

# THE MESSIANIC HOPE OF THE SAMARITANS

BY  
**JACOB, SON OF AARON**  
HIGH PRIEST OF THE SAMARITANS

TRANSLATER FROM THE ARABIC BY  
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EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
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## CONCERNING SAMARITAN MANUSCRIPTS

The Samaritan priests, appreciating the interest of American and European Christians, are now willing to sell to them accurate modern copies of the ancient books of the Samaritan religion. I think it well, however, to warn intending purchasers, that not all the copies offered for sale, even in Nablus, are accurate. Some people of little learning, relying on the ignorance of tourists, have made garbled copies of our Torah, and have sold them to tourists or correspondents. Manuscripts purchased at our Synagogue, from myself or my sons will be certified as complete and correct. Several recent purchasers have sent their manuscripts to me for inspection, and I have been sorry not to be able to certify to their correctness. It grieves us to have our Law incorrectly copied. I request my friend, Dr. Barton, to make this statement to intending purchasers. We desire that such copies of our sacred books, as go forth into Christian libraries shall be accurate. Any manuscript purchased in our Synagogue, and bearing my seal, is genuine and complete.

JACOB, SON OF AARON, High Priest of the Samaritans.

Samaritan Synagogue, Nablus, Palestine.

## THE MESSIANIC HOPE OF THE SAMARITANS. INTRODUCTION.

I COUNT it no small honor that I am permitted to introduce to American and English readers the author of the following little treatise, Jacob, Son of Aaron, High Priest of the Samaritans. Through him the hope of ages utters its voice in expectation of a Messiah still to come. So far as I know the messianic hope of this ancient and almost forgotten sect has never before been set forth with authority and completeness in a modern tongue.

The High Priest lives at Nablus, the modern Shechem, at the foot of his sacred mountain, Gerizim. Jerusalem has been destroyed again and again, and its name almost forgotten; but this little sect still clings to its holy mountain, and speaks its unheeded message in a strange language and to a world that has almost forgotten the existence of this ancient and now diminutive congregation.

A few years ago it was my privilege to visit the Samaritan colony at Shechem, and to establish an acquaintance with the High Priest out of which has grown an interesting correspondence.

In January 1906, I learned from Mr. E.K. Warren, who had visited Jerusalem as chairman of the World's Sunday School Convention in 1904, that some correspondents of his had discovered

what they believed was an independent source of information concerning the life of our Lord. The letter which he showed me read in part as follows:

**"It seems to me we have made a discovery which will greatly interest you. The Samaritans have a genealogy of their high priests, which I have never heard has been translated. Each high priest notes what during his priestly office occurs of note. One of these high priests speaks of 'Jesus the Son of Mary' being born, and another of his being crucified during his term. I have secured an Arabic hand-written transcript of this record and their history, which, with the translation of those passages into English, we are sending under separate cover to you."** (page 2)

I at once wrote to the High Priest, who wrote me under date of February 28, 1906:

**"I have received your letter, and the explanation which you require about the genealogy of the priests, and the information (photo with caption: 'Jacob, son of Aaron, High Priest of the Samaritans.')** about Jesus Christ and his crucifixion. It is found with us. We gathered the information from various historians and papers which were with us of very ancient date. These were written by priests (page 3) long before our time. The ancient papers were sold to a learned Jew about 35 years ago. The name of the Jew was Abraham of the Museum of the Russians. He bought all the papers which were with us, and we have not one of those papers now. But before those papers were sold I gathered the history from those papers of ancient date. The history as now written includes the history of our congregation and all that happened to us from the day we entered the Holy Land to the present time. If you wish one of those histories, I will send it. It will be useful to you." (photo with caption: 'high priest and the Holy scroll of Nablous.')

Meantime Mr. Warren received a copy of the book from his correspondents in Jerusalem. It was a manuscript volume of 494 pages in Arabic, with a tabular supplement of 13 pages. Later word was received that the High Priest's cousin Isaac had a copy of a part of the chronicle, one leaf of which was sent to him for examination, and by him forwarded to me. It was on very old parchment, 8 x 12 inches. The book contained 15 such leaves, and one other, (page 4) the first one, in paper; the original first leaf having been worn out. For this chronicle he wanted 200 pounds sterling.

Prof. Abdullah Ben Kori of Pacific University examined the book, and reported its contents. It proved to be the Samaritan Chronicle of Abulfath, compiled about 1355 A.D. (756 of the Hegira), and brought down to date. The work of Abulfath was edited by Edward Vilmar and published in Gotha in Arabic, in 1865. The narrative ends with the reign of Haroun-al-Raschid. This chronicle the High Priest had taken, and from the records and traditions of his ancestors, the priests of the Samaritans, had brought the chronicle down to date. (photo with caption: 'A village Fountain') Before I had determined the precise character of the book, I had secured a translation of those portions relating to Jesus, and had discovered that they were, in their present form, not earlier than the period of the Crusades. Their references to Jesus are here given:

