



# The Samaritan Update

“Mount Gerizim,  
All the Days of Our Lives”



March/ April 2014

Vol. XIII - No 4

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## Future Events

First day of the First Month 3652 - Sunday Evening., March 30, 2014  
Passover Sacrifice - Sunday, April 13, 2014  
Festival of Passover. First Day of Matzos - Monday, April 14, 2014  
Festival of Unleavened Bread - first Pilgrimage. – Sun. April 20, 2014  
The Seven days of Shavuoth (Feast of Weeks) June 2-8, 2014  
Tuesday, June 3, 2012, Evening, Memorial day of Sinai Assembly  
Festival of Weeks: Second Pilgrimage - Sunday, June 8, 2014

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## Passover 2014

On Sunday, April 13, 2014, the Samaritans performed their duty to keep the memorial Passover sacrifice as instructed, as their forefathers have done before them.

Besides the Samaritans, there were at least 1,000 visitors to Mount Gerizim for the Event. Below you will find the News of the Event.

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**Friends of the Library Volunteer  
James Purvis Honored by  
Samaritan Medal Foundation  
2014, Feb. 12 *The Bedford Citizen***

Dr. James D. Purvis, retired Boston University Professor of Religion and long-time volunteer with the Friends of the Bedford Library, recently received a medal and citation from the

**Samaritan Medal Foundation** for his

scholarly research on this sect. Although he wasn't able to go to Washington in person to receive the medal, Dr. Purvis' grandson Christopher Purvis accepted it for him in November 2013. [Continue](#)

[reading](#)



James Purvis is the author of [The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect](#), Series: Harvard Semitic Monographs 2, Harvard University, 1968, and [many other works](#).

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## THE KEEPERS [SHAMEREM] - A TINY SPECIAL PEOPLE AND ADVOCATE OF PEACE

When the Keepers – the Israelite Samaritans – think about their special identity among all societies of the world, and how this identity comes to full expression in their unique customs, especially when they offer once a year, the Passover Sacrifice on Mount Gerizim; they ask themselves, who are we? What are we?

Let us first try to confirm what we are not.

We are not Jews, called by this Assyrian nickname due to the origin in Judea. We are not Samaritans, called by this Assyrian nickname, due to the fact that our residence has been in Samaria. Judea and Samaria are two different regions of the Land of Israel and also were the two Israelite Kingdoms of the ancient world [Sources: Assyrian Annals - "Yaudi" - "Samarini"]. The Jews have adopted their foreign nickname for themselves.



We the Keepers – "the Sons of Israel, Keepers of the Truth of the Torah", never adopted the nickname – Samaritans – as our fathers were called in ancient times, despite the fact that we use it only for reference for the outside world of our people to let them distinguish between us from others.

We are not Palestinians, whereas the origin of most of them are from Jews and Samaritans who converted by force to other monotheistic religions throughout generations. It is not enough that the fact was proven by genetic research, DNA and by blood that are common to Palestinians, Jews and Samaritans, but also by the fact that there are large Arab families today in the Middle East whose names still keep within the Samaritan and Jewish Hebrew forms. Even the Danfi family who are the keepers of the Muslim holy sites at Jerusalem Temple mount is of Samaritan origin.

We are not Christians and we are not Muslims, we are not Druze and we are not Adighe, nor Baha'ians, nor Shia Islam, nor Suna Islam and not Alawites.

So, who are we?

We are sons of the ancient Israelite people. We and our fathers have never left this land and nor wandered off this land, by our own will, but only by force were we taken to other lands. In the last 127 generations, since Joshua Bin Nun entered the Holy Land, we, the descendants of the tribes of Levi and Joseph [till 1967 we had also descendants of the tribe of Benyamim] have adhered to the Almighty of Israel, His Prophet Moses, our Moses Torah and the Chosen Place of the Almighty – Mount Gerizim, as it clearly written in our Book of Deuteronomy at the end of chapter 11 and the start of chapter 12, as in the same of some of the Jewish versions of the Torah in those chapters [Sources: Some manuscripts of LXX and Dead Sea Scrolls].

By this heritage we have come to our full individual identity – "The Sons of Israel, Keepers of the Truth of the Torah", of the true tradition of the People of Israel, being that we are the accurate followers of the Ancient Israelite People. This long name was shortened by us to "The Keepers" [Shamerem]. In singular "Keeper" = Shameri. In this way our identities were written in the sources of our fathers [Sources: Israelite Samaritan Chronicles].

What are we?

So far who are we? Now, what are we?

We are a tiny community, descendants of the People of Israel, having endured all the confrontations and frictions that are characteristic in the Middle East. We have our own script – Ancient Hebrew, our own language – an ancient pronunciation of the Hebrew and our special historical tradition of thousands of years of our existence in the Land of Israel. These three signs make us special among other nations of the world.



Our numbers are small – only 760 individuals [in May 2014, 400 in Holon, Israel and 360 in Kiriath Luza, Mount Gerizim, Samaria], but this is now an encouraging number with plenty of hope for our future, since our number has increased more than five times since 1919 when we were all only 141 individuals and were very close to extinction [in their prime the Keepers counted an estimated number of 1,500,000 through the 5th and the beginning of the 6th century CE]. Today, we have a majority of children and youth to carry forth our Israelite heritage into the future.

