

should seem by their being mentioned first ; I should think they were all when first written of the same form ; and that such of them as are now broken and disjointed, are those said to be like to the *Samaritan* letters, which are rough and deformed ; hence the Jews call them רועץ, a fracture, broken, and uneven ; and such that agreed with neither, those that are greatly effaced by time ; and I am the more strengthened in this supposition by the relation of *Cosmas Ægyptius*, who travelled into those parts in the sixth century, more than twelve hundred years ago ; who testifies, that he himself saw many stones in the wilderness engraved by the *Hebrews* in *Hebrew* letters, in memory of their journey in it^a ; his account, as *Montfaucon*^c relates it is, that in the wilderness of *Sinai*, and in all the mansions of the *Hebrews*, you may see stones fallen from the mountains, all engraved with *Hebrew* letters, as, says he, I testify, who travelled that way. Now I imagine that this man in that age could have no other notion of *Hebrew* letters than of those then in use with

^a Vid. Fabritii Bibliothec. Græc. Tom. 2. p. 615. ^c in Dr. Kennicott's Dissert. 2. p. 147. 148.

with the *Jews*; and he adds, some *Jews* who read these inscriptions told us, they signified so and so—such a journey—out of such a tribe—in such a year—in such a month—i. e. such and such things were done. Now the letters which these *Jews* were conversant with, and capable of reading and interpreting, seem more likely to be the *Hebrew* letters, which they then used, than the *Samaritan*, which it is not reasonable to suppose they would give themselves the trouble of learning, having nothing to do with the *Samaritans*, but at enmity with them.

THE plate of gold on the forehead of the high-priest, on which was engraven *holiness to the Lord*, the *Jews*^t dispute about it, whether this was in more lines than one, and what letters were in a line, but it was never a question with them in what character it was written. *Jerom* says^t indeed, that the word *Jehovah* was in his time found written in antient letters, in some *Greek* volumes; but it should be observed, that *Jerom* speaks not of *Jewish* or *Hebrew* copies, but of *Greek* volumes,
meaning

^s T. Bab. Sabbath, fol. 63 2. & Succah, fol. 5. 1. ^t Præfat. in lib. Reg. fol. 5. L.

meaning the *Greek* versions of *Aquila* and *Theodotion* in *Origen's Hexapla*, and of ancient *Hebrew* letters in the said *Greek* versions, where the word *Jehovah* was written in *Hebrew* characters thus, ΠΙΠΙ, which the *Greeks* not understanding, and being deceived with the similarity of the characters to some of theirs, read it from the left to the right, as they were wont to do, *Pipi*; whereas the word was to be read no other than *Jehovah*, and was written neither in *Greek* nor in *Samaritan* characters, but in *Hebrew* letters, as sometimes figur'd, or however as formed by some *Greek* writers not expert in the *Hebrew* letters, as may be seen in a specimen of such letters, given by *Montfaucon**, which seem to have been written by some *Grecian* who had but little knowledge of the *Hebrew* tongue and its characters, in which the *Hebrew* letter *He*, tho' *Schindler* would have it to be the *Samaritan He*, resembles the *Greek* letter *Pi*, and the letters *Vau* and *Jod* are very similar in *Hebrew*, and both have some likeness to the *Greek* letter *Iota*. *Drusius* out of *Procopius* on *Is.* lix. 13. observes, that in his margin were written A. Th.

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* Præliminar. ad Hexapla Origen. c. 2. p. 22.

εϑ ΠΙΠΙ, that is *Aquila*, and *Theodotion* so read; and he further observes, that so formerly they wrote the letters of the name tetragrammaton or *Jehovah*, which they read *Pipi*, because of the similitude of the letters^w; and *Jerom*^x himself is as express for it as can be, he says the name of four letters is written with these, *Jod* י, *He* ה, *Vau* ו, *He* ה, which some not understanding, because of the likeness of the characters, when they found it in *Greek* copies, used to read it *Pipi*; and elsewhere^y he says, the name of God, on the plate of gold, was written in *Hebrew* letters, those above-mentioned; hence, because as *R. Asariah*^z understands him, he affirmed that these were engraved in the *Assyrian* character, he conjectures that *Jerom* had seen the plate of gold at *Rome*, which *R. Eliezer ben Jose*, saw there, and that *Jerom* was of the mind that the present *Hebrew* letters, were then used by the *Jews*; and indeed it is not probable that this plate should be engraved in the *Samaritan*, that is in the letters

