

which rejected that doctrine.<sup>31</sup> The one argument against this solid line of testimony is the rejection by the first sect, as recorded by Abu'l Fath, of the formula, "Blessed be God forever;" but this omission may have been intended to deny more pronouncedly than before the disbelief in resurrection. As for the rigorism predicated of the two sects, it is to be observed that this feature is common to all sects, and is not remarkable in Samaritanism, which itself was literalistic and rigorous in an old-fashioned way. That there were two sects would appear from the statement of the well-informed Origen, that of the Dositheans he describes there were only thirty survivors in his day, whereas there is evidence of another Dosithean sect of size and importance far down into the Arabic period, flourishing in Egypt as well as in Palestine. It may be argued that it is unlikely that there were two sects of the same name; but it is not impossible that two heresiarchs bore the very common Samaritan name of Nathanael-Dositheus.<sup>32</sup> There is also this distinction evident in the two reports of Abu'l Fath, that the second sect was distinctly an enthusiastic body, possessing apocryphal writings, ascetic customs, etc., thus differing from the first.

The most probable reconstruction of these data will then be the assumption of two sects founded by and named after different Dosithei. The first of these would have arisen, following the note of Josephus and one line of Patristic tradition, before the Christian era, perhaps in Egypt. It was a reforming sect, harking back to a greater liter-

<sup>31</sup> Appel has not, in his confessedly brief thesis, treated the Arabic evidence.

<sup>32</sup> Beside the many Nathanaels appearing in the highpriestly line, there is the Hellenistic poet Theodotus. Observe also the obscure reference in an Epistle, *N. et E.* 112 (121), to "the Targum of Nathanael" (see below, p. 292.) A Dustan is also a liturgical composer; Cowley, *JE* x, 673. For the great frequency of the name in Judaism, see Krauss, *op. cit.* 32; Büchler, *op. cit.* xliii, 224. N. B. the probability that the legend of Simon Magus is based upon two historical Simons (Salmond, *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*, s. v.).

alism of interpretation, at the same time coming under the influence of Judaism; however it continued the ancient Samaritan doctrine of the denial of the resurrection. Subsequently with the general Samaritan acceptance of that doctrine, by the IVth Century, this faction became the minority and were forced into the condition of a heterodox sect; it survived however into the IIId Millennium. But the other sect is very different in spirit and practice. It is to be counted among the many enthusiastic and absurd cults which had their rise about the beginning of our era. It was ascetic and encratic; the ritual bath was an accompaniment of all devotion; certain mystical books, among them those of "the Sons of the Prophets," were included in their scriptures, while there was the Messianic devotion to the founder of their faith, along with the cult of a martyr of their sect. They were ardent resurrectionists of a very materialistic order of belief, and were awaiting the end of all things with millenarian expectations. We can probably even identify the influences producing this sect. Several points of practice connect them with the mysterious community of the Essenes, namely, not only their frequent baptisms, but also their scrupulousness in hiding their bodies when in the bath, which is to be compared with the Essene rule of wearing a loincloth when bathing, while further the fear of contact with others — amongst the Essenes even with those of a lower caste in the order — is common to both. The vegetarianism of the Dositheans also agrees with Jerome's report of the like practice among the Essenes, although this notice is now generally invalidated by criticism.<sup>33</sup> Some element of truth therefore is found in Epiphanius's statement making the Essenes a Samaritan sect.<sup>34</sup> The rise of this body may then be placed about the

<sup>33</sup> For these practices of the Essenes, see Schürer, *GJV* ii, 567.

<sup>34</sup> Some Morning Hymns open with very poetical apostrophes to the sun; *BS* ii, Nos. xlvi, xciii. May this phenomenon have Essene origin?

beginning of our era, a date which would agree with the Patristic references collocating Dositheus with Simon; Abu'l Fath's assignment of its origin to Baba Rabba's age is a post-dating common to Samaritan chronology. This sect had evidently, from Origen's note, a short-lived existence, as it was already moribund in his day. It doubtless was a product of the influences which induced the Samaritan adoption of the doctrine of the resurrection, and in this respect secured a triumph over its like-named rival.

We may notice here the account Abu'l Fath gives of a number of similar enthusiastic sects which, he says, sprang from the party we have just described.<sup>35</sup> The first was the sect of the Be'unai, or Ab'unai, which followed an anchorite life. Of a sect founded by one Ansama, or Antami, nothing particular is told. The next sect, which taught that all laws were abolished, were called the Kilatai or Katitai. Accepting the latter reading, which has double authority, we may connect the word with *Encratite*, and suppose the sect to have been libertine in character, the contempt of the flesh passing over into license, a phenomenon marked in many Christian sects.<sup>36</sup> Another sect, the Sadukaï, had a "mystic" faith. Yet another took to itself the name of "the Proud and Humble;" they went and lived in the desert across Jordan; we naturally compare the "Afflicted Ones" of the Old Testament, and the Christian Ebionites. The next sectarian recorded is Shalih ibn Tirun ibn Nin, or Sakta ben Tabrin; his Arabic name assigns him to the age of Islam. He was an extremist in departing from the ancient customs, even giving up the ascent of Gerizim, and having Puritanic traits like those of the Karaites. The sect of the Sons of Josadak, or

<sup>35</sup> *Abu'l Fath*, 159. Cf. *Chron. Adler*, 70, which is much briefer and with a different order of sects.

<sup>36</sup> Clement notes a sect of *Entychitæ*, a branch of the Simonians, *Stromata*, vii, 17. They appear as *Eutyctetæ* in Theodoret, *Hæres.* i, 1.