The Keepers are small in numbers, yet are an advocate for peace. We are a people that stand in the middle of the bridge. We are the bridge. The bridge of peace, a lifestyle for peacefully living together with all the political entities of the Middle East.

Therefore, since we are a model of living together with any entity and welcome visitors who come to visit our neighborhoods. We are favorably welcomed in the offices of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, President of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah, King Abdulla El Hussein the 2nd in Amman,

the British Parliament and the Foreign Office in London, the White House and the State Department in Washington D.C. and in the European Commission offices in Brussels.

Rise your heads when you visit during the Samaritan Passover Sacrifice Ceremony and see the crowd that came from all over the world to watch the sacrifice, and by this fulfilling the prophecies concerning peace in the top of the mountain of all nations, not as the prophecies of Isaiah and Micha said, will be in Jerusalem [Sources: Isaiah, 2:1-2, Micha, 4:1-2], but at the present it materializes on the top of the Chosen Place of the Almighty – Mount Gerizim.

During the Samaritan Passover Sacrifice Ceremony you can see the Mayor of Nablus, the Palestinian Military Officers and Palestinian top Officers sitting together with Israeli top officers of the Israel Army in an environment of peace – This is the humble contribution of the ancient Israelite Keepers to bring peace that is desired for the region, the first time since our forefather Abraham.

With our holy Torah, we have a unique history with both ancient and modern literature, special customs, ancient poetry and music, a rich social and sports life, a huge archaeological site on the top of Mount Gerizim that testifies to our special culture, in the land of Israel, one of the most ancient. All of these proofs testify to our interesting story that has attracted hundreds of thousands of peoples to our special place throughout the year, every year.

**Benyamim Tsedaka**

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**2014 Passover News/Photo Links**

**Ori Orhof**

*Wonderful Photos of the 2014 Passover and Pilgrimage, plus more*  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/oriorhof/sets/>

**Getty Images**

**Samaritans Hold Mountain Top Prayer. NTD.TV**

<http://www.ntd.tv/en/news/world/asia-pacific/20140421/130758-samaritans-hold-mountain-top-prayer.html> Video included

**Foreign Dispatch: Samaritans Celebrate Passover [VIDEO]**

<http://radio.foxnews.com/2014/04/17/foreign-dispatch-samaritans-celebrate-passover-video/>

**A Passover ceremony at Mount Gerizim**

By Haaretz 10:28 22.04.14

<http://www.haaretz.com/1.586626>

**Haaretz: Picture of the Day**

<http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/picoftheday/1.2301667>

<http://megafon-news.co.il/asys/archives/210688>

**קרנן אתמול הקריבו השומרונים: אצלנו בקרוב** (I know it is all spelled backwards)

<http://www.kipa.co.il/tarbut/166/56442.html>

**Postcard from... Mount Gerizim**

By Inna Lazareva 23 April 2014

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/postcard-from-mount-gerizim-9275632.html>

**Israeli families gather for ritual Passover meal**

By Ian Deitch, Associated Press | April 14, 2014 |

<http://www.chron.com/news/world/article/Israel-readies-for-Passover-marking-Egypt-exodus-5399946.php#photo-6163308>

**Israel readies for Passover, marking Egypt exodus**

By Ian Deitch AP

[http://bismarcktribune.com/news/world/middle-east/israel-readies-for-passover-marking-egypt-exodus/article\\_bbb3c507-a974-594c-859c-5a75edcf576a.html](http://bismarcktribune.com/news/world/middle-east/israel-readies-for-passover-marking-egypt-exodus/article_bbb3c507-a974-594c-859c-5a75edcf576a.html)

**Taking Passover back to its roots**

By Judy Lash

**San Diego Jewish World**

<http://www.sdjewishworld.com/2014/03/30/taking-passover-back-roots/>

**Das Lamm als Opfer**

By Von Ulrike Schleicher

[http://www.katholisch.de/de/katholisch/themen/glaube\\_2/140416\\_laemmer\\_opfer\\_samaritaner.php](http://www.katholisch.de/de/katholisch/themen/glaube_2/140416_laemmer_opfer_samaritaner.php)

**Lammopfer auf dem Berg**

By Ulrike Schleicher

<http://www.juedische-allgemeine.de/article/view/id/18844>



**Korban Pesach of the Shomronim (Samaritans)**<http://lifeinIsrael.blogspot.com/2014/04/korban-pesach-of-shomronim-samaritans.html>**In West Bank, good Samaritans seek foreign brides**By Inna Lazareva, *Contributor* / April 30, 2014<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2014/0430/In-West-Bank-good-Samaritans-seek-foreign-brides>**Samaritan ritual slaughter keeps tradition alive****Deutsche Welle**<http://www.dw.de/samaritan-ritual-slaughter-keeps-tradition-alive/a-17565087>

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**Binyamin Tsedaka makes comment of article:****Samaritan ritual slaughter keeps tradition alive**by **Kate Shuttleworth, Deutsche World** - April 14, 2014

Passover on Mount Geizim - 2014

Every year, the Samaritans in the West Bank celebrate Passover by slaughtering sheep. It's another way to keep traditions alive for a people that's facing genetic problems in an ever-dwindling population. A brilliant golden sunset cast a spotlight on Mount Gerizim in the southern valley of Nablus in the West Bank on Sunday night. The most sacred site to the world's remaining 800 Samaritans, it's a beautiful, yet unlikely place for a ritual slaughter.