^w Vid. etiam *Drusium* de voce *Elohim* & *Tetragram*. c. 20. & *Grotium* in *Matt.* xxii. 44. *Montfaucon*. præliminar. ad *Hexapla* *Origen.* vol. 2. p. 90. 184. *Lexicon* col. 430.
^x *Epist* ad *Marcellam* Tom. 3. fol. 31. B. ^y *Ad Fabiolam* fol. 20. B. ^z *Meor Enayim*, c. 58. fol. 178. 2.

ters of the old *Phœnicians* or *Canaanites*, the race of *Canaan*, whom the *Jews*, when this order about the plate was given to *Moses*, were going to drive out of their land. It must be owned that *Origen* has the following words in a fragment^a of his; “ with
 “ the *Jews* the name of the four letters
 “ (*Jehovah*) is ineffable, which was en-
 “ graved on the golden plate of the high-
 “ priest, and with the *Greeks* is pro-
 “ nounced Lord (*κύριος*); but in correct *He-*
 “ *brew* copies it is written (that is, with
 “ its four letters *Jehovah*, which may be
 “ believed; but when he adds, it was writ-
 “ ten) in antient letters, but not in those
 “ now in use.” If he means the *Samari-*
tan letters, as it is supposed he does; this depends on a *Jewish* tale he next relates, which has been already considered.

THAT the *Pentateuch* written by *Moses* was written in the square characters or letters now in use with the *Jews*, seems clear by comparing *Gen.* x. 3, 4. with 1 *Chron.* i. 6. where the persons called *Riphat* and *Dodanim* by *Moses*, are by the author of the book of *Chronicles* in some copies called *Diphat* and *Rodanim*; and who is called *Hemdan* in
Gen.

^a Apud Montfaucon. ut supra, p. 86.

Gen. xxxvi. 26. is *Hemram* in 1. *Chron.* i. 41. and *Hadar* in *Gen.* xxxvi. 39. is *Hadad* in 1 *Chron.* i. 50. The author of the book of *Chronicles*, thro' the similitude of the letters \daleth and \daleth *Resh* and *Daletb*, puts one for another, and still signify the same persons; so *Riblab* in *Numb.* xxxiv. 11. and as it is read in the 2d book of *Kings*, and prophecy of *Jeremiah*, is in *Ezek.* vi. 14. called *Diblatb*; on which *Jerom* remarks, that the near likeness of the *Hebrew* letters \daleth and \daleth *Daletb* and *Resh*, which are distinguished by a small *apex*, it may be called *Deblatba*, or *Reblatba*; and so *Theodotion* reads it *Deblatba* in *Jer.* xxxix. 5. and this will account for the same man being called *Deuel* and *Reuel*, *Numb.* i. 14. and ii. 14. Now this can't be owing to the mistakes of late transcribers, since the same difference is observed in the *Septuagint* version of these places, at least in most of them, and were so from the beginning, from the writers themselves; and those letters being much more similar in the *Hebrew* than in the *Samaritan* alphabet, the *Samaritan Daletb* having a hook at the back of it thus \daleth which strikes the eye at once, and easily distinguishes it from \daleth *Resh*, shews that *Moses*,

ses, in all probability, wrote in the former and not in the latter; so likewise differences of names in the same books plainly arise from the similarity of the letters ' and ך *Jod* and *Vau* in the *Hebrew* square characters, when there is no such similarity in the *Samaritan* character ם and ך, as to occasion such differences, thus *Alvan* in *Gen.* xxxvi. 23. is *Alian* 1 *Chron.* i. 40. *Vaakan* *Gen.* xxxvi. 27. is *Jaakan* 1. *Chron.* i. 42. *Zepbo* *Gen.* xxxvi. 11. is *Zepbi* 1 *Chron.* i. 36. *Shepbo* in *Gen.* xxxvi. 23. is *Shephi* 1 *Chron.* i. 40. *Alvah* *Gen.* xxxvi. 40. is *Aliah* 1 *Chron.* i. 51. *Pau* *Gen.* xxxvi. 39. is *Pai* 1 *Chron.* i. 50. *Heman* *Gen.* 22. is *Homan* 1 *Chron.* i. 39. *Kimchi* on 1 *Chron.* i. 6, 7. takes notice of the difference of these several words, as read in *Genesis* and *Chronicles*, and attributes it to the similarity of letters; and observes, that let them be read as they may, they are the same names, and so *Ben Melech* after him.

