

Reproduced from the Library of the Editor of
www.theSamaritanUpdate.com
Copyright 2011

Jonas King, Missionary to Syria and Greece
By Mrs. F. E. H. Haines
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY
150 Nassau Street, New York 1879

(p. 152).....

Quite exact measurements were taken at Nablous of Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, and facts of interest obtained from the priest of the Samaritans, Salameh, who was acquainted with the Abbe Gregoire, whom Dr. King had known at Paris. This priest, in answer to inquiry, said, "The number of Samaritans is about two hundred, the number of males sixty, and the number of houses twenty; there are three persons at Jaffa; there were formerly many at Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli, Gaza, and in Egypt; but now there are none.'

"I asked him, 'When did your fathers separate from the Jews?'

"PRIEST. Their separation commenced under Shilkiah, in the days of Saul. At that time four tribes revolted. The final separation was in the time of Ezra, after which, several of the tribes went to the east into India beyond a river, and wandered about and went to Russia.

"I. Do you know Hebrew?

"PRIEST. Yes.

"I. Have you the Jewish books? Do you believe in them?

(p. 153)

"PRIEST. We have the five books of Moses. This is our holy book. Moses commanded that nothing should be added. The Jews have changed the letters of the alphabet and added.

"I. Have you the book of Joshua?

"PRIEST. Yes. We consider it a good book, but not inspired by God like the books of Moses.

"I. Do you believe in the prophet Samuel?

"PRIEST. He was a great enemy to the Samaritans.

"I. Do you know anything about Jeroboam and Ahab who were kings here?

"PRIEST. NO.

"I. Have you any sacrifices?

"PRIEST. Yes. Once a year, in commemoration of the passover, we offer six or seven lambs of a year old upon an altar of stone.

"I. Have you no daily sacrifices?

"PRIEST. No. There is no place to offer them. Gerizim is the place where we should worship.

"I. Had you a temple there formerly?

"PRIEST. Yes, but it is destroyed.

"I. Have you an altar?

"PRIEST. Yes, of stones on Mount Gerizim, where we offer the passover.

"I. Have you seen the Gospel?

"PRIEST. Yes, and read it much.

"I. What do you think of Jesus Christ?

"PRIEST. He was one of the first of infidels, because he said he was the Son of God.

"I. Were not his works good?

(p. 154)

"PRIEST. I say nothing against his works, neither do I curse him. I only say he was an infidel, because he called himself the Son of God.

"I. Have you read his conversation with the woman of Samaria by the well of Sychar?

"PRIEST. Yes. It is all a lie. He came to the well, and all he said was, 'What is the name of this well?' and she replied 'Jacob's.'

"I. Do you believe in a Messiah to come?

"PRIEST. Yes.

"I. What will be his character? Who will he be, a man or God?

"PRIEST. The spirit of Moses will descend from heaven and take another body and reign over all nations.

"I. You believe, I presume, that I and you and all men are sinners.

"PRIEST. Yes, truly.

"I. What must a man do in order to inherit the kingdom of heaven?

"PRIEST. He must keep the law.

"I. But we have none of us kept the law, and Joshua said, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a Holy God.' Your fathers were very rebellious and Moses called them stiff-necked, and the law says, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all things* written in the book of the Law to do them.' We are all under the curse. How can we be saved?

"PRIEST. By repentance, that is enough.

"I. Moses sprinkled the book of the law with blood, and if a man sinned, he was to offer sacrifices, and with (p. 155) out the shedding of blood there was no remission. Were you a king and I a subject, and had you issued a decree, that whosoever should kill or steal should be put to death, and I should commit either of these crimes, repentance would not atone for it. God, who cannot lie, has said, 'Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.' We are all under the curse of God's holy law, which you and I believe; and there is no remission, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, to whom all the bloody sacrifices under the Mosaic dispensation had reference.

"PRIEST. I am not a sinner like you.

"I. Have you never sinned?

"PRIEST. Very little, very little, almost none.

"I. If you say this, you do not know your own heart. God told his covenant people they were ever inclined to go astray. Moses sinned and was not permitted to enter the promised land. Are you better than Moses?

"PRIEST. Yes, better.

"I. Is Moses in heaven?

"PRIEST. Yes.

"I. How was he saved?

"PRIEST. His sin was as nothing—small—small.

"I. But the Lord was angry with him and did not permit him to enter into Canaan.