As the sun slipped behind the mountain, 50 men in white boiler-style suits stood over a man-made ditch framed by rocks. They each had a sheep between their legs.

These designated butchers had blades at the ready. The sheep were chased, herded and taunted all afternoon by young boys from the Samaritan community; kicked into a small holding space inside a large stadium until they were brought into the center of the stadium.

Alongside the 800 Samaritans from the village of Kiryat Luza near Tel Aviv were 1,200 curious tourists, Palestinian and Jewish spectators and media. The heavily guarded stadium on top of the mountain was packed. Another 1,000 onlookers watched from the outside.

**Sacrifice and vegetarianism**

Yafit, 23, was dressed in a red dressing gown. "I have been taking part in the sacrifice since I was born. Everyone takes part unless they are too sick, like in hospital," Yafit said.

When asked what the meat cooked from sacrificed sheep tastes like, Yafit said it was unlike any other meat. "The meat is holy meat. I eat meat everyday, but this tastes different - it's how it feels," she said. Samaritan priest Yousef Kohen, 69, told DW he was a vegetarian and didn't like seeing the blood or eating the meat. He gestured to his mouth and said he just touched the meat to his mouth, as it's mandatory to take part in the sacrifice.

"It's a big day for us, because we're coming to sacrifice 50 sheep," he said. "I don't like that people take pictures of killed sheep, but God gave them to us to kill."

Wood smoke and ash filled the air. The chanting and sung prayer in the ancient Aramaic language stopped abruptly as cheers and clapping started.

Not long for this world: a sheep shortly before the slaughter

The butchers simultaneously cut the throats of the sheep. Blood spilt into a ditch and over the stonework of the arena. The blood was then dabbed on each of the men's foreheads as they stopped to hug one another and their families.

The blood dots looked similar to a bindi - the small circle placed by Hindus or other south Asian religions to symbolize the third eye. But for the Samaritans, it represents God's "chosen people."

**Strict religious traditions**

Lutfi Altif, 42, a Samaritan architect who works in both Israel and the Palestinian territories, said he helped build houses for Samaritans that adhered to their strict rules. He described the community as tight-knit and restricted in where they could live.

"We don't eat anything outside of the home and we have to manage the Shabbat in a special way," Altef said. "I can't live in a building that has a radio on during Shabbat. Because of that we have to live inside an enclosed community."

### Sacred mountain

The Samaritans believe Mount Gerizim, and not Jerusalem, was the holy place chosen by God. They have their own version of the Torah and holy days similar to Jewish ones.

"We are not Jewish, we never want to be Jewish, we are Israel-people and there is a difference between Jewish and Israel," Yousef Kohen, the Samaritan priest, said.

Members of the community observe laws according to the Torah regarding diet, Shabbat and circumcision. Women must also live separately from their husbands and children during menstruation and isolate themselves for 40 days after giving birth to a boy and 80 days after a girl.

Yousef Kohen doesn't eat the meat, but still participates in the ritual.

Around the mid-20th century, about 7 percent of Samaritans suffered some genetic defect. Genetic testing before marriage has cut that rate in half. Because of a surplus of men in the community, Samaritans have had to "outsource," Yousef Kohen told DW.

"My son took a wife from Ukraine," Kohen said. "We have to do that, because 30 people in our community have disabilities. We found a way to stop it. Since we have one girl to every three boys, we import women from Ukraine. They are lovely and they are not religious, so it's easy to make them Samaritans."

*[Binyamin Tsedaka: A.B. Response: This is an example of disinformation that a person uses lame excuses to justify the fact that the gates of the community are open to marriages from outside the community. In fact the number of disability cases in the community presently is less than 15, which is normal for any society, despite the fact that 75% of the marriages are within the community that is a genetic miracle. In fact, in the last two decades the number of births in the Samaritan Community of females and males is equal. Most of marriages between Samaritan boys and Non-Samaritan girls are successful. The Samaritan Community is blessed with such marriages. Fact].*

When asked if they become good Samaritans, he replied: "Very good. They keep the religion of Samaritans more than Samaritans themselves."

### Blood on the landscape

In the stadium, the blood of the sacrificed sheep was on the foreheads, hands and clothes of the Samaritans. The audience looked on as the dead sheep were gutted and skewered on long spits. Then they were placed into fire pits. The herb covered meat was served at midnight.