***About the Birth of Jesus, the Son of Joseph the Carpenter.***

**"In the days of the high-priesthood of Yahokeem, who was high priest for about thirty-two years, occurred the birth of Jesus, son of (page 5) Joseph the carpenter, of the sect of the Jews: hence the date from our ancestor Adam (to whom be peace) to the appearance of the son of Mary, 4290 years, and from the commencement of Fansota to the birth of the said Jesus, the son of Mary, 1236. And his birth took place in Bethlehem, and his resort was to Nazareth, and many of the sect of the Jews were gathered to him, until his chief men were from among them. And the Jews hated him with bitter hatred, and sought in every way to slay him, because they claimed that his works were contrary to the law of their religion, and opposed to the traditions of their elders in every matter. And when he had gathered apostles, he delegated them to various countries. Among (photo with caption: 'Department store at Nablous.')** these, Peter was sent to Rome and Andrew to the Soudan, Matthew accompanying him. This Matthew wrote a Gospel; (this word is Greek<sup>2</sup> and signifies "good news"). This Matthew wrote his Gospel in the year 41 after the death of Jesus, and it is said that he wrote it in Judea. Thomas was sent to Babylon, and Philip to Kerwan, and Africa, and Paul to Eliya, and its neighborhood. This Paul (page 6) wrote a number of epistles which the Christians have. And he at first was called Saul, and it is said that he was born in Tarsus, capital of Cilicia. It is said he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, but more truly he belongs to the tribe of Judah. He wrote fourteen epistles. Before he wrote these he sent an epistle to Salonica in the year

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<sup>2</sup> The high priest's definition of the meaning of Gospel is better than his knowledge of the language from which it has been derived. It is good Old English and means "God-story." The Greek (word) εὐαγγέλιον means "good news."

52 after the slaying of Jesus, the son of Mary: the last was the second epistle to the people of Timothy in the fifty-sixth year after the slaying of Jesus. And Simon was sent to the country of Barbary. And the said Jesus had other disciples than these, among whom was Mark, who also wrote a gospel, and of whom it was said that he was a disciple of Peter. It is said that he wrote his (photo with caption: 'Plows in the Valley of Shechem') Gospel at the dictation of Peter to the people of Rome. It is said that he wrote his Gospel forty-eight years after the death of his master Peter. Among the others there was Luke, who was from the city of Anitoch and Sabius, practicing medicine; and it was said that he was originally a heathen. After he became a Christian it is said that he became a disciple of Paul. It was said that he wrote his Gospel in Boeotia, which is a state in Greece, and its king was Tabis Cade. Among the others was John, who was from Bethsaida, a town of Galilee. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome. He was (page 7) in his youth a fisherman, and Jesus ordained him as an apostle. He also wrote a Gospel in the year 101 after the death of Jesus, but more correctly in the year 97 after the slaying of Jesus. Because he reached the age of 115. And it is said that he wrote a part of his Gospel in the island of Patmos, and part after his return from there, in Ephesus: and he continued at the writing of his Gospel from the year 64 to the year 97 after the slaying of Jesus.....

"To return to the subject of Jesus, the son of Mary, whom the sect of Jews, his relatives, accounted an illegitimate son of Joseph the carpenter; Herod the king sought to slay him, and he fled from (photo with caption: 'Children near Shechem.') his hands and was a fugitive from him and from his relatives the Jews. At this time the High Priest Yahokeym<sup>3</sup> died, in the mercy of God, and was succeeded by the High Priest Jonathan, who held the office twenty-seven years. In his day Jesus, the son of Mary, was crucified by the Emperor Tiberius. With him were crucified two sinners, who according to the law of the Jews, were worthy of death. One of them was crucified on his right, and the (page 8) other on his left, and this was in the Jebusite city of Aelia,<sup>4</sup> through the instrumentality of Pilate who ruled over the sect of the Jews.

"This Jesus never molested the Samaritans, all the days of his life; neither were the Samaritans concerned with him or molested (photo with caption: 'Mother and Child.') him. But he was a plague to his relatives and his co-religionists, from whom he sprang. These are the sect of the Jews who hated him with a bitter hatred. (page 9)

"The Jews were also the cause of the death of John, a disciple of the same Jesus; and they deceived Herod through the means of a young maiden, whom they presented to him for his pleasure. And when she found out that said King Herod was dead in love with her and her beauty, and was inclined to her, it was not difficult for her; and he beheaded said John. Said Herod was at Sabaste at that time. The reason for him naming him John the Baptist was that originally the Jews believed in his being righteous, and believed on him, and were also baptized of him; but stopped doing so when they saw that he was a lover of Jesus, son of Mary. Because they asked John not to baptize Jesus; but he took him to Jericho and baptized him there; for the Jews believed that any one who was baptized in those waters was freed from all their uncleanness and sins. Since that time baptism was changed, and taken up by the Christians and refused by the Jews; and the Jews instituted in its place to pass through the waters of the Jordan, believing whoever did so would be cleansed from their sins. But when the Christian kings came into power, they forbade them from doing that."

While this evidently possessed no value as a source of information concerning the events of our Lord's life, it seemed to me to have interest as an interpretation. And it caused me to question the High Priest farther as to his view of the person of Christ, and his hope of a Christ to come. He wrote me in answer:

"Concerning your question about Christ who has come and the Christ who is to come, I have sent you a long epistle. I trust in God it will reach you and that you will be pleased with it."

