As the Day of Atonement approaches, I feel that it should be proper to remind yourselves of the cause of the removal of the Tabernacle!

Uzzi, after the Holy Tabernacle was Removed

A brief review of the history of the Israelite tribes from the days of Joshua son of Nun onwards, as told in the Samaritan chronicles, and a comparison to the Jewish sources, will reveal that all points of controversy referring to Mount Gerizim. It was here that the High Priests of the house of Phinehas, to whom the high priesthood was given, officiated for 260 years. The priesthood list corresponds, for the most part, to the biblical list of High Priests of the house of Phinehas, quoted in the book of Chronicles. According to Samaritan chronicles, these were the days of grace, of the Shekhina. Upon the death of Samson, no one had replaced him. When young Uzi, son of Buki, a son of the Priestly Phinehas, is appointed High Priest on Mount Gerizim, it is actually Eli, a priest an overseer of the house of Ithamar, son of Jephunneh a descendant of Ithamar, son of Aaron, being a dominant, older man offered a sacrifice without salt on the altar. High Priest Uzzi draw attention to the major err but Eli, refused to accept the authority of the younger Uzi, withdrew from Mount Gerizim to Shiloh and founded there a new religious center, where the unfaithful of Israel began to worship. This severed division in the nation was used to good advantage by the Philistines, who later destroyed the Shiloh temple, forty years after its foundation.

The Jewish Bible glosses over the priesthood of the sons of Itamar and the causes that had led to their appointment. Jewish traditions associate the removal of the priest of the house of Phinehas with the incident of the daughter of Jephth, or the incident of the concubine in Gibeah, and its hard bloody aftermath. Historian Josephus Flavius, in his book, "The Antiquities of the Jews", V:318 writes "Following Samson's death, the Israelis were led by high priest Eli". Ibid 361 - "Eli was the first ruler of the house of Ithamar, the second house of the sons of Aaron, at first the priesthood was given to the house of Elazar...the latter handed it down to his son Phinehas, who handed it down to his son Abiezer (Abisha), who gave it to his son Buki, whose son Uzi received it from him, and afterwards the priesthood was given to Eli". Josephus Flavius makes no attempt to explain the reasons for the removal of Phinehas' family, the significance and centrality of the removal and its consequences.

According to Torah the High Priest should be of the sons of Phinehas and not Itamar. During the time of Eli, the sons of Phinehas were well alive on Mount Gerizim and were followed by a tremendous number of Israelites. No Israelite should have followed Eli but remained faithful to the family of Phinehas, the words of Torah and to the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. This division of the tribes and people of Israel was the turning point of the faithfulness of their fathers to the curses, breaking the covenant that they and their fathers committed to. Moses foretold this event, 'For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you, and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of Shema, provoking Him to anger with the works of your hands,' (Deut. 31:29).

On Mount Gerizim, a young true High Priest Uzzi remained with seventy thousand faithfuls. Uzzi realized that the presence of Shema no longer dwelt in the tabernacle and darkness filled the room.
When Uzzi went to the inner part of the Tabernacle, he found that Glory of Shema had left. When Uzzi went outside to inform the people he found an open cave that he had never seen before and he knew what must be done. Uzzi gathered all the holy garments, all the vessels of gold and silver, the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Testimonies, placing them in the cave. The next day when Uzzi returned to the location of the cave, it could not be found. This event happened in the year 3,055 after creation of the world, on the second day, which was the morrow of the festival of the Pilgrimage of Weeks which was 260 years after the Israelites entered the land.

And it is written in the Book of Deuteronomy 31:18, "I shall surely cause to hide my presence from them on that day on account of the wickedness which they have done, because they erred in following strange gods."

These are the English translation of the words records to the lamentation of the occurrence.

(The following is from pages 116-118 of The Samaritan Chronicle No. II)

O’ Israel, your Head has turned away from you.
O Israel, who is there to support you when your glory is overthrown?
O Israel, who is there to keep hold of you when your sovereignty has departed?
O Israel, who is there to love you?
He manifested wonders for your sake. He smote *Mizraim*¹ on your account. He made the *Reed*² Sea a dry waste that you may cross it on dry land.
He made an end of Pharaoh king of *Mizraim* and all his people to exalt your name. With the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night he protected you,
And he showed you favor by sending down manna for you from heaven to feed you. The waters of Marah he sweetened when you were athirst.
He made you hear his voice from heaven that you might bring up water from the rock. He brought you out in order to test you.
He destroyed Amalek before you when he sought to smite you.
He made his angel to dwell close to you that you might keep his name. (His name) was called over you and your enemies were afraid of you.
He made an end of Sihon and Og and all their cities to give you victory. He destroyed the Moabite kings and Midian, and he gave you their plunder.
He stopped the Jordan waters to your praise and glory. He slew seven warrior kings and gave you their cities and all they possessed in honor of you.
Heaven and earth he commanded to keep watch over you and with the great blessing he compassed you.
He enabled you to possess the best of places and gave them to you as your territory where you might multiply many delights, the like of which have been heard.
He made bestowal on you though his angels. He raised you up by his acts of mercy. He made you an object of wonder by his loving acts.
He made your glory and joy great. He exalted your glory to his splendor. He put in your midst the indwelling of his majestic angels.
But you neglected his great name and worshipped gods with no power- save he- to smite.
You turned aside to those who have no ability to remove distress or plague from you.

¹ This Editor replaced the word Egypt.
² This Editor replaced the word Red
You paid no attention to their presumptuous disbelief in him. You concealed the iniquity of those who did not keep the commandments of his holy laws.

So he had hidden his face from you. The Lord of prophets, Moses the son of Amram, reproved you, but you did not heed him.

He warned you, but you did not pay attention. He instructed you, but you did not acquire knowledge.

Likewise his disciple Joshua the son of Nun made a covenant with you, but you violated that covenant.

Similarly the covenant of the chief prince of the Levites, Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, with you, you forsook.

You did not heed them and you were rebellious. You did not keep their covenant.

Where can you flee from distress? Who is there to deliver you from your foe? Who is going to be your refuge?

Woe to us! Woe to us for what we have wrought for ourselves! Who will strengthen our hearts? Who will manifest our high hopes? Who will reinvigorate us?

The following is from *The Samaritan Chronicle No. II (or: Sepher Ha-Yamim) From Joshua to Nebuchadnezzar*, by John Macdonald, published by Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin 1969. While I do release that the book is copyrighted, it is with support that I bring this to you. I suggest that you purchase this book or the now available eBook at http://www.degruyter.com/cont/fb/th/detailEn.cfm?id=IS-9783110025828-1

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