**Kate Shuttleworth**

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### You Tube Videos

[Passover Celebration: West Bank Samaritans mark Jewish holiday](#) **Jewish News One**

[Samaritan Passover Sacrifice](#)

[Samaritans Hold Mountain Top Prayer](#) **NTDTV**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTSiPX66e-s> **Ori Orhof**

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### In the News

**Author - hand "Kitab Alh'olf" - differences between Samaritans and Jews**

By **Haseeb Shehadeh** April 21, 2014. *The article is in Hebrew*

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Jewish/Israeli History & Culture Israeli & International Art  
by Kedem Public Auction House Ltd

May 14, 2014, 5:00 PM EET Jerusalem, Israel, Live Auction  
Lot 411: Ephraim Moshe Lilien (1874-1925)

[http://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/-1-c-EB92892F5A?utm\\_source=afalerts&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=keywordadertlive#.U1h6cVVdWDA](http://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/-1-c-EB92892F5A?utm_source=afalerts&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=keywordadertlive#.U1h6cVVdWDA)

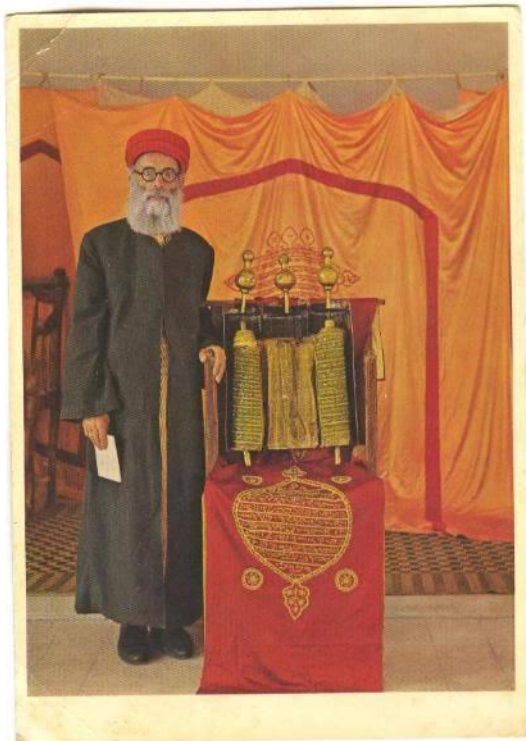
**From the Editor**

I still have not finished the compilation of the Biblio I have been working on. I did happen across this following [Dissertation](#) but I am not sure how or where to add it. Any suggestions would be helpful.

Here is a wonderful article that you should read if you have not as of yet "[Israelites, Samaritans, Temples, Jews.](#)" by Etienne Nodet. Publication Name: in: József Zsengellér (ed.), [Samaria, Samaritans, Samaritans. Studies on Bible, History and Linguistics](#), Berlin, W. de Gruyter, 2013, p. 121-172. If you like this, you should purchase the book, there are more good articles there!!!!

In Nodet's article he focuses on 4 points: '1. The Gerizim temple and its significance in the Persian period. 2. Jews and Samaritans in Hellenistic times. 3. The Jerusalem temple and the meaning of King Solomon's works. 4. The Pentateuch was common to all; what does it say about Shechem?'

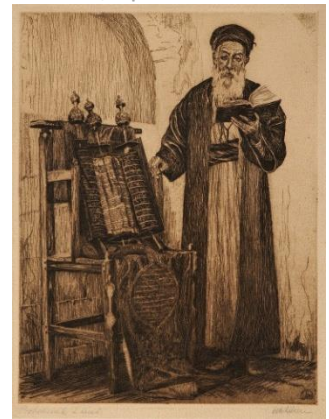
Nodet makes the point of a priestly line that marries into the family of the Governor of Samaria, Sanballat, who, by the way is not defined as a Samaritan, where his origins actually comes from we cannot verify. Now, a priestly line that had conflict in Jerusalem comes to Shechem and builds a temple on Gerizim like that of Jerusalem. The temple on Mount Gerizim was built out of rivalry with the Jerusalem temple. Once again, the real truth of the rivalry came between two fractions in the Jerusalem temple! This must be made clear that the local Samaritans would not have built a temple like Jerusalem, period! First the ark had been concealed many years before and was never seen as of yet. The Samaritans claim to have never had a temple on Gerizim and besides they have had their own Priestly line that did not come from Jerusalem. There is no Manasseh listed in the Samaritan



priestly chain. The Gerizim temple had according to Nodet, many Jews that came there, this would account for the animal bones found during the excavations of Magen. This is seen with the Proto-Jewish names of some of the inscriptions that were found at the excavation with similar words 'of offered... [before the Lo]rd in the temple' during the fourth and fifth centuries B.C.E. Therefore the term that has been used, the Samaritan Temple on Gerizim, really should be the Jewish-Samaritan Temple on Gerizim or plainly the Jewish temple on Mount Gerizim. It should no longer be called the Samaritan temple!

Nodet, also talks about the Samaritans that went to ask permission to help rebuild the Jerusalem temple. These were Jews that lived in Samaria, or to be accurate, Samaritan Jews. (See page 166.) The Jerusalem temple did not accept some 'local Israelites (from Judea or Samaria.' These people were not Samaritans!

Recently, I obtained the booklet, [The Genealogies of the Samaritan Priests](#) by Priest Taka Tawfiek Samri (C.E. 1965) (in the color photo to the left, this was not shown in





the booklet in color, but comes from my photo collection). Now we have 2 English translated lists of the Samaritan Priests which would include Moses Gaster's "[The Chain of Samaritan High Priests](#)," from the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April, 1909.