The document is a manuscript booklet of 21 pages written in Arabic, with Scripture quotations in Samaritan Hebrew and in red ink. Prof. Ben Kori has translated it very faithfully, bringing to the work a very accurate knowledge of the Arabic. I preface it with further word about its author taken from near the end of the chronicle above referred to, when it begins with the death of his uncle and predecessor, and his own induction to the priesthood:

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<sup>3</sup> In a translation made in Jerusalem this name is spelled Ay tam; and in another made in Nablous it is Yahonata; but the Samaritan reads Yhkeem.

<sup>4</sup> Aelia was a village near Jerusalem which was left after the destruction of the city. See p. 26.

**“In the year 1292 (i.e., 1874 A.D.) in the beginning of the year, in the days of the High Priest Omran, on the night of Friday of the month of Moharem, the days of his priesthood came to an end, and he died, to the mercy of God. And he left Isaac and Salaam his sons: and he also His Excellency, his nephew Jacob, the son of his brother, who succeeded him in the priesthood and commandery. And Jacob, the aforesaid High Priest, who can trace his generation to antiquity, acquired great respect from the Mohammedan government, and from the children of his own people; may God multiply (page 10, Photo with caption: ‘Samaritan Pentateuch and Genesis. Owned by Dr. Wm. E. Barton.’) (page 11.) their like. And he became perfect in his personality, and through the good counsels by which he became the highest of his people. And there is none who would oppose him in significant title of his priesthood. May God lengthen his honorable existence. His is great ability in writing Hebrew and Arabic; and he is very zealous upon the enemies of his religion. Amen. To him belong several Hebrew compositions, and also a book containing ten chapters concerning the origin of the Samaritan people and their customs and their religion. And he is the man who gathered the various portions of this history; for he is the foremost of his age and time. And may God be exalted, and lengthen the days of his honorable existence. Amen.”**

It is evident that this little treatise raises as many questions as it answers. We cannot help wondering whether the Messiah of the Samaritans is to be a prophet and only a prophet. The High Priest speaks throughout of a Second Kingdom, but gives no hint as to whether the Messiah is to be a king. Apparently his office is to be prophetic and spiritual; and the political offices of the kingdom may be discharged by others. Of this we may not be to sure; and fortunately we shall be able to secure the information at first hand, and will await further information from the High Priest himself.

Also we wonder whether the Messiah is to be a priest; and whether the sacrifices are considered prophetic of his coming, and are to be discontinued at his appearing. And we shall be glad to know what is to become of other nations and religions. We will inquire of the High Priest; but meantime here is the little treatise as we sent it. An interesting piece of rabbinical logic it is; and one which cannot fail to be suggestive to American and English readers.

William E. Barton.  
Oak Park, Illinois.  
First Congregational Church

(page 12)

## **THE CHRIST WHOM THE SAMARITANS EXPECT.**

### **IN THE NAME OF THE MOST MERCIFUL GOD!**

Praise be to the powerful King, the Omniscient, the Conqueror, the One who chose Israel and conferred honor upon (photo of written letter in Arabic with Arabic caption) it through his revelation, the One who revealed the truth to all creation through his apostle Moses, son of Amram, upon him and his righteous fathers, each and all, the best of peace! (page 13)

As the minds of the majority of this our generation are not able to undertake a detailed research after most of the truths that are in the Torah, on account of hindrances and other life relations, (photo with caption: ‘The High Priest at the time of Prayer.’) one whose requests are binding on me and whom I would respect by obliging him to the utmost of my power, requested me to write down for him some statements in proof of the Second Kingdom. (page 14) To this request I gave an affirmative answer and composed, accordingly, this essay; in order that men’s minds may become prepared for the triumph and the vanquishing of evil and adversity. I pray God, in the meanwhile, for success; verily He hears and answers. Amen.

The reference concerning the establishment of the Second Kingdom, affirming the appearance of “THBH” or a Prophet at the end of time of whose appearance we have a promise, is found in Ex. xx, (photo with caption: ‘Samaritan High Priest reciting history of the first Passover. Exodus XXII. On Top of Mt. Gerizim, Passover celebration of 1906.’) in the last verses, which are not found in the Torah of the Jews. It reads, “They said well. Let their consciences uphold my fear, and the keeping of my commandments, all the time: so that it may be done well unto them and their children. I shall set up for them a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I shall put my words into his mouth and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall be that the man who harkens not to the words which he speaks, I shall make him thereto responsible.” These words concern the prophet in whose coming we believe. (page 15) Again, “The prophet who dares to address words in my name and speaks what I have not commanded him, and he that speaks in the

name of foreign gods shall be killed.” The same is stated again in Deuteronomy, as also one may find in the Torah of the Jews, Deut. xviii. 15.

Now, proofs concerning the Prophet and his coming amount to ten in the holy Torah, and they are given in the way of symbols.