Aben Ezra has helped us to another proof of the *Pentateuch* being written in the square character; he observes, "that the word חיה in *Exod.* i. 16. is irregular according to the grammar, and should be חיתה for *He* radical is changed into *Tau*, according

ding to usual construction, as in *Gen. i. 30.* but so it is, because these letters are near alike in writing, there being only the duct of a point between them, which is in the letter *He*, but in pronunciation and name they differ; for at first it is called *He*, and when the point is protracted it is called *Tau*; and this is a sign or proof that the writing we now use is *Hebrew*:" and as the *Pentateuch* was originally written in this character, so it continued until the *Samaritan Pentateuch* was written, which plainly appears to be copied from it, by its having the interpolations of *Ezra's* copy in it, which it would not have had, had it been more antient than that; and if it was first brought to the *Samaritans*, as is probable, by *Manasseh*, when he fled to them, it was in the square character first introduced among them, as *Dr. Prideaux* owns^b, who otherwise is an advocate for the *Samaritan* letter being the antient *Hebrew* character. That this was the case, appears from the difference between the *Hebrew* and *Samaritan Pentateuch*, occasioned by the similitude of the letters in the square character, the same with that now in use with the
Jews,

^b Connection, part 1. p. 416, 417.

Jews, as has been observed by many learned men^c, particularly in *Resh* and *Daleth*, see *Gen.* x. 4. and xlix. 10. which shews that the *Pentateuch* was originally in the modern *Hebrew* characters, and which is superior in point of antiquity to the *Samaritan*, which is copied from it; and to the same cause, in many instances, is owing the difference between the *Hebrew* text and the *Septuagint* version, namely the similarity of the *Hebrew* letters, as *Jerom* frequently observes; for that was made out of the *Chaldee* tongue, as *Philo* the *Jew*^d affirms, that is the *Hebrew* according to him; and *Justin Martyr*^e asserts, that *Moses*, under a divine inspiration, wrote his history in *Hebrew* letters, (he does not say in *Samaritan*, tho' he himself was a *Samaritan*) and that out of their antient books written in *Hebrew* letters, the *Septuagint* or 70 elders made their translation, which books in *Hebrew* letters were then preserved by the *Jews* in their synagogues. *Ptolemy*, king of *Egypt*, had only at first the *Hebrew* bible in *Hebrew* letters, transcribed and sent him; but not being able to

F

read

^c Hottinger. Antimorin. p. 50. Carpzov. Critic. sacr. p. 229. 604. 610. Universal History, vol 17. p. 305. ^d De vita Josephi, l. 1. p. 658. ^e Ad Græcos, p. 13.

read and understand it, he sent for men out of *Judea* to translate it into *Greek*^f; and *Tertullian*^g affirms, that in the *Serapeum*, or library of *Ptolemy*, the translation was to be seen in his time, with the *Hebrew* letters themselves, from which the translation was made; and certain it is, as the authors of the *Universal History*^h have observed, that the *Septuagint* version is of higher antiquity than any of those shekels which are said to have the *Samaritan* characters on them, the eldest of which did not precede the settlement of the high-priesthood in the *Asmonean* family, that is not much above 150 years before *Christ*; and yet this is the main argument advanced in defence of the *Samaritan* letters being the antient *Hebrew* characters; of the validity of which, and the genuineness of the *Samaritan* shekels, more hereafter.

THE argument in favour of the *Pentateuch* being written in the square character, taken from the similarity of *Dalet* and *Resh*, occasioning different readings of words, may be used with respect to the second book of *Samuel*, as written in the same character,

^f Epiphan. de ponder. supra, p. 301, 304, 305.

^g Apologet. c. 18.

^h Ut

rafter, the penmen of which seem to be *Gad* and *Nathan*, see 1 *Chron.* xxix. 19. in which the king of *Zobab* is called *Hadadezer*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 3. but the writer of the book of *Chronicles*, generally supposed to be *Ezra*, putting *Resh* for *Daleth*, thro' the likeness of the letters, calls him *Hadarazer*, 1 *Chron.* xviii. 3. and so one of *David's* worthies is called *Shammab* the *Harodite*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 25. but in 1 *Chron.* xi. 27. *Shammoth* the *Harorite*; where may be observed another difference, arising from the same cause, the likeness of the letters ה and ח the same man being called *Shammab* in one place, and *Shammoth* in the other; and that it cannot be owing to the mistakes of late transcribers, since the same difference is to be observed in the *Septuagint* version of both places; besides there is another difference in the name. *Harodite* in *Sam.* is written with a ח *Cheth*, and the *Harorite* in *Chronicles* with an ה *He*, which two letters are also very similar in the square character; whereas, neither the א *He* and א *Tau*, nor the א *Cheth* and א *He* are at all alike in the *Samaritan* character. So that the same that is called *Hiddai* 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 30. is *Hurai* or *Churai*, 1 *Chron.*