I finished reading I have been reading Alexander Broadie's thesis, '[An Investigation into the Cultural Ethos of the Samaritan Memar Margah with Special Reference to the Work of Philo of Alexandria](#),' 1975. About half way through, Broadie focuses more on Margah. Yet the book got me thinking more, but it was less than Samaritan religion and more Byzantine area thought with many personal interpretations and perspectives apparently from a Christian. I saw now signs of a religious Jewish education or perspectives. What I mean by this is that [Philo of Alexandria](#) was a Hellenistic Jew. Both Philo and Margah focused on the Pentateuch as the source of inspiration. While Broadie also inserts [Aristotle](#), a Greek philosopher and the [Stoics](#), a school of Hellenistic philosophy mostly with the content discussing the [Logos](#). While I found it interesting, I would not recommend it to the study of Samaritans unless one is focusing on outside influences toward the Samaritans. Yes, I could see a little of this in Broadie's work. Yet how could there not be, even Philo living in Egypt had to have been exposed to other religions.

One of Hasseb Shehadeh's articles was just recently was published in the Israeli paper Hagada on April 21, 2014. The article is in Hebrew, but is basically called [Author - hand "Kitaab Al-khulf" - differences between Samaritans and Jews](#). It is on the [Manuscript of 'Kitaab Al-khulf' by Hadr \(Finhas\) b. Ishaq al-Hiftawi](#). Exposer of Samaritan information and knowledge to the Jewish people is always an ethnocentric challenge.

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**From the Samaritan Museum**



**Teachers and students of the University of Jerusalem on a visit to the Samaritan Museum.**

May 1, 2014 ([Samaritan Museum](#))

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**Upcoming Lectures:**



**Samaritan Manuscript Culture and the Oral Transmission of the Samaritan Torah**

Prof. Stefan Schorch (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg)

Where: University of Cambridge

When: May 8, 2014 5-6 pm

The speaker will examine the relationship between the written transmission of the Samaritan Pentateuch in its manuscripts, dating from the 11th century onwards, and its oral transmission in liturgical reading. The lecture will include a description of the phonology of the Samaritan Hebrew pronunciation and a discussion of its historical background. All are welcome. The event will be followed by a reception.

**International Conference: Samaritans-Samaritans in Translation** Wednesday, May 14, 2014  
université de Lausanne Switzerland

<http://theologie.cuso.ch/fileadmin/theologie/document/Programme-samaritains-1.pdf>

**Abraham's Children Listening Tour, June 14-28, 2014**

Visit with rabbis, imams, priests, pastors, settlers, and refugees. Listen to people like Jeff Halper of ICAHD, Jean Zaru of the Ramallah Friends, Sufi Sheikh Ghassen Manasra, **Samaritan Priest Abu Wisam**, and an official of the Palestinian Authority. <http://www.fosna.org/content/abrahams-children-listening-tour-june-14-28-2014>

**2014 INTERNATIONAL MEETING**

Vienna, Austria Meeting Begins: 7/6/2014 - Meeting Ends: 7/10/2014 BIBLICAL CHARACTERS IN THE THREE TRADITIONS (JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM) **John Tracy Greene**

Description: This seminar approaches biblical literature through its most famous and pivotal characters, for it is around them that the subsequent biblical story is organized and arranged. Moreover, these characters have come to enjoy a life and fame that extends well beyond the basic Old Testament, Miqra, and New Testament, and even into the Qur'an and Islamic oral and written texts. As was demonstrated at the recent Tartu seminar, Samaritan texts and traditions (unfamiliar to many) have a contribution to make to the seminar as well. Our work seeks, among other goals, to facilitate a meaningful and informed dialogue between Jews, Christians, Muslims and Samaritans by providing both an open forum at annual conferences, and by providing through our publications a written reference library to consult. A further goal is to encourage and provide a forum in which new scholarly talent in biblical and related studies may be presented.

[https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Congresses\\_ProgramUnits.aspx?MeetingId=24](https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Congresses_ProgramUnits.aspx?MeetingId=24)

**2014 ANNUAL MEETING**

San Diego, CA Meeting Begins: 11/22/2014- Meeting Ends: 11/25/2014

On the heels of a great session on the state of several questions in the study of the Samaritan Pentateuch in Baltimore (SBL, 2013). We look forward to continued conversations about textual criticism in San Diego. Join us.

[http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Congresses\\_CallForPaperDetails.aspx?MeetingId=25&VolunteerUnitId=34](http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Congresses_CallForPaperDetails.aspx?MeetingId=25&VolunteerUnitId=34)

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**Recent Lectures**

**Biblical Texts in Diaspora and Digital Humanities** (Conferences / Seminars / Lectures) April 3, 2014

**University of Michigan** Professor of Classical Studies Arthur Verhoogt and Michigan State University Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies Robert Anderson will speak about the U.M.'s digital papyri collection and M.S.U.'s digital Samaritan Manuscripts. Joining Dr. Anderson will be William Hart-Davidson, Associate Professor of M.S.U.'s Writing, Rhetoric, and American Culture and Jim Ridolfo, Assistant Professor of writing, rhetoric, and digital studies at University of Kentucky. The U.M. Papyrology collection and MSU Libraries' Chamberlain Warren Samaritan Collection are both the

largest of their kind in the United States, and both contain materials that are strongly connected to the Old and New Testament. This talk will feature and demonstrate how these scholars have created and implemented digital applications that make possible new ways of understanding and communicating with biblical texts that come from the world over.