A part of the first proof is denoted in the meaning of the sleep that fell upon Abraham in Gen. xv. 17, beginning with “*Wa iehi hashemesh*,” i.e. “and the sun was.” The second part consists in the fact that when our lord Abraham was assured of God’s promise to him, given in the chapter beginning with *Achar haddebarim haelleh*,” i.e., “After these things,” as follows: “Look up toward heaven and count the stars, if thou be able to count them;” and He added: “thus shall thy seed be.” I say when this assurance was given him, he wanted to know whether or not their kingdom and the fulfillment of the covenant rested on conditions. He desired to find out the order of events; and hence his question given in the same chapter, verse 8: “Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” God (who is exalted) knowing Abraham’s purpose and the aim of his question, informed him that the kingdom and the fulfillment of the covenant rested on certain conditions: therefore He said to him (in the same chapter, verse 9): “Take me a heifer of three years old, a she-goat of three years old, a ram of three years old, etc.” He also informed him of the manner of offering them. Concerning the beasts it is said: “He divided through,” just as it has been revealed unto Moses (upon him be peace) in the first chapter and twelfth verse of the book of Leviticus, as follows: “And he shall cut it according to its pieces.” Referring to the birds, Gen. xv. 11 says: “He divided not,” just as one reads in Lev. 1. 17: “And he shall rend it between its wings but clear through.” Herein indications are given as to what is fit for sacrifice offerings. In the word *meshulleshet*, we understand that peace offerings are to be divided into three parts: (a) God’s part or portion, as it is indicated; (b) The high priest’s portion, consisting of the heave thigh and wave breast; (c) Israel’s portion, consisting of the remainder. Now, allusion is made to the first kingdom in the section beginning with “*Haiah hashemesh*.” First in verse 12: “And they will enslave them and oppress them for four hundred years,” down to and including verse 14, “And after that they shall go out with much wealth.” Here he was informed that their servitude during these years and what would transpire for and against them (page 16) will not come about in his days; for we read in the same chapter, verse 15: “But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace, and thou shalt be buried in a good old age.” When He was through these informations concerning the first kingdom, as to how it would begin and how He would hide his pleasure and how the truth would be falsified- Compare “And the sun had disappeared,” meaning of course, His pleasure, and “Darkness came,” That is erring away- he included those concerning the reappearance of his pleasure and the (Photo with caption: Samaritans prostrating themselves in Prayer. On top of Mount Gerizim, Passover celebration of 1906.) beginning of the second kingdom. God assured that to him with a firm covenant, saying (xv. 18): “In that day God made a covenant with Abraham, saying, To thy seed will I give this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the Euphrates river.” By this he was referring to the second kingdom, for the Jews did not possess that territory during the first kingdom. Concerning the passage, “And behold a smoking furnace and a sheet of fire,” we (page 17) shall give a later explanation, in its proper place. Now, the scattered mention of “Seven nations” refers to those whom God had destroyed before Israel, and whose lands He caused Israel to possess. But we have here a mention of eleven nations. They are those whose lands Israel shall possess in the second kingdom, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, and as far as the far sea. Here ends the first proof.

The second consists in that to which Jacob called the attention of his sons, in Chapter IX. Jacob (may peace be his lot) had, indeed, included in his sayings some subtle meanings. He said: “gather yourselves,” referring to the first kingdom and Israel’s gathering and coming out of Egypt. He referred, also, to its wandering away and the evil consequences resulting therefrom; for in the same chapter and verse, he says: “And I will inform you as to what shall befall you in the latter days.” Even our lord Moses, the apostle (may peace be upon him), said in Deut. iii. 29: “And evil shall befall you in the latter days.” Such days are the days of error. But these will disappear and be displaced by those of his pleasure and the return of the kingdom, in reference to the words, “Gather yourselves.” Such is affirmed by God (who is exalted) in the holy book, in Deut. xxx. 4: “From thence will IHVH, thy god, gather thee and from thence will he fetch thee.” But this will take place only when perfect obedience is assured and conditions of repentance are fulfilled. We pray the Lord (who is exalted) for success in our affairs. May He mend our doings and bring us to the days of his pleasure, when the Shekinah will appear. Verily He is able to dispose of everything He will.

The third proof is found in connection with the hand of the apostle Moses (upon him be peace), and with its change to whiteness and return to its first state. The meaning is that He (who is exalted) indicated thereby to the apostle that the truth will appear at his hand, and then it will disappear. His hand was, therefore, designated as “leprous,” and “as white as snow,” referring to purity. The word *Mesoraat* reminds us of the days of error. *Kashaleg* would indicate that though error is prevailing and God’s pleasure is taken away, there would remain a portion that would cling to the law, believe in its truthfulness, obtaining thus care from God for the purpose of preserving his covenant, according as we find the word of God in Lev. xxvi, 42: “I shall remember my covenant with Jacob and I shall remember my covenant also with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham.” Also the passage in the same chapter beginning with verse 44: “But still, though they are (page 18) in the land of their enemies,” etc. That these conditions are to disappear and the return of God’s pleasure is to follow, is illustrated by the fact that the apostle’s hand assumed its former state; for in the book of Exodus iv. 7 we read: “Behold it became again like his flesh.” This agrees fully with the promise: “But I will remember, in their favor, the covenant of their ancestors.” What would prove, moreover, the days of error, is the passage in the same chapter, verse 43: “And the land shall be deserted by them,” i.e., it shall be empty of them. Their return and the restoration of their kingdom is affirmed thus: “I will remember the covenants of their (photo with caption: “Jacob’s Well”) ancestors, in their favor.” That the kingdom shall be lasting is indicated by the passage: “That I may be their God, I am the Lord:” for God (who is exalted) is eternal with no change (may His highness be exalted!).

