SHORT NOTES

THE MEANING OF THE PHRASE *ŠETŪM HĀʿAYIN* IN NUM. XXIV 3, 15

The prophet-seer Balaam uses these words in describing himself at the beginning of two of his oracles. They have generally been thought to indicate that his eye was either 'open' [1] or 'shut' [2], the two interpretations being complementary as well as contradictory [3]. For the former reading, reference used to be made to the rare NH and Aramaic word שתם, 'unseal, open' [4]. Since WELLHAUSEN [5], however, it has generally been recognised that the reading of the Targum here (דשפיר חזי) [6] owes more to a division of the phrase into ש־תם עין or ש־תמה עין, i.e., the relative particle ש and the adjective (or noun) from the root תמם, 'be perfect' [7]. Those who interpret the phrase as 'closed of eye', usually refer to the verb שתם (for סתם, = NH and Aramaic סתם), 'stop up, close, conceal', found in this form in Lam. iii, 9.

A. B. EHRLICH suggested [8] that there might be some connection with the Arabic *šatama*, 'reviled', and thought the phrase then meant that Balaam looked upon Israel with 'a malicious eye' in vexation at their good fortune. There is, in fact, a phrase developed from this root which brings us very close to our Hebrew passage. As well as *šatama*, 'reviled', there exists in Arabic *šatuma*, 'was ugly, displeasing,

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[1]) Cf. Ibn Ezra, Rashi, ad. loc.; Qimchi, *Sepher ha-Shorāshīm*, 1546, p. 139; RV (Marg.).

[2]) Cf. Symmachus, Aquila, Theodotion: ἐμπεφραγμένοι.

[3]) Cf. *Sanhedrin* 105a: בלעם סומא באחת מעיניו.

[4]) Used of opening a cask of wine in ʿ*Abodah Zarah* 69a; cf. M. JASTROW, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, etc.*, 1903, s.v.

[5]) *Die Composition des Hexateuchs*[3], 1899, p. 350.

[6]) Cf. LXX, Syriac, Saadiah.

[7]) Cf. A. VON GALL, Zusammensetzung und Herkunft der BILEAM-PERI-KOPE in Num. 22-24, in *Festgruss Bernhard Stade*, pp. 1-47, 1900, p. 32, who,

or hateful in countenance', with an adjective *latīmun*, 'austere, grim-faced'[1]), used especially of a lion[2]). The full phrase used in this connection is *latīmu 'l-muḥayyā*, 'stern, unrelenting of countenance', of which *latīmu 'l-ʿain* would be an exact equivalent[3]). This, it is suggested, is the true meaning of the Hebrew phrase, and Balaam calls himself 'the *geber*, the unrelenting, or, the grim-faced one'[4]).

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BIBLE QUOTATIONS
IN THE SECTARIAN DEAD SEA SCROLLS

The two scrolls containing the Hebrew text of the book of Isaiah and the Habbakuk scroll have been of great service to the student of the Bible and its text. There are, however, several quotations from the Bible in the purely sectarian writings and these, too, should be studied systematically.

DSD V 15[5]): מכול דבר שקר תרחק. This reading agrees with the LXX against MT (Ex. xxiii 7)[6]).

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[1]) Cf. Al-Qāmūs, s.v.: *ʾal-karīhu 'l-wajhu*.

[2]) Cf. Tāj al-ʿArūs, s.v.: *ʾal-ʾasadu 'l-ʿābisu*, used as a metaphor. Note the description of David's men in 1 Chr. xii, 9: פני אריה פניהם.

[3]) E. W. LANE, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 1863-93, s.v. *ʿain*, and for BH מראות = עינים, cf. 1 Sam. xvi 7.

[4]) The text of our passage should presumably be spelt שתם, i.e. equal in form to the verb in Lam. iii 9. Should we not read that word there in an equivalent sense, i.e., 'He has reviled my prayer'? The passive participle in our text of Num. corresponds exactly with the Arabic adjective *latīmun*, and the construction may be explained as denoting an inherent quality like *baṭūḥ*, 'trustful', *ẕākūr*, 'mindful'. J. BARTH (*Die Nominalbildung in den semitischen Sprachen*, 1894, p. 175) and GESENIUS-KAUTZSCH (*Grammar* 28, 2nd Eng. ed. Cowley, 1910, § 50f) think that these forms are not true passives but are active participles derived from a u imperfect. In view of the use here, however, SEGAL's explanation (*JQR*, xx, 1908, pp. 688f.) is attractive, namely, that they are passives of acts which are so constant and continuous as to become a condition or quality of the subject, who is thus conceived to be himself influenced or acted upon by his own act.

[5]) I use the abbreviations usual by now. Quotations from the scrolls are given