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**MISSIONARY JOURNAL AND MEMOIR OF THE
REV. JOSEPH WOLF,
MISSIONARY TO THE JEWS.**

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,
REVISED AND EDITED BY **JOHN BAYFORD**, ESQ. F.S.A.

LONDON: SOLD BY JOHN DUNCAN, (LATE OGLE, DUNCAN, AND CO.)
37, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 295, HOLBORN;
SEELEY, FLEET STREET; AND HATCHARD, PICCADILLY.
1824

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Dec. 29, - Mr. Joseph Damiani introduced me to-day to Israel, from Naplus, (Sichem,) Scrivano to a Turkish merchant at Jaffa. He is one of the few descendants of the Samaritans residing at Naplus. He received me with great cordiality; I addressed myself to him in the Hebrew tongue, he was only able to understand the expression Lasan hakodesh, (the holy language.) I asked him whether he spoke the holy language (the Hebrew); he showed me three Samaritan manuscripts, the first contained the fourth part of the books of Moses, the second, a book called Mimar, old sermons of their priests, which (page 200) he affirmed were above 1600 years old, and the third manuscript contained a catechism for the Samaritan youth, which consisted of the Ten Commandments of Moses; all these manuscripts were written in the Samaritan language, which I was not able to read. Israel is of an amiable countenance; another Samaritan was there also.

I. Do you sell these books?

Israel. No Samaritan will ever sell his books.

I. Are you in the possession of the Prophets and the Psalms of David?

Israel. We do not acknowledge any other prophet besides Moses; we do neither acknowledge Isaiah, nor Jeremiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Psalms of David; nothing. Nothing, nothing but the books of Moses: we also despise the Talmud and the Mishna. There is much to be found in the books of Moses, not every one is able to understand them, or enter into the depth of them.

I. Why do you not believe in the Prophets?

Israel. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you.

I. What do you think about Messiah, whether he is already come, or shall come?

Israel. He shall surely come, and his coming will be glorious, a fiery column shall descend before his coming. Believe me, my lord, I am young, but I have studied the book of Moses diligently.

I. Who shall be the Messiah.

Israel. There shall be two; the first (but not the chief one) shall be Joshua, the son of Nun, the disciple of Moses: the other of the tribe of Joseph.

I. Have you any communication with the Jews?

Israel. No; an enmity from the time of Joseph, the son of Jacob, whose descendants we are, exists between us.

I. What was the cause of your first enmity?

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Israel. Joseph was a good child, and beautiful, and beloved of his father; his brethren, Simeon and Levi, hated him; and when his father sent Joseph into the field, an angel appeared to him, and said, "Thy brethren are in Dodaim:" he went to them, they saw him, and tried to kill him; but Judah, who had much authority among his brethren, persuaded them to sell him to a caravan of merchants, and thus came Joseph into Egypt; there he became the first after Pharaoh, and there he begat Manasseh and Ephraim, and we are his descendants. Joseph, our father, has pardoned them their offence, but we his children, can never forget that Joseph, our father, was so harshly treated by his brethren. And from that time is the division, till we finally separated from them, and worshipped no longer at Jerusalem, but upon Gerizim.

I. Will you give me letters for your brethren at Naplus? I love you, and will enquire into your state, and many of my friends in England will be rejoiced to hear more about you.

Israel. With the greatest pleasure will I give you letters. We know that when nations from afar shall come to enquire into our state, the time will not be far off, the time of the redemption, the time of the arrival of the Messiah. Tell me, my lord, are not some of our brethren in England?

I. I do not know.

Israel. We have heard that some of our brethren live in the desert of Moscovia.

I. I would advise you to enter into a correspondence with my friends in England about your nation: I will forward the letters.

Israel. I will give you letters for all my brethren; you may live with them, and they shall love your lordship.

I. I love you very much, my brother.

Israel. What is your name, my lord?

I. Joseph Wolf.

Israel. Joseph? Joseph, Joseph? And repeating my (page 202) name, he looked continually in my face, and said, Yes, I will give you letters; you will not find many Samaritans, but the Lord does not consider the number, he considers those who love him, and keep his commandments. God blessed Ishmael, and made him fruitful, and multiplied him exceedingly, and he begat twelve princes, and made him a great nation; but he established with Isaac his covenant, and the Lord drove Hagar out of the house of Abraham. He gave Isaac to eat of the manna which was endowed with the tastes of the best fruits of several kinds.

I. We do not find the latter observation in the book of Moses.

Israel. I have told you from the beginning, that the book of Moses contains many hidden things, but not every one enters into the depth of them.

I have observed that the Samaritans, notwithstanding their rejection of the Talmud, have adopted notions from that book; as, for instance, that an angel appeared to Joseph, and of the several tastes the manna was endowed with; fables taken out of rabbinical books. Or, perhaps, the Rabbies have taken these notions from the Samaritans, I continue to ask him,

I. Have you still sacrifices?

Israel. *(with a joyful countenance).* Yes, we sacrifice once every year an animal, on the feast of Passover, and we have a high-priest from the family of Aaron.