The fourth argument consists of a part of the parable of Balaam in Numbers xxiv. 17: “A star shall come out of Jacob and a rod shall rise out of Israel,” to “the sons of uproar.” Herein certain characteristics of the first kingdom are mentioned. We are informed, also, that such a kingdom was removed from Israel to Esau (see verse 18): “And Edom shall be a possession;” then it (page 19) shall be handed to Esau, then to Ishmael by way of inheritance, in accordance with the verse: “And Esau shall be an inheritance to his enemies.” Thus by the end of the kingdom of “Ishmael,” “Ishrael” shall reign. Thus we read later: “And Israel shall act valiantly,” referring to its victory, as we read in verse 19: “And the one, who is from Jacob, shall have dominion,” i.e., shall have the rulership. All such is firmly proved, and God knows best all matters.

The fifth proof is found in the section beginning with: “If ye shall bring forth children.” This section is divided in three stages. The first stage refers to the days of rebellion and the loss of the kingdom and the disappearance of the Shekinah, (compare Deut. iv. 25) : “And ye shall corrupt yourselves,” etc. The second concerns the necessity of repentance and God’s satisfaction that its conditions have been fulfilled, (compare verse 29 of the same chapter): “Then if thou shalt seek,” etc. The third deals with God’s return to them with his pleasure, with rulership and kind doings. Compare verse 31: “For the Lord thy God is a merciful God,” etc.

The sixth proof is derived from the disasters that would befall the enemy. Says Deut. xxix. 22, “And the last generation shall say,” down to “They shall see the plagues of the land,” including “And no grass shall grow therein.” The references to the places which are the object of God’s displeasure, are sufficient to convict of error those of Israel who have strayed from the truth. Deut xxix. 24 says: “All nations shall say, why hath God done thus unto this land?” and they shall confess their error and their forsaking the truth and their continued lethargy in falsehood, and it shall be answered as in verse 25: “because they forsook the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers, which He made with them, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.” Also verse 27: “Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against that land.” Those who will say these words are the faithful to the law of truth, and this will take place when the truth shall appear. Its appearance will have its signs, just as the appearance of falsehood has its own signs: and all will be recorded in its own place.

The seventh proof is discerned in the noted section beginning with, “And then all these things are come upon thee,” designating thereby that, at the end of the days of falsehood, minds will be rectified, religions purified, good doings practiced and impurities washed away. With all these things, perfection is, however, to be obtained from God (whose is might and glory). Compare Deut. xxx. 6: “And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God,” etc. (page 20) Then they shall come up and rule the land and truth shall triumph. Compare verse 3: “And the Lord thy God will return, ‘with’ thy *repentance*,<sup>5</sup> Also as far as “More than thy fathers.”

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<sup>5</sup> The High Priest renders *Shebooth ka* as “repentance.”

The eight proof is found in the section beginning with, "Give ear." Deut. xxxiii. 22 says: "A fire is kindled in my anger and it burns to the lowest pit." This is given after the extreme rebellion of Israel has been related, compare verse 24: "They have moved me to jealousy with that which no God; they have provoked me (photo with caption: 'Joseph's Tomb and Mount Ebal.') with their vanities." Next to these words we read: "But I will move them to jealousy with those that are not a people; with a foolish nation will I provoke them." After that, the holy of holies of the enemy will be disgraced and truth will be triumphant; that is *Bethiahweh, har Gerizim, Bethel*. Israel will have the kingdom: "I became kindled in the fire of my anger," etc., as far as "It is the fire that will burn," *Migdash Zerutah*. Compare verse 22: "It will eat up the land and its produces." It is the fire concerning which (page 21) we read xxix. 23: "All its land is burning; it shall not be sown nor shall it bear," etc.

What would also prove the second kingdom is Gen. xv. 17: "And behold a smoking furnace and a fire torch." Thus would show that the triumph of truth will proceed from God (who is exalted and honored) in having the form of these two symbols. The fire of the one will descend upon *Al migdash-Zerutah*, the other will descend upon *Al har Gerizim* in order to purify it of the defilements of those who accept another sanctuary instead of it. Then will truth triumph and the kingdom be restored. Compare Deut. xxxii, 22: "It shall lick the foundations of the mountains." It is the fire (Photo with caption: 'Valley of Sychar and Ancient Tomb.') that will descend upon Mount Gerizim. Do you not see that when *Migdash Zerutah* were mentioned, the word *Tokel* was used, meaning annihilation; while with the mention of *Gerizim*, the word is *Telahet*? This distinctly means, "It will lick," that is, it will purify but not annihilate. The latter is used in the same meaning as *Tahiru bash*, ye shall pass in fire, referring to purification. We have, indeed, two consecutive expressions that have nearly the same meaning; but God knows best! The use of *Gerizim* in plural is out of respect to it, and it should be, therefore, elliptically understood in the expression: "It will lick the traces of the mountains." (page 22)