<http://events.msu.edu/main.php?view=event&eventid=1389377019620&timebegin=2014-04-03%2019:00:00>

### **University of Bergen: Institute for Foreign Languages- Arabic Language and Literature**

**Workshop: Rational Theology and Greek Philosophy in Samaritan Bible Exegesis March 25-28, 2014**

Also see [http://www.uib.no/sites/w3.uib.no/files/attachments/samaritan\\_bible\\_exegesis.pdf](http://www.uib.no/sites/w3.uib.no/files/attachments/samaritan_bible_exegesis.pdf)

### **Targumic Literature: Aramaic Translations of the Bible,**

Feb. 9-14, 2014 Tel Aviv University

**Evelyn Burkhardt & Stefan Schorch:** *The Samaritan Targum and its Hebrew Vorlage*

**Leonhard Becker & Martin Hagg:** *Samaritan Translations of the Bible into Aramaic and Arabic*

**Alina Tarshin •** Tel Aviv University: *The Vocalic Interchange e-a in Samaritan Aramaic*

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### **Also Recent**

#### **US Embassy Presents American Classics to BIU Library System**

**The Wurzweiler Central Library** has also recently displayed a photo exhibit on the **Samaritans** and illustrations from Solomon's Song of Songs. See page 4 of the BIU News Bytes from Bar-Ilan University <http://afbiu.org/document.doc?id=77>

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#### **The Editor is Still Looking for the following Copies:**

*A critical edition of the text of the Samaritan Yom Ha-kippur liturgy, with translation thereof and comparison with the corresponding Jewish liturgies* by **John Macdonald** his Thesis (doctoral) University of Leeds 1958

*A Critical Investigation and Translation of the Special Liturgies of the Samaritans for Their Passover and Their Feast of Unleavened Bread* by **Isaac Lerner**, University of Leeds 1956

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#### **New Publications**

[\*The Samaritan Version of the Book of Numbers With Hebrew Variants: A Close Textual Study\*](#) by David Lee Phillips (Mar 30, 2014)

[\*The Comfort of Kin: Samaritan Community, Kinship, and Marriage\*](#) (Brill's Series in Jewish Studies) by Monika Schreiber (June 15, 2014)

[\*Mosaics of Faith: Floors of Pagans, Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Muslims in the Holy Land\*](#) by Rina Talgam (Jul 3, 2014)

[\*Evidence of Editing, Growth and Change of Texts in the Hebrew Bible\*](#) by **Reinhard Müller**, Juha Pakkala, and Bas ter Haar Romeny. Society of Biblical Literature: Atlanta January 2014 [brief view](#)

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### **From the Archives of the Global Jewish News Source**

#### **Samaritans Preserve Old Holy Scrolls**

August 2, 1926 Jerusalem (Jul. 31) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

A denial that a split exists in the Samaritan sect there was made by the High Priest of the Samaritans in a letter published in the "Ha'aretz," Hebrew daily.

The "Al Jedid," Palestine Arab newspaper published in Caire, had printed a report that there was a dispute between the sect and its priests. The Arab paper stated that a family had complained to the District Officer of an alleged sale of the Scrolls of the Law.

It was proved that the Scrolls, handed down to the Samaritans for innumerable generations, are intact in the old synagogue the High Priest declared.

<http://www.jta.org/1926/08/02/archive/samaritans-preserve-old-holy-scrolls>

### **Palestine Population 1,035,154: Figures of Census Taken This Week: Increase of 277,972 Since 1922:** November 21, 1931 Jerusalem (Nov. 19)

An increase of 35 per cent. in the population of Palestine as compared with the figures of the census taken in October 1922 is revealed in the figures of the new Palestine census taken this week, it is announced here to-day. According to the new census, there are now 1,035,154 souls in the country, as compared with 757,182 at the time of the 1922 census. The population of the Jewish town of Tel Aviv is 46,062. The figures giving the proportion of Jews, Moslems, Christians, etc. are not yet available.

The census taken by the Palestine Government in October 1922 showed that the total population of 757,182 in the country at that time included 590,890 Mohammedans, 83,794 Jews, and 73,024 Christians. There were also 7,028 Druses and 163 Samaritans, as well as several other small groups. In Jerusalem, with a total population of 62,578, there were 33,971 Jews, 14,699 Christians, and 13,413 Mohammedans. No separate figures were given in the 1922 census report for Tel Aviv, which was lumped together with Jaffa, whose total population of 47,709 was made up of 20,699 Mohammedans, 20,152 Jews, and 6,850 Christians. The most notable growth in the Jewish population, it was pointed out, however, at that time, was in Jaffa, where the number of Jews had more than doubled in recent years, owing to the phenomenal growth of Tel Aviv.