Sadok, was more orthodox, but made some ritual innovations. A certain Aulian founded a sect which appears to have had a communistic basis. Finally there was the sect of the Faskutai, which proceeded to the extreme in daring fleshly passion, until at last they all passed over into the worst lasciviousness. May this name be connected with the Greek *physikos*, or *psychikos*? The sect would then be another specimen of encratitic delusion. Samaritanism thus experienced the variegated religious influences of the first centuries of the Christian era, and we have to assume for it in its small sphere a life of inner sectarian turmoil, very unlike the hard and fast orthodoxy into which it has long since settled down.

## § 2. SIMON MAGUS; GNOSTICISM; KABBALISM.

Many of the early Christian writers assert that Simon Magus (*Acts*, 8), was one of the earliest heresiarchs, if not the first, that disturbed the peace of the Church. In fact an extensive romance has been spun about that mysterious personage, appearing especially in the apocryphal Clementine literature. To the student of the New Testament and Patristics the inquiry into the relation of Simon to Samaritanism would appear to be of prime importance. In the following pages the Samaritan data on Simon will be collected and their relation to Christian references noted, along with the consideration of his assumed influence on the Samaritan sect; but the results will prove disappointing to the student who desires more light on that arch-heresiarch.

In *Acts*, 8, Simon appears as a sorcerer and an impostor whom his dupes acknowledge as "the so-called Great Power of God." Justin Martyr, himself a citizen of Neapolis-Shechem, although not a Samaritan, is the next to give details concerning Simon's life and character. He was

born at Gittai in Samaria;<sup>37</sup> almost all the Samaritans and many of other nations believed in him, and he was accompanied by a woman, a former prostitute named Helena, whom he declared to be his "first conception," *ἐννοια πρώτη*. Justin himself says that he had written a special treatise against the Simonian heresy, and it is thought probable that this work is the basis of Irenæus's treatment of the sect. This Father gives an ampler account of Simon's doctrine, which has become a perfect example of full-blown Gnosticism. Other features of the heresy are given in Hippolytus's *Refutation of all Heresies*, with special stress upon its immoral features. Later there is the development of the romance of Simon with its caricature of St. Paul, found in the Pseudo-Clementines, which has been so thoroughly exploited by the school of F. C. Baur.<sup>38</sup>

In the Samaritan Chronicles "Simon the Sorcerer" appears only as a wonder-worker and as an opponent of the Christians.<sup>39</sup> His birthplace was 'Alin (*Abu'l Fath*) or Tablin (*Chron. Adler*). A long anecdote is given recounting how his magic worked the death of an innocent man, whom he later restored to life. He then went to Armiya, or Armina, evidently Rome,—this in correspondence with the Christian tradition, which is as ancient as Justin. He had encounters with the Christians, whom, according to *Chron. Adler*, he overcame with his magic. He then went

<sup>37</sup> The word appears in our Patristic references as Γιτθων, Γιττων. After the analogy of the Greek representation of place-names, this probably stands for the Hebrew Gittaim; cf. 2 *Sam.* 4, 3; *Neh.* 11, 33. Place-names compounded with *gath* were common in Palestine, and there is no tradition of the exact location of Simon's birthplace. Robinson may be correct in identifying it with Kuryet-Jit, 7 mi. W. of Nablus, on the road to Joppa; *LBR* 134.

<sup>38</sup> The references in Justin are found in *Apol.* i, 26; 56; ii, 15; *C. Tryph.* 120; in Irenæus, in his *Hæreses*, i, 23. For an admirable discussion of the subject, see Salmond in the *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*, s. v. *Simon Magus*. Justin does not appear to be well acquainted with the Samaritan sect; cf. Chap. IX, *sub fin.*

<sup>39</sup> *Abu'l Fath*, 157; *Chron. Adler*, 67. The MSS give both the Hebrew and the Greek forms of the name, Sim'on and Simon.

to the philosopher Philo of Alexandria, and asked his help to destroy the Christians; but Philo bade him let the thought alone, for "if this thing be from God, none will be able to exterminate it" (cf. *Acts*, 5, 39). Finally Simon returned to his birthplace and died there, being buried "in the valley over against the house of the disciple who first testified to the Messiah, whose name was Stephen."<sup>40</sup> The age of Simon is placed by the chroniclers in the IVth Century; but the story of his connection with Philo evinces a truer chronological tradition. To sum up, the Samaritan version of the Simon legend is very scanty, being based on the Christian romance, and yet embracing some independent details drawn probably from a Palestinian form of the story. It possesses no information concerning Simon's doctrines.

Finally the question arises as to the Samaritan origin of the Gnostic heresies which defiled "the virginity" of the early Church. According to the Fathers and especially the heresiologues, the first heretics, or amongst the first, were Dositheus and Simon, and the latter's disciple Menander,<sup>41</sup> the last two being Gnostics. Palestine had long been the meeting-place and crucible of the religions of East and West, and no region was better fitted to be the peculiar home of syncretism than Samaria. Lying next door to Judæa, it was susceptible to the attractions of the Jewish religion, and likewise had ample opportunity to affect both Judaism and its daughter Christianity. Yet there is little or no proof for the hypothesis that the Samaritan religion was responsible for these processes of amalgamation, or

<sup>40</sup> According to early Christian tradition Stephen was buried by Gamaliel in his own tomb at Kaphar-gamala (or Kaphar-Gamaliel?), 20 miles from Jerusalem, the remains being removed to Jerusalem in 415; see Cave, *Lives of the Fathers*, "Life of St. Stephen."

<sup>41</sup> See the Patristic references in the preceding Section. For Menander, see Justin, *I. Apol.* 26, 56. Another disciple of Simon was Cleobius, *Apostolic Constitutions*, vi, 16.

became