The ninth proof is found in the section beginning with "*Zoth habberaka*," i.e., "This is the blessing," in Deut. xxxiii. 4, which is: "They are sitting at thy feet and receiving thy words," etc. The reference is about the seed of our lord Abraham, namely, the children of Esau and of Ishmael, whom God invited, in the day of gathering, to enter into his service to keep the law. Compare verse 2 of the same chapter: "And shone from Seir unto them," referring to the children of Esau, in harmony with Gen. xxxvi. 8: "And Esau dwelt in Mount Seir." Compare also Deut. xxxiii. 2: "And he glimmered from the mountain of Paran," meaning the children of Ishmael, in harmony with Gen. xxi. 21: "And he (Ishmael) dwelt in the wilderness of Paran." Thus, from these plain references one can not doubt that truth will appear in favor of Israel, through the fact that these nations shall return to its religion, though they had already refused, as it is without doubt, to enter its religion and to submit to its laws. But God (who is exalted) has informed us that they will submit themselves to the Law, for we read in Deut. xxxiii. 4: "They are sitting at thy feet and receiving thy words." This, however, will take place when God's pleasure shall be restored; when the clouds shall alight upon the Shekinah, in the house of God, on mount Gerizim. This is in fulfillment of Ex. xv. 17: "Thus, O God, hast made a sanctuary: O Lord build it up with thy might by the ever presence of the Shekinah and of offerings."<sup>6</sup> The ever presence of the Shekinah is linked with God's eternity, as the next verse indicates: "The Lord will reign for ever and ever." They will say, "*Torah asher sy-wah lanu Mosheh*," i.e., "The law which Moses commanded us," thereby confessing the veracity of the prophecy of our lord Moses (upon him be peace); that he was sent for the sake of the truth to the whole world. They will also concede that God (may He be exalted) brought down the Law upon Israel, and thereby honored Israel above all nations and made him the prince of the whole world; for it is said in Deut. xxxiii. 4: a possession of the people of Jacob." May God, who is exalted, bring the time near by His might and will. AMEN, LORD, AMEN!

The tenth proof is contained in chapter 34 of Deuteronomy, beginning with: "And Moses went up from Arabat Moab." Here said in Exodus xxxiv. 10: "I will perform miracles with thee," etc. It is: "And the Lord showed him all the land" down to "As far as the great sea," and "To thy seed will I give," referring to the children of Moses (upon him be peace). This was not exclusive: The (page 23) mention of the fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (upon them be peace) has already preceded. They were the people of the covenant, oath and promise for giving the land to their seed, and it is the twelve tribes that came out of the lions of Jacob. Therefore in saying to the apostle Moses (upon him be peace): "This is the land I swore to thy fathers to give to their seed," He meant that

<sup>6</sup> The High Priest's rendering of the quotation is very loose.- A. Ben Kori.

to each of them He made an oath. For example, He said to Abraham in Gen xii. 7: "To thy seed will I give this land." To Isaac He said in xxvi. 3 of the same book: "To thee and thy seed will I give those lands." And to Jacob He said in the same book (xxxv. 12): "And the land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac, to thee I give; to thy seed give I the land."

We have proved the establishment of the kingdom, its restoration and the reappearance of the Shekinah and its duration; but the things that are hidden belong to the Lord, our God, and those that are revealed are for ourselves and children.

As to the appearance and coming of the lord Christ, recorded in our chronicles, we regard its validity not from the viewpoint of our law, but as a matter of history. As to the Messiah, with whose coming we are promised, there are proofs and demonstrations in regard to his coming. As our learned men have explained in their voluminous commentaries, he will rise and perform miracles and demonstrations; he will uphold religion and justice. Among other proofs he will produce the following three:

1. The reproduction of the ark of testimony, which is the greatest attestation for Israel. For Deut. xxix. 29 says: "It shall be there FOR THEE as a witness." This upholds strongly the veracity of our Torah; it has only twenty-two letters, in harmony with the numerical value of "B" and "K,"<sup>7</sup> with no addition or retraction, and not as the Jews pretend, for their version possesses twenty-eight letters.
2. He will produce, at his hand, the staff which was given by the Creator (who is exalted) to our lord Moses (upon him be peace), about whose attribute a reference is made as follows: "And this shall be to thee as a sign," in order that miracles be performed thereby.
3. He must produce the omer of manna which our fathers ate, while in the wilderness, for forty years. This is the greatest proof, because, after all this period, it will be found to have undergone not the slightest change. When our ancestors, in the days when manna used to fall, would keep some of it till the marrow, it would become rotten and wormy. Therefore, it would be a proof none could deny (page 24) (photo with caption: 'Chart of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. With symbols of the temple furniture to be restored by the Messiah, as illustrated on the case of the Holy Scroll. From a drawing by the High Priest.) (page 25) if it should appear sound after this long interval, and remain in its sound state. Thus the people of the second kingdom might see it, and confess reverently and increase in exalting and glorifying the Creator (who is exalted), for the power of producing such a marvel.

These three proofs must be verified by the Prophet; and without them his claim would be considered illegal. No matter could ever be sustained unless with two or three testimonies, in accordance with the saying of the holy Law: "Upon the testimony of two or three witnesses a matter is sustained." Without such proof he has no standing.

But how many have appeared and claimed the prophecy through signs and dreams, against whom the Law has warned us? Read: "If there arise in thy midst a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and if he give thee a sign or miracle, and if the sign or miracle whereof he spoke unto thee take place, and then say unto thee, Come let us follow other unknown gods and worship them: listen not to the words of that prophet or dreamer of that dream." The foregoing is found in Deuteronomy xiii. 1. Verse 6 of the same chapter says: "If thy brother, the son of thy father or the son of thy mother, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, who is as thyself, would entice thee, saying: Come, let us worship other gods, that are unknown to thee and to thy fathers, from the nations that are around thee, whether near or far away from thee, thou shalt not listen," etc.