<http://www.jta.org/1931/11/21/archive/palestine-population-1035154-figures-of-census-taken-this-week-increase-of-277972-since-1922-q>

### **High Priest of Samaritans Dies at Age of Seventy**

December 5, 1932 Jerusalem (Dec. 3)

Itzchak Ben Amram, High Priest of the Samaritans, known as the Kohen Gadol, died in Nablus at the age of seventy yesterday.

Funeral services were held this afternoon and were attended by Ben Zvi and Joseph Lurie, representing the Palestine Jewish National Council and the Jewish Agency Executive.

Ben Amram was a picturesque Palestine figure and leader of the historic sect, known as Bene Yisrael, living in the city of Nablus which they still call Schechem.

<http://www.jta.org/1932/12/05/archive/high-priest-of-samaritans-dies-at-age-of-seventy>

### **21 Arabs Speak Hebrew; 2,216 Jews, Arabic**

April 30, 1933 Jerusalem (Apr. 28)

Twenty-one Arabs have given Hebrew as their native language, according to the official Palestine census, covering the year 1931, just published here in two volumes comprising 950 pages of statistical data.

However, against these 21 Hebrew-speaking Arabs, 2,216 Jews in Palestine gave Arabic as their mother tongue; while 4,694 Jews gave Yiddish, 5,305 English and 2,492 German as their native languages.

The population of Palestine in 1931 was 1,035,821 compared with the 757,182 of the year 1922. Of the present population, there are 759,712 Moslems, 174,610 Jews, 91,398 Christians, 182 Samaritans and the rest are Druses.

These figures reveal that the Jewish population of Palestine has increased 108 percent since the last census. In the same period the all-Jewish city of Tel-Aviv has increased 203 percent in population, the population of Haifa 104 percent and that of Jerusalem 45 percent.



The average annual increase per 10,000 of population is given as 850 for Jews, 354 for Moslems and 251 for Christians. <http://www.jta.org/1933/04/30/archive/21-arabs-speak-hebrew-2216-jews-arabic>

### **Only 92 Men Left in Samaritan Community**

October 22, 1934 Nablus (Oct. 10)

The death of a Samaritan Jew, killed by a truck while walking on a highway, leaves the ancient Samaritan Jewish community with only ninety-two adult males.

Samaritan Jews, who live on Mount Gerizim, claim that none of their members left Palestine when the Jews were exiled by the Romans. The Samaritan Jewish community is rapidly dying out.

<http://www.jta.org/1934/10/22/archive/only-92-men-left-in-samaritan-community>

### **Explorers Survey Palestine Finds**

April 11, 1935

An investigation of the ancient staircase, believed to date from Roman times, which was uncovered at the foot of Mount Gerizim during the recent Nablus floods, has been made by I. Ben-Zvi and Dr. Meisler, of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society. They visited Wadi Tufach, where two stone tablets engraved with the Ten Commandments had been found.

The place where these tablets were discovered is now known as Beit-Al-Ma, and it is presumed that there was a Samaritan community and a synagogue at this site during the Roman and Byzantine periods.

Remains of buildings and columns as well as scattered stones, which were found, date back to King Herod's time. The synagogue is known in Samaritan history. It was built by a leading Samaritan of the time, Ibn Fusha.

<http://www.jta.org/1935/04/11/archive/explorers-survey-palestine-finds>

### **Samaritan Brides at Premium**

March 30, 1936

The marriage problem is causing great concern to the ancient and fast-dwindling Samaritan community in Nablus, whose members do not marry outside their own community. They now number 200 souls in all.

There are twenty-five men seeking wives now and their choice is restricted to the fifteen unwed women. Some of the women are more than thirty years old, which is an advanced age for marriage in the East.

The brides shortage has prompted parents to set high requirements for suitors, including a dowry of \$48. Parents whose daughters work and contribute to the family's support are demanding much higher prices.

In protest against the high cost of marrying, some of the eligible men who are brothers or cousins of marriageable women are exercising their ancient prerogative of insisting that the younger girl not marry until they have been wed. This has brought the marriage market to a stalemate.

Several conferences have been held by the elders of the community, but no solution has been reached.

<http://www.jta.org/1936/03/30/archive/samaritan-brides-at-premium>

### **Samaritans Celebrate First Wedding in Years**

December 11, 1936

The fast-dwindling Samaritan community here had a rare occasion to celebrate recently — a wedding. The group of 200 persons has quite a marriage problem. The shortage of women leaves a score of men unmarried since no marriage is permitted outside the group.

The wedding was the first in years and followed intense competition for the dusky lady's hand.

<http://www.jta.org/1936/12/11/archive/samaritans-celebrate-first-wedding-in-years>

**British Authorities Act Against Jews in Jerusalem, Haifa for Attacks on Arabs**

July 5, 1939 JERUSALEM (Jul. 4)

... A member of the dwindling community of Samaritans at Nablus was shot dead in Haifa the first to die in the three-year-old reign of terror in Palestine. He was Ibrahim Yussef Kahan.

