαντασιοκοπήν*, confusing it with חזה. It is, however, possible that originally it read ומחפחו.

⁴ A agrees with the Syr. Our text here agrees more with the Gr. For קפודה we must probably read קפוצה or קמוצה.

⁵ A agrees with Gr. Cf. T. J. *Abodah Zarah*, 40 d, הווח ליה כן. See also Stade's *Heb. Wörterbuch*, p. 135, about the reading of the LXX in Job vi. 21. For לו read לי. A יעשה agrees with the Syr.

⁶ A אל agrees with Syr. Verse 4 (1) is omitted as in the Gr.

⁷ A רחמיו רבים. Cf. notes, *ad loc.*

⁸ A ואל ר' ינח. Cf. notes, *ad loc.*

⁹ A מיום אל יום.

Leaf 1, verso.

v. 7^c כִּי פִתְאוּם יֵצֵא זַעְמוֹ וּבַעַת ¹ נִקְם
 תִּסְפֶּה . 9 אֵל תְּהִי זוֹרָה לְכֹל
 רוּחַ וְאֵל תֵּלֶךְ לְכֹל שְׁבִיל ² .
 10 הִיָּה כְמוֹךְ עַל דְּבַרְךָ וְאַחַר ³
 יִהְיֶה דְבַרְיֶךָ . 11 הִיָּה נִכּוֹן
 בְּשִׁמוּעָה טוֹבָה וּבְאֵרֶךְ
 עֲנָה תִּעֲנֶה נְכוֹנָה ⁴ . 12 אִם
 יֵשׁ אֵתְךָ עֲנָה רִיעִיד ⁵ וְאִם
 אֵין שִׁים יָדְךָ עַל פִּיךָ . 13 כְּבוֹד
 וְקִלְוֹן בִּיד בּוֹטָה וּלְשׁוֹן אָדָם
 מִפְּלִיטוֹ ⁶ . 13 (I) חֵיד יִטְעֵם מְנוּעֵמִי זָבֵד ⁷

¹ See the Gr. A וביים.

² A ופונה רך שבוה. The שבוה, however, can only have slipped in by mistake from iv. 26, whilst the לכל of our text must also be ascribed to a clerical error for בכל, due to confusion with the first clause.

³ A דעתך ואחר יהי רבך.

⁴ A היה ממחר להאין ובארך רוח השב פתגם. The טובה of our text is fairly guaranteed by the ἀγαθή of various Gr. MSS., among them MS. 248 (see Fr.). In this case the verse would contain the advice to remain composed when receiving suddenly a good message: cf. Exod. xlv. 26, whilst the נכון may have been suggested by Ps. cxii. 6 נכון . . . כמשמיה. More probable, however, seems to me that we should read בשמיעה (for בשמיעה the scribe thinking of Prov. xv. 30 and xxv. 25), which would mean a "good listening" or proper attention: cf. *Perek R. Meir*, where שמיעה האון is counted as one of the things by which the knowledge of the Torah is acquired. Below viii. 9 שנים [ת] בשמיעת. After ובארך we must supply the word רוח or אפים, but it should be noticed that the horizontal part of the resh is so short that it can be taken for a waw and read ובארך. For the כונה (MS. 248 עףטקט) in the second clause see Job xlii. 7. I am inclined to think that the text of A in this place is the more original, but was altered at an early period with the purpose perhaps of giving it a more Biblical look.

⁵ A רעך. ⁶ See Dict. s. פלט, but probably a corruption of מפלית as in A.

⁷ See Ecclus. below, xxxvi. 19, as well as British Museum Fragments in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, vol. XII, p. 8, gloss to the first line, and the Rev. G. Margoliouth's notes there, p. 24 sq.

Leaf 2, recto.

xxv. 8^b

1 אשׁרי שׁ

2 עבד נקלה

. . . . בעל אשה מ

3 חורש כשור

4 כל מכה ולא כ

13

5 לב כל רעה ולא כר

17

. רע אשה ישחיר

מראה איש ויקדיר פניו

לדוב⁶ 18 בין רעים ישב בעלה

ובלא טעמו⁷ יתאנה 19 מעט

רעה כרעת אשה גורל

חוטא יפול עליה⁸ 20 כמעלה⁹

¹ Perhaps we should supply *וא* לשונו ולא. Cf. Versions.

² Supply ממנו. Cf. Is. iii. 5 and Prov. xii. 9.

³ For the last two lines the Syr. In the minor tractate, *Derech Erez Rabbah*, I, we read ומשום . . . ומשום ארבעה עשרה לאוין לא חחרוש. The parallel passage given in the *Yalkut* to Deut. xxii. 10 (I, § 931) reads על הגייה חייב עליה משום ד' לאוין . . . משום לא חחרוש בחמור ושור יחריו זקל אשה מ[עם נכר]. We perhaps thus read and supply our text חורש בשור וחמור יחריו.

⁴ Supply נכמה. The quotation in B. T. *Shabbath*, 11 a, has כאב ולא כאב כל לב. Most parallel passages however have מכה הלב (see *JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, III, p. 986, and p. 697 sq.).

⁵ Supply כר[עת אשה]. See Versions and the references given in the preceding note.

⁶ The *Gr.* agrees with Syr., whilst the *לדוב* corresponds with the *Gr.* : cf. Ryssel. Perhaps we should read כרוב, that is as if a bear met him. Cf. *Gen. Rabbah*, chap. 87, § 4: שאני מגרה בך את הריב: "I will incite against thee the bear" (the wife of Potiphar). See also v. 19, &c. The horizontal stroke of the *resh* of ישחיר is so long that it is not likely that there was much writing if any following it.

⁷ In the sense of reason, cause; comp. the phrase בלא טעמא (B. T. *Gittin*, 14 a), and see *Rabb. Dict.*

⁸ Agrees more with the *Gr.*

⁹ כמעלה, see *Heb. Dict.*

Leaf 2, verso.

אשת xxv. 20
¹ אל תפול ²¹
 ה ועל יש לה
² ד²² כי בעדה ³
⁴ בושת אשה מכלכלת
 בעלה²³ רפיון ידים ⁵
 . . שלון ⁶ ברכים אשה לא
 תאשר את בעלה . ²⁴ מאשה
 תחלת עון ⁷ ובגללה גוענו
 יחד . xxvi. i אשה טובה אשרי
 בעלה ומספר ימיו כפלים ⁸ :
 אשת חיל ⁹ תדשן לבעלה 2

¹ Agrees with the Gr. See Ryssel and cf. A vi. 2.

² Perhaps we should supply [לא חזמו]ך. Cf. Syr. See also A xiii. 5 text and notes. It should be noticed that the vertical stroke of the *daleth* is somewhat longer than usual, so that it may represent a final *kaph*. In this case we should supply [לא חשים עיני]ך.

³ Read with the Gr. עברה, cf. Ryssel. Or perhaps [כמו אש] בַּעֲדָה, cf. Is. ix. 17. Syr. עברה.

⁴ Agrees with the Gr., Syr. מְחַסְפָּא or מְכַשְׁלָא.

⁵ See B. T. *Arachin*, 5 b, for this phrase.

⁶ Supply וכסלון.

⁷ Cf. the phrase חזלה קלוח ראש . . . חזלה שומאוח and so on in *Derech Erez Zuta*, III, ed. Tawrogi. For the second clause see Num. xvii. 26.

⁸ The Rabbinic quotation *Sanhedrin*, 100 b, has מספר . . . אשה ישה. The מספר of our text points to an agreement with the Gr. (*kal*).

⁹ Cf. Prov. xxxi. 18. See also A xiv. 11 דרשן.