Testimonies similar to the foregoing are many in the Torah of the law, that is, the Old Testament, and so much is enough concerning this question.

*This is all that my frail mind could suggest for this essay; and God knows best!* (Writing in Arabic and a seal mark in Arabic.) (page26)

#### **FURTHER COMMENTS OF THE SAMARITAN HIGH PRIEST.**

COMMUNICATED BY WILLIAM E. BARTON, D.D.

The treatise of the Samaritan High Priest on "The Messianic Hope of the Samaritans" was submitted to the author, and it reached him at the time of the Passover on the top of Mt. Gerizim. It was read to him and he heard it with approval, but in comment on the footnote at the bottom of

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<sup>7</sup> The components of "in thee." B=2, and K= 20: total, 22.



page 8, he explained that the name Aelia, given to Jerusalem after its destruction, is not used (Photo with caption: 'Ruin of temple on the top of Mt. Gerizim.) by the Samaritans for the city itself, but denotes a village near the present site of Jerusalem, the spot where Eli set up his tabernacle. He adds that the place now called Shiloh, near Sinjil, which Christians suppose to have been the Shiloh of Eli and Samuel, was not the real Shiloh. The High Priest then proceeds to answer the questions asked him concerning the Messiah.

In the little treatise the Messiah was depicted as a prophet. But the Christian messiah is spoken of as "Prophet, Priest and King." It seemed an interesting question whether the Messiah of (page 27) the Samaritans were to be more than a prophet. The High Priest answers this inquiry:

"There is nothing in prophecy to say whether he will be of the priestly line or not. Some of our learned men say he will come from the children of Aaron, and be a priest. Others say that he will be of the children of Joseph, and 'like unto his brethren.' My own private opinion is that he will be of the children of Joseph."

Of course the Samaritan hope is not colored by any of the Jewish memories of the throne of David, and the treatise gave no (Photo with caption: 'Samaritan High Priest and His family.) hint as to any kingly rule. Asked concerning this, the High Priest answers:

"The Messiah will be a prophet, and will be acknowledged as a prophet. That will be his title, as the prophecies give it. But he will also be a king."

The High Priest was asked concerning two or three Old Testament passages frequently quoted as Messianic. He replies:

"The promise that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, in Genesis iii, 15, has no Messianic significance whatever. It has a very long interpretation, but the substance is this: (page 28)

"The serpent has intruded upon man, and the man who seeks revenge upon the serpent does so with much advantage yet with peril. He will have his heel bruised, but ultimately will overcome the serpent and kill it."

"Of course the serpent is only a serpent."

"While there is some difference of opinion about Gen. xlix. 55, which tells at what time the scepter shall depart from Judah, there (photo with caption: Crypt of old Crusaders' church showing Jacob's well.) is light to be found in the form of the name Shiloh. The Jews make it two words, but in the Samaritan Torah it is but one word, and that is the name Solomon. The characteristics which Jacob attributes to Shiloh belong very well to the character of Solomon. For he it was who set up idolatry in Jerusalem that he might please his heathen wives; and further built there the temple for the pretended ark, as I have told in another place. Then it was (page 29) that the scepter departed from Judah, and under his son Rehoboam, though he came back to the true capital, Shechem, to be anointed king, the true Israel revolted, and set up the kingdom in Shechem where it belonged, and the scepter departed from Judah."

To Christians it will be interesting to know whether the Samaritan Messiah is expected to be in any sense divine. The High Priest answers: (photo with caption: Jacob's well showing ruins of the old Crusaders' church.)

The Messiah will not be in any sense a Son of God. He will be prophet like Moses and like his brethren, as it is told in Deut. xviii, 15-22:

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembling, saying, Let me not hear again the (page 30) voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, they have well said that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall speak a word presumptuously in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. And (photo with caption: Old olive grove outside Nablous.) if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the ting which the Lord hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him."

"This is the passage of the Torah which tells us what the Messiah will be, and I hope you will read it with clear eye, as you always read everything."

Another thing was asked of the High Priest, namely, what (page 31) would be the attitude of the Messiah toward Christians and other nations. He answers:

The Messiah will be a prophet, as I have told you, and will no doubt work signs to prove his mission. There will be unusual signs and wonders, which I described in the little book. But he is to be a king, and rule the earth from Shechem, the ancient seat of power, and from his holy mountain, Gerizim. He will call all the world to acknowledge him, and will do so. He will bring blessings to all nations that acknowledge him.” (photo with caption: View from High Priest’s House. (The rock of Jotham is seen on the hill above.))

Still one thing was asked the High Priest as he sat in his tent while the fires were heating the ovens for the sacrifice of the lambs for the Passover, Will the Passover continue after the Messiah comes?

He answered:

“The Passover will continue after the Messiah comes. It is a perpetual feast. It has no reference whatever to the Messiah.”