"PRIEST. God commanded that you should not add to, or diminish from the law, or change a single letter. But you say the sacrifices are done away, and you keep the first day of the week. Why is this?

"I. The sacrifices all referred to the death of Christ, (p. 156) the great sacrifice which was made to atone for the sins of the world, and they ceased, as a matter of course, when he suffered. All the ritual in the Law as it respects sacrifices was then fulfilled, and the work of redeeming man was so much greater than that of creating the world, that we keep the first day of the week instead of the seventh. You ask me, Why change the law? Why abolish sacrifices? You yourselves have left off the daily sacrifice.

"PRIEST. Why is circumcision abolished?

"I. That was a bloody seal of the covenant God made with Abraham, and like the blood of the sacrifices, probably had reference to him, the seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed: to his blood, which was to be shed that the covenant might be established. The covenant God made with Abraham was, 'I will multiply thee, etc., and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' This seed was Christ; He said not seeds, as of many, but 'in thy seed.'

"PRIEST. No. The seed is all his posterity, and the promise or covenant was multiplication of them.

"I. Why then are you diminished to the number of two or three hundred, and the Jews to about seven millions, and scattered over the face of the earth?

"PRIEST. There are multitudes of Samaritans in the world.

"I. Where?

"PRIEST. I know not, but they exist somewhere.

"I. No. The promise made to Abraham had reference to those who should be of the like faith with him. Those who believe in Jesus Christ, and walk according (p. 157) to God's Holy Word, are his children according to the promise, and I trust there are many such in England and America, and among other nations, who are not his seed according to the flesh.

"PRIEST. The Mussulmans are the children of Abraham.

"I. Are all the nations of the world blessed by them?

"PRIEST. The blessing is with us Samaritans.

"I. Is this then the fulfilment of God's promise, 'I will multiply thee'? Here you are, pined away to the number of two hundred, without a temple. No, the promise is spiritual, and is fulfilling, and will be fulfilled: all the nations of the earth shall turn unto the Lord, and shall believe in Jesus Christ, and the seed of Abraham shall be like the stars of heaven for number, and as the sands upon the seashore, and I hope that you will be of that spiritual seed also.

"While I thus spoke he listened very attentively. Before leaving, I asked if he would permit me to see his manuscript of the Torah. He replied, 'Yes,' and asked how much I would give? I offered him two piastres. He then said the key to the synagogue, where the book was, was not with him.

"I answered, 'I know where the key is, sir; it is in my purse.' At this he smiled and said, 'Yes.'

"Afterwards showing this man a dollar, the roll was brought out and opened. He said it was 3,448 years old, and was written by the grandson of Aaron. He did not say a word against my touching it. I asked him to read the ten commandments of the Law, which he

did from (p. 158) the 20th chapter of Exodus, and interpreted them to me in Arabic. He called the first two one; and for the tenth, said it was written, 'Thou shalt make to thee an altar of stones upon Mount Gerizim.'

"The commandments were comprised in four sections. The Samaritan differs from the Hebrew in character, and in pronunciation. The priest charged the Jews with having changed the letters of the Hebrew language, and added to the word of God. Before closing the book, the priest remarked to me, 'You will now receive a blessing, on account of having seen this book.'"

On a shelf near the altar in the small neat synagogue, Dr. King saw many books written in Samaritan, but was not disposed to pay \$200 for one of them. He went with the priest to his house, from which was a fine view of the Mounts Ebal and Gerizim.

The priest seemed really impressed, when Dr. King on leaving committed him to the care of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The tomb of Joseph was shown here, also the well of Jacob, now partly filled with stones and earth. On Wednesday the missionaries received a most cordial welcome from Mr. Fisk at the Convent of the Archangel at Jerusalem. The expense from Beyrout, including servants, was thirty-four dollars.

This reference is not located in *A Bibliography of the Samaritans, Third Edition, Revised, Expanded, and Annotated*, by Alan David Crown and Reinhard Pummer, ATLA Bibliography, No. 51, **The Scarecrow Press, Inc.** Lanham, Maryland, Toronto, Oxford. 2005

A version of this is found in:

The Religious Intelligencer, Published by N. Whiting
No. 21. New-Haven, Saturday, October 23, 1824 Vol. IX
(p. 322-3) PALESTINE MISSION. JOURNAL OF MR. KING.

King was a friend and co-missionary with Revs. Messrs, Fisk, and Joseph Wolff (They began in Malta in 1823).