<http://www.jta.org/1939/07/05/archive/british-authorities-act-against-jews-in-jerusalem-haifa-for-attacks-on-arabs>

**High Priest of Samaritan Order Dies in Palestine**

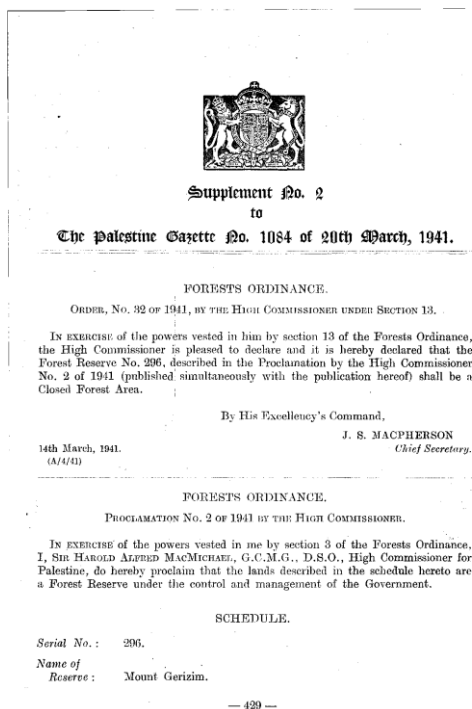
January 22, 1943 Jerusalem (Jan. 21)

The High Priest of the Samaritan order, Jacob Matzliach, died in Nablus today at the age of 70. He had been the spiritual ruler of the Samaritan community for the past ten years.

There are about 240 Samaritans in Palestine, 180 of whom reside in Nablus and another forty in Tel Aviv. They consider themselves the direct descendants of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasach and Levi, and as such entitled to the highest posts in the Jewish clergy.

Matzliach will be buried on Mount Gerizim which is considered by the Samaritans to be the holiest place in Palestine. The Jewish National Council telegraphed its condolences to the Samaritan community.

<http://www.jta.org/1943/01/22/archive/high-priest-of-samaritan-order-dies-in-palestine>

**Forest on Mount Gerizim is preserved**

Below you will find an ordinance from 1941, whereas the forest on Mount Gerizim has been preserved.

[http://www.nevo.co.il/law\\_html/law21/PG-e-1084-2.pdf](http://www.nevo.co.il/law_html/law21/PG-e-1084-2.pdf)



The firewood used for the Passover does not come from this forest but from local olive trees. Olive wood is very dense which makes it burn very well for a very long time and will produce the highest heat. It burns for much longer than most woods. It does not have a high sap content like conifers, it is a hardwood and therefore this unique fruit tree does not cause sap. The best thing about olive wood is the smell and it gives the food the flavoring it deserves. It makes

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**Samaritan Stereoview**

In the *March, 2006 issue* (Vol. V – No. 4) of the Samaritan Update, we posted a stereoview published by M.W. Chase, ca 1860. There was never much information on the card but just recently *on Ebay.com* a stereoview

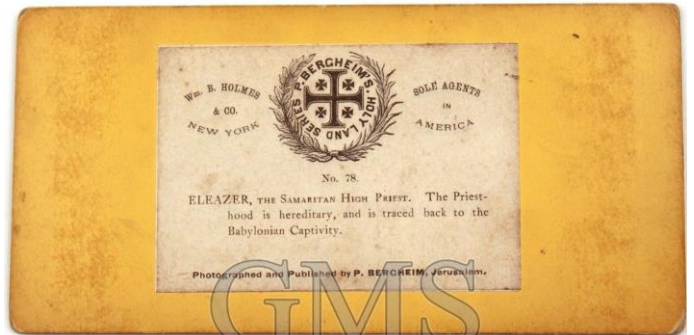


card has appeared with the same image. The back of the card has a sticker with the following statement:

'Eleazer, the Samaritan High Priest. The Priesthood is hereditary, and traced back to the Babylonian Captivity. The image was photographed and published by P. Bergheim, Jerusalem. Card No. 78 is from the P. Bergheim's Holy Land Series and sold in the US by Wm. B. Holmes & Co. New York.'

P. Bergheim appears to be appears to be Peter E. Bergheim, (1815-1890) a known photographer between 1863-1873.

In the same series, image #75, is a Jewish Rabbi (not shown). My guess is that the Samaritan image is of a Jew. He also possibly be a Karaite Jew. In 1912 there were only eighteen persons (five males, thirteen females from five families). The head wear in the stereo card appears different than the turban a Samaritan High Priest would wear. We also know that during the 1860's the Samaritan High priest was Amram ben Shalmah. But we may never know who the image really is!



It appears that Bergheim had a studio in the Christian Quarter of the Old City and also subcontracted, reproduced 3 of his photos in 1865 by the Survey team of the *British Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem* lead by Captain Charles W. Wilson and Captain Charles Warren. Both of these men are had connections with the Samaritans known. The other photographer, well known for taking a few Samaritan photos was Sgt. James McDonald, worked with Wilson. Most of the photos in the survey were his. So one would think that he would have been informed if the man was Samaritan or not.

**The Samaritan Update is open to any articles that are relative to Samaritan Studies. Submit your work to the Editor. [The Editor](#)**

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