I am sure that these answers will be interesting to very many readers of the little treatise already printed. (page 32)

The priest wishes also that a word be inserted cautioning Americans and Englishmen who buy manuscripts in the Samaritan tongue that it is not safe to buy them except at the Samaritan synagogue; as the demand for them has led unauthorized persons to make incorrect copies, some of which have come to him to be authenticated; and he finds them imperfect, and some of them fraudulent. The synagogue is very glad to sell copies of the Pentateuch and of their other books. The copies which they have for sale are of course modern copies made by the priests and authenticated. It is to be hoped that the oldest manuscript will not pass from the (photo with caption: Samaritan synagogue with ancient Pentateuch on the chair.) possession of the Samaritan community. This, their greatest treasure, held in most holy veneration, should not depart from its historic home in the bare little synagogue at the base of Mount Gerizim so long as the Samaritan community exists.

The oldest of the Samaritan manuscripts, and that from which all the others are derived, is believed by many scholars to be as old as the Christian era, and is generally conceded to be the oldest manuscript of the Bible in the world. Strange as it may seem, our Old Testament manuscripts are much less ancient than those of the New. There are three New Testament manuscripts which date (page 33) from 300 to 450 A.D., - the Alexandrian, known as Codex A, in the British Museum; the Vatican, known as Codex B, which is in the Vatican at Rome; and the Sinaitic, known as Codex Aleph, which is treasured at St. Petersburg. One of these is in possession of the Greek Church, another of the Roman, and the other of the Protestants, which illustrates the dependence of all sects in Christendom on the same things and on each other. But the Old Testament manuscripts we have none in Hebrew going back of the tenth century. The Samaritans have one nearly a millennium older!

Five years ago I saw this oldest manuscript. The High Priest stood guard over it, and one of his sons exhibited the next oldest roll which on all ordinary occasions is shown in place of the oldest one. The ancient one is supposed to be shown to the Samaritans once a year only, on the day of Atonement, and never to outsiders. Most travelers who suppose themselves to have seen it have seen only the substitute. The original is written on a yellow parchment, not brown or white, without ruled lines, and the writing is smaller and less regular than in the substitute. The ordinary ink of the Samaritans is dense black and glossy, but this is purple. It has been re-inked in many places. At least a third of it has cracked way, for it is very brittle, the black is reinforced by other parchment, and the missing portions have been supplied. It is many years since it has been unrolled, and the High Priest writes that to unroll it would be to injure if not destroy it. He is willing to consider the question of photographing such pages as can be exposed without endangering the parchment, but not the entire work. The old book is kept under lock and key, and covered with rich green cloth.

I have what may possibly be a fragment of that old codex. I obtained it from a son of the High Priest as a premium with a larger purchase. No Samaritan, I hope has yet reached a depth of depravity which have lead him to mutilate that book for money, but in many places bits have been worn out of it, and this is such a scrap, five and one half by three and one half inches from the lowest margin of the manuscript, and containing Genesis xxvi, 20-22. The letters are small and irregular; it has been re-inked at least twice in places; the lines are not ruled; the parchment is yellow and brittle and wrinkled; and above all, the ink, which is so faded and over-written that it

would be difficult to tell from the front of the leather what was the original color, has stained the back of the parchment a distinct purple. If it is true as Deutsch affirms, that (page 34) “the ink is black in all cases except the scroll at Nablous,” then I may not be counted over-credulous in thinking the relic I obtained (photo with caption: view near Nablous.) from the young priest Abal hassan as being of distinct interest among literary treasures. (page 35)

Pictures of the Samaritan Pentateuch are not rare, though in almost every case it is the substitute roll that has been photographed. They give a good general idea of the appearance of the Holy Scroll. The case is of silver, as large as a stove-pipe, cut lengthwise into three sections, and with two sets of hinges at the back, so that it will (photo with caption: High Priest with ancient Pentateuch manuscript.) open and show a column of text, or close and protect all from the light. At the top are three large knobs, the middle one a dummy and the two end ones rollers by which the parchment is rolled forward or back. The case inside is about eighteen inches high; but the knobs above and the legs below make the entire height about (page 36) thirty inches. The five books of Moses, which are all the Bible which the Samaritans receive, are written on the hair side of skins of lambs offered in sacrifice. The entire roll is probable sixty or more feet in length. I presume no one knows how long it is, though Condor was told that it contains twenty-four skins. As a Hebrew Pentateuch which I brought in Jerusalem has fifty-two skins, and another on exhibition at the St. Louis Fair (which I also bought) has more, I think Condor’s estimate too low.

The Samaritan colony now is very small and poor. There were 152 of them in 1901, 97 males and only 55 females. While this is a greater number than that of the passengers of the Mayflower, and their descendants now are legion, there is little prospect that the Samaritans will leave such a posterity. They expect to be brought practically to extinction, but to be restored when their Messiah comes.

So far as the treatise indicates, the Samaritans do not look for any vicarious sacrifice on the part of their Messiah. His career, when he comes, would appear to be one of victory and tranquil rule, primarily religious, but with some political significance. The sacrifices are declared not to be prophetic of his mission. The passages quoted by Christians from the Pentateuch as messianic are held not to refer to him. Practically the whole content of Samaritan messianic prophecy appears to be derived from Deut. xviii. 15-22, in which the Messiah is a prophet like unto Moses, raised up from among the people, and one of their own brethren. (end)