xi. 32. and another is called the *Gadite* 2 *Sam.* 23. 36. and *Haggeri*, or the *Haggerite*, 1 *Chron.* xi. 38. so thro' the likeness of *Jod* and *Vau* in the square character, which have none in the *Samaritan*, as before observed, the king of *Tyre* is called *Hiram*, 1 *Kings.* v. 1, 2. and *Huram* 2 *Chron.* ii. 3. 11.

Aben Chabib or *R. Moses Schem Tob*, a Jew, who lived about the year 1480, was shewn in the kingdom of *Valentia* in *Spain*, a sepulchral monument of a general of *Amaziab* king of *Judah*, on the top of a mountain; which, tho' much effaced, he was just able to read a verse or two in rhyme and metre, at the end of which was לֵאמֹנִיָּהⁱ; from whence he concluded that such kind of verse was in use with his ancestors, when in their own land: and he might have concluded also the antiquity of the *Hebrew* letters, as *Buxtorff*^k observes, could this inscription be thought genuine; but it is hard to conceive how a general of *Amaziab*, king of *Judah*, should be buried in *Spain*: and of like credit must be accounted the grave of *Adoniram*, the tax-gatherer

ⁱ R. Azariah, *Imre Binah*, c. 60 fol. 182. ^k De liter. Heb. f. 27. & de profod. metric. ad calc. Heb. Gram.

gatherer for *Solomon* and *Rehoboam*, in the same country, and found at the same time¹; and could the account be credited which *Benjamin of Tudela* gives of the cave of *Machpelah*, where he says there are six graves, of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *Sarah*, *Rebecca* and *Leah*, opposite to one another, on which are written “this is the grave of *Abraham*,” and so on the grave of *Isaac*, and on the rest, it would prove the very early antiquity of such letters; but these are not to be depended on.

THE *Hebrews* have five letters, which they call double letters, or final ones, because the figure of them is different at the end of a word, from what it is at the beginning of one, or in the middle of one; and these are *Mem*, *Nun*, *Tzade*, *Pe*, and *Capb*, commonly called מנצפך *Manatzpach*; these must be of very antient use, they are mentioned in *Beresbitb Rabba*ⁿ, and in both the *Talmuds*; in the one^o they are said to be used by the seers or prophets, and in the other^p to be an *Halacab* or tradition of *Moses* from *Sinai*; yea, by an antient writer^q they are said to be known by *Abra-*

F 3 bam,

¹ Vid. Hottinger. præfat. ad Cipp. Heb. p. 4. ^m Iti-
 nerar. p. 48, 49. ⁿ Parash. 1. fol. 1, 4. ^o T.
 Bab. Sabbat, fol. 104. 1. ^p T. Hierof. Megillah,
 fol. 71. 4. ^q Pirke Eliezer c. 48.

ham; and indeed they seem to be as early as the other letters in the alphabet. Hence *Abraham, de Balmis*^r makes the *Hebrew* alphabet consist of twenty-seven letters; and *Jerom*^t speaks of these five final letters as of as early, and equal use with the twenty-two letters, and so *Epiphanius*^t; and *Irenæus*[†], before them. is thought, by Dr. *Grabe* to refer to a final *Hebrew* letter, when he says, “that God, in *Hebrew*, is called *Baruch* (blessed) which consists of two letters and a halt;” Dr. *Grabe*’s note upon it is, that ך is taken for half of the letter ם; but in that he is mistaken, for the word has not that letter, nor has that letter a final, but ך, and the final of that does not shorten, but lengthen the letter. Now if these final letters were of *Moses* and the prophets, then the law and the prophets must be written in the *Hebrew* characters now in use, and not in the *Samaritan* characters, for the *Samaritans* have no final letters; and particularly the book of the prophet *Isaiab*, which was written 200 years or more before the supposed change of letters by *Ezra*, must be written not in the *Samaritan*

^r Mikneh Abraham, pag. 2. lin. 12, 13. ^t Præfat. ad lib. Reg. fol. 5. M. [†] Adv. Hæres. l. 2. c. 41. [†] De mensur. & ponder.