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Israel. (continued). I still could tell you more of the mount Gerizim, which was blessed, and mount Ebal, which was cursed, but you will be well informed at Naplus; but I must ask thee a question, my lord.- We received, some years ago, a letter by the way of Aleppo, which was written in France, by two gentlemen; the name of the one was Gragier, but I have forgotten the name of the other.

I. What did they write to you?

Israel. They asked us deep questions, and among others, they asked us the reason of our having given up the trial to seek every year for such an ox? Dost thou know, my lord, whether Gragier, and the other whose name I do not remember, reside in a city called Paris?

I. Gragier is, most probably, Monsieur Gregoire, and the other, perhaps, Sylvestre de Sacy. I could not understand the description of the ox, nor was Mr. Joseph Damiani, who interpreted, as often as I wanted a word, able to explain to me the meaning of it. I hope to enquire at Naplus; for that kind Samaritan gives me letters for Naplus, so that I shall have lodging in the house of a Samaritan Jew.

On my return to the house of Mr. Damiani,

(Page 204) Dec. 30. – Israel, the Samaritan, called on me again, and gave me a letter of introduction to his relatives at Naplus, the ancient Sichem. I asked whether they had the book of Joshua; he told me that they are only in possession of the history of Joshua, but the book itself is lost. I asked further, what do you think about the character of those men, whom Jews and Christians consider as prophets?

Israel. Those persons have been the cause that the schism among the Jews has become stronger and stronger, and the enmity from the times of Joseph established for ever. Ali, an old man, called by the Jews Elijah, came to the king of Samaria, who was a young man and he (Ali) thought himself not sufficiently honoured by the young king, and therefore went about and exasperated the minds of the people against their king.- Certainly, that was not the reason Elijah grieved, but rather that Ahaziah enquired of Beelzebub, as if there was a God in Israel.

After the conversation with him, I mounted the ass and left Jaffa.....

(page 309) May 5. – Abraham Ben David, who, I trust, has been converted to the knowledge of Christ, called on me, and told me, that the chief rabbies have this morning proclaimed in the synagogue, that every Jew must burn all the *Hebrew Bibles*, (Reineccius's edition,) on account of the Samaritan text, and that crosses which are to be found in the notes. To prevent so great an evil, I wrote a letter immediately, in Hebrew, to rabbi Jom Toph Danum, to Morenu Meyahis, and to Abraham Hadid, the first high-priests of the Spanish persuasion

Page 310 *Morenu Meyahis.* Some of the Jews in Jerusalem are partly from Salonichi, partly from Barbary, and others from Polonia; many of them are rough and ignorant and are not able to discern good from bad, or bad from good; many of them do not know their own law, and therefore we must watch over them. We are not bad shepherds; we have seen the copies of the Old Testament which you have distributed among the Jews of this place, and we have observed in the notes of them the text taken from the Samaritan Codex, (Deut. V, see note,) in which it is said, "I have commanded you to-day upon the mount Gerizim;" we know very well that this is not in the text, but in the notes; and that it is not the intention of the English nation to make us believe in the authenticity of the Samaritan Codex, but we rabbies only are able to distinguish this; the youth

who might learn the Hebrew out of such an edition, may easily be induced to believe that the law does not go out from Sion, but from mount Gerizim;

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Israel Smaria, one of the Samaritans of Naplus, who resides now at Jaffa, has given me lessons in the Samaritan tongue, made me acquainted with their customs and feasts, and gave me a manuscript, which contains the history of the Samaritans, of Jesus Christ, and of Mahomed and Moses, written by a Samaritan, called Hassan Alsuri; the Samaritan texts cited in this manuscript, prove the authenticity of it. Hassan Alsuri lived 500 years ago. Israel Smaria promised to go to England, and take with him a great quantity of Samaritan manuscripts. He told me that an Englishman tried to send the whole body of Samaritans to England: I think he meant Lord Guildford.....

(page 345).....

You will receive by the hands of Mr. Senner, the following books and Arabic manuscripts: -

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4. The History of the Samaritans, written by a Samaritan,

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#### **Comments on this section from the Editor of theSamaritanUpdate.com**

The Joseph Wolf dates the meeting as Dec. 29<sup>th</sup>,1821 when he met Israel Smaria, the Samaritan. Israel Smaria is really Israel El Shalabi, the uncle of Jacob El Shalabi.

There is no mention that I have found in this book of Rev. Wolfe having ever visited Nablus (Wolf has it spelled Naplus for Nablus).

The section on page 201 where it is written by Rev. Wolf, 'Joseph, our father, has pardoned them their offence, but we his children, can never forget that Joseph, our father, was so harshly from that time is the division, *till we finally separated from them, and worshipped no longer at Jerusalem, but upon Gerizim.*' This is a mistake, most likely the translator's interpretation or the wishful thinking of Wolf. The true Samaritans would have never worshipped in Jerusalem. According to the Bible some Samaritans wanted to help rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, these people were most likely Jews living in the land of Israel, as in Samaria.

In 1822, the Samaritan High Priest would have been High Priest Shalma b. Tabia (1787-1855).

Also see ***TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES OF THE REV. JOSEPH WOLFF***  
Joseph Wolf and Joseph Wolff are the same person.