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***JOURNEY FROM
Aleppo to Jerusalem
At Easter, A D. 1697.***

*The Fifth Edition, To which is now added an Account
of the Author s Journey to the Banks of Euphrates
at Beer, and to the Country of Mesopotamia.*

By **Hen. Maundrell**, M.A. late Fellow of *Exeter* Coll.
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(P. 58)

Tuesday, Mar. 23.

Leaving this Lodging we arriv'd in one third of an hour at the *Emir's* Tents, who came out in Person to take his Duties of us. We paid him two Caphars, *riz.* one of *Lagune*, and another of *Jeneen*, and besides the Caphars, whatever else he was pleas'd to demand. He eased us in a very courteous manner of some of our Coats, which now (the heat both of the Climate and Season encreasing upon us) began to grow not only superfluous, but burdensom.

Getting quit of *Chibls* we turn'd out of the Plain of *Esdraelon*, and enter'd into the Precincts of the half Tribe of *Manasses*. From hence our Road lay for about four hours thro' narrow Valleys, pleasantly wooded on both sides. After which, crossing another small fruitful Plain, we came in half an hour to *Caphar Arab*, where we Lodged. Our whole Stage exceeded not five hours; our Course being near as the day before.

Wednesday, Mar. 24.

Having paid our Caphar, we set out very early the next Morning; and leaving first *Arab*, and then *Rama* (two Mountain-Villages) on the Right hand, we arrived in one hour at a fair Fountain call'd *Selee*, taking its Name from an adjacent Village. In one hour more we came to *Sebasta*. Here you leave the borders of the half Tribe of *Manajses*, and enter into those of the Tribe of *Ephraim*.*

Sebasta is the Ancient *Samaria*, the Imperial City of the ten Tribes after their revolt from the House of *David*. It lost its former Name in the time of *Herod* the great, who rais'd it from a ruin'd to a most Magnificent state, and called it, in honour of *Augustus Casar*, *Sebasta*. It is (p. 59) situate upon a long Mount of an oval figure, having first a fruitful Valley, and then a ring of Hills running round about it. This great City is now wholly converted into Gardens; and all the tokens that remain, to testify that there has ever been such a place, are only, on the North side, a large square Piazza, encompass'd with Pillars, and on the East some poor remains of a great Church, said to have been built by the Empress *Helena*, over the place where St *'John Baptist* was both imprison'd and beheaded. In the Body of the Church you go down a Stair-case, into the very Dungeon, where that holy Blood was shed. The Turks (of whom here are a few poor Families) hold this Prison in great Veneration, and over it have

* For both Caphars, eight per Frank, and three per Servant.

erected a small Mosque; but for a little piece of Money they suffer you to go in and satisfy your curiosity at pleasure.

Leaving *Sebasta* we pass'd in half an hour by *Sberack*, and in another half hour by *Barseba*, two Villages on the right hand; and then entering into a narrow Valley, lying East and West, and water'd with a fine Rivulet, we arrived in one hour at *Naplosa*.

Naplosa is the Ancient *Sychem*, or *Sychar*, as it is term'd in the New Testament. It stands in a narrow Valley between *Mount Gerizim* on the South, and *Ebal* on the North; being built at the foot of the former: For so the situation both of the City and Mountains is laid down by *Josephus*, *Antiq. Jud. Lib. f. Cap. 9. Gerizim* (says he) hangeth over *Sychem*; and *Lib. 4. Cap. ult. Moses* commanded to erect an Altar toward the East, not far from *Sychem*, between *Mount Gerizim* on the right hand, (that is to one looking Eastward, on the South) and *Hebal* on the left (that is on the North:) Which so plainly assigns the position of these two Mountains, that it may be wonder'd, how Geographers should come to differ so much about it; or for what reason *Adrichomius* should place them both on the same side of the Valley of *Sychem*. From *Mount Gerizim* it was, that God commanded the Blessings to be pronounced upon the Children of *Israel*, and from *Mount Ebal* the Curses, *Deut II. 29*. Upon the former, the (p. 60) *Samaritans*, whose chief residence is here at *Sychem*, have a small Temple or place of Worship, to which they are still wont to repair at certain seasons, for performance of the Rites of their Religion. What these Rites are I could not certainly learn: But that their Religion consists in the adoration of a Calf, as the Jews give out, seems to have more of spite than of truth in it.