ritan character, according to that notion, but in the modern *Hebrew*; since the *Mem* final, contrary to common usage, appears in the middle of the word לִסְרֵבָה *If. ix. 6.* which has occasioned much speculation and enquiry, both among the Jews and christians, which could not appear if written in the *Samaritan* character; in which, as before observed, are no final letters; and that it was so read in the antient *Hebrew* copies, is clear from both *Talmuds*^u, where it is written and reasoned upon, and the *Jerusalem Talmud* was finished A. D. 230. *Jerom*^w owns the reading of it, and offers a reason for it, and observes that the *Mem clausum*, in the middle of the word לִסְרֵבָה is so written for the sake of a mystery, to shew the exclusion of the Jews from the kingdom of Christ; even that same *Jerom* makes this remark, who says, *it is certain that Ezra* changed the Jewish letters; but if *Isaiab* wrote in the *Samaritan* character, as that change supposes, it would spoil the remark he has made; in this he contradicts himself. This is an observation of *Wasmuth's*; but I suspect that *Waf-*

F 4

mutb

^u T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 27. 4. T. Bab. ib. fol. 94. 1.
^w Apud Wasmuth. *Vindiciæ Heb.* par. 1. p. 44.

mutb has mistaken *Hieronymus de sancta fide*, a later writer who wrote a book against the Jews, for *Hieronymus* the antient father; since I can find no such treatise as is referred to by him in *Jerom's* works, either genuine or ascribed to him.

THE book of *Daniel*, if written by himself, as it seems plainly to be, must be written before the pretended change of letters by *Ezra*; the Jews in the *Talmud*^x indeed say it was written by the men of the great synagogue, that is the synagogue of *Ezra*; but the reason given for it is frivolous, as in the *Gloss* upon the place, that prophecy was not suffered to be written without the land (of *Israel*); for did not *Moses* write the *Pentateuch* without the land? and was not *Ezekiel* ordered by God to write among the captives at the river *Chebar*, *Ezek.* i. 3. and xxiv. 2.? *Josephus*^y is express for it, that *Daniel* wrote his own prophecies, and left them to be read, and this is clear from the book itself, ch. xii. 4. and from the words of Christ in *Matt.* xxiv. 15. now since this book was written partly in *Hebrew*, and partly in
Chaldee,

^x T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 1.
c. 11 f. 7.

^y Antiqu. l. 10.

Chaldee, I ask, in what letter it is most probable it was written, whether in two different characters? which seems not at all probable, and whether in one character; what most probably that was, whether the *Samaritan* or the square letter? it should seem more probable to be the latter, according to the hypothesis of those who are for the change of letters by *Ezra*, who suppose that was the character used in *Chaldea* and *Babylon*, where *Daniel* lived; and I should think it more probable for another reason, because it was better known to the *Jews*, for whose use chiefly that book was written: and particularly it deserves consideration, in what letter or character the hand-writing *Belsazzar* saw on the wall was written, which the *Chaldeans* could not read, only *Daniel* the *Jew*. It is certain the words in *Daniel* v. 25. are *Chaldee*, and had they been written in their own characters, which were the same since called *Samaritan*, as will be shewn in the following chapter; the *Chaldeans*, no doubt, could have read them, though they might not have understood the meaning of them: now tho' we can't be certain of the character, yet it is probable it was the square character

character then and now in use with the *Jews*, to which *Daniel* was accustomed before he came to *Babylon*, and therefore could easily read the hand-writing, tho' without doubt it was by divine inspiration that he gave the interpretation of it. *Josephus ben Gorion*^a is quite clear in this; the letters, he says, were the holy tongue, that is, *Hebrew*, but the writing or words were the *Syriac* tongue, or the *Chaldee*; and indeed if these words had been in a different character from that which *Daniel* wrote, it is much he had not given them in it.

Bianconi^a, the last that wrote on the antiquity of the *Hebrew* letters, is of opinion that the *Chaldeans* used the same characters with the *Hebrews*. He supposes their language to be the same, which he argues from the relation of *Abraham* and *Nabor* being brethren, and from the *Hebrews* descending from the one, and from the other the *Chaldeans*; hence *Josephus*^b calls the *Chaldeans* their kindred; tho' perhaps the latter rather sprung from *Arphacjad*;
he

^a Hist. Heb. l. 1. c. 5. p. 25.
ter. Heb. p. 6. Bononiæ 1748.
l. 1. f. 13.

^a De Antiq. li-
^b Contr. Apion.