Upon one of these Mountains also it was that God commanded the Children of *Israel* to set up great Stones, plaster'd over and inscrib'd with the Body of their Law; and to erect an Altar and to offer Sacrifices, feasting, and rejoicing before the Lord, *Deut. 27.4*. But now whether *Gerizim* or *Ebal* was the place appointed for this Solemnity, there is some cause to doubt. The Hebrew Pentateuch, and ours from it, assigns *Mount Ebal* for the use; but the Samaritan asserts it to be *Gerizim*.

Our Company halting a little while at *Naplosa*, I had an opportunity to go and visit the Chief Priest of the Samaritans, in order to discourse with him, about this and some other difficulties occurring in the Pentateuch; which were recommended to me to be enquir'd about, by the Learned Monsieur *Sob Ludolphns*, Author of the *Æthiopick History*, when I visited him at *Franckford*, in my passage thro' *Germany*.

As for the difference between the Hebrew and Samaritan Copy, *Deut. 27.4*. before cited; the Priest pretended the Jews had maliciously alter'd their Text, out of *odium* to the Samaritans; putting, for *Gerizim*, *Ebal*, upon no' other account, but only because the Samaritans worshipped in the former Mountain, which they would have; for that reason, not to be the true place appointed by God for his Worship and Sacrifice. To confirm this, he pleaded that *Ebal* was the Mountain of Cursing, *Deut. II. 29*. and in its own nature an unpleasant place: but oh the contrary *Gerizim* was the Mountain of Blessing by God's own appointment, and also in its self fertile and delightful; from whence he inserr'd a probability that this latter must have been the true Mountain, appointed for those (p.61) religious festivals, *Dent. 27.4*. and not (as the Jews have corruptly written it) *Hebal*. We observ'd that to be, in some measure true which he pleaded concerning the nature of both Mountains: For tho' neither of the Mountains has much to boast of as to their pleasantness; yet as one passes between them, *Gerizim* seems to discover a somewhat more verdant fruitful aspect than *Ebal*. The reason of which may be, because fronting towards the North, it is shelter'd from the heat of the Sun by

its own (hade: Whereas *Ebal* looking Southward, and receiving the Sun that comes directly upon it, must by consequence be render'd more scorched and unfruitful. The Samaritan Priest could not say that any of those great Stones, which God directed *Joshua* to set up, were now to be seen in *Mount Geriain*; which; were they now extant, would determine the question clearly on his side.

I enquir'd of him next what sort of Animal he thought those *Selave*, might be, which the Children of Israel were so long fed with in the Wilderness, *Num. II*, He answer'd, they were a sort of Fowls; and by the description, which he gave of them, I perceiv'd he meant the same kind with our Quails. I asked him what he thought of *Locusts*, and whether the History might not be better accounted for, supposing them to be the winged Creatures that fell so thick about the Camp of *Israel*? But by his answer, it appear'd, he had never heard of any such Hypothesis. Then I demanded of him, what sort of Plant or Fruit the *Dudaim* or (as we Translate it) *Mandrakes* were, which *Leah* gave to *Rachel*, for the purchase of her Husband's embraces? He laid they were Plants of a large leaf, bearing a certain sort of Fruit, in shape resembling an Apple growing ripe in Harvest, but of an ill savour, and not wholesome. But the virtue of them was to help Conception, being laid under the Genial Bed. That the Women were often wont so to apply it, at this day, out of an opinion of its prolifick virtue. Of these Plants I saw several afterwards in the way to *Jerusalem*; and if they were so common in *Mesopotamia*, as we saw them hereabout, one (p.62) must either conclude that these could not be the true Mandrakes (*Dudaim*,) or else it would puzzle a good Critick to give a reason, why *Rachel* should purchase such vulgar things at so below'd and contested a price.

This Priest shew'd me a Copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch, but would not be persuaded to part with it upon any consideration. He had likewise the first Vol. of the English *Polyglot*, which he seem'd to esteem equally with his own Manuscript.

Naplosa is at present in a very mean condition, in comparison of what it is represented to have been anciently. It consists chiefly of two Streets lying parallel, under *Mount Gerizim*; but it is full of People, and the Seat of a *Bassa*. Having paid our Caphar here, we set forward again in the Evening, and proceeding in the same narrow Valley, between *Gerizim* and *Ebal* (not above a furlong broad) we saw on our right hand just without the City, a small Mosque, said to have been built over the Sepulcher purchased by *Jacob* of *Emmer* the Father of *Shechem*, *Gen. 13. 19*. It goes by the Name of *Joseph's* Sepulcher, his Bones having been here interr'd after their Transportation out of *Egypt*, *Josh. 24.32*.

At about one third of an hour from *Naplosa*, we came to *Jacob's Well*; famous not only upon account of its Author, but much more for that memorable Conference, which our Blessed Saviour here had with the Woman of *Samaria*, *John 4*. If it should be questions whether this be the very Well that it is pretended for, or no; seeing it may be suspected to stand too remote from *Sychar*, for Women to come so far to draw Water? it is answer'd, that probably the City extended farther this way in former times than it does now; as may be conjectur'd from some pieces of a very thick Wall, still to be seen not far from hence. Over the Well there stood formerly a large Church, erected by that great and devout Patroness of the *Holy-Land*, the Empress *Helena*. But of this the voracity of time, assisted by the hands of the Turks, has (p. 63) left nothing but a few Foundations remaining. The Well is cover'd at present with an old stone Vault, into which you are let down thro' a very strait hole; and then removing a broad flat stone, you discover the Mouth of the Well it self. It is dug in a firm Rock, and contains about three yards in diameter, and thirty five in depth; five of which, we

found full of Water. This confutes a Story, commonly told to Travellers, who do not take the pains to examine the Well, viz. that it is dry all the Year round, except on the Anniversary of that day on which our Blessed Saviour sat upon it; but then bubbles up with abundance of Water.

At this Well the narrow Valley of *Sychem* ends; opening it self into a wide Field, which is probably part of that parcel of ground, given by *Jacob* to his Son *Joseph*, *John* 4. 5. It is water'd with a fresh Stream, rising between it and *Sychem*; which makes it so exceeding verdant and fruitful, that it may well be looked upon as a standing token of the tender affection of that good Patriarch to the best of Sons, *Gen.* 48. 22.

From *Jacob's Well* our Road went Southward, along a very spacious and fertile Valley. Having pass'd by two Villages on the right hand, one called *Howar*, the other *Sawee*; we arrived in four hours at *Kane Leban*, and Lodged there. Our whole Stage to day was about eight hours; our Course variable between East and South.

Kane Leban stands on the East side of a delicious Vale, having a Village of the same Name standing opposite to it on the other side of the Vale. One of these places, either the *Kane* or the Village, is supposed to have been the *Lebonah* mention'd *Judg.* 11.19. To which both the Name and Situation seem to agree.

Comments on this section from the Editor of theSamaritanUpdate.com

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Henry Maundrell (1665-1701) was the English chaplain to the Levant Company merchants at Aleppo, Syria, at the end of the seventeenth century.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Maundrell

He met the Samaritans on Wednesday, March 24, 1697.

The Samaritan High Priest at the time was Abraham b. Yitzhaq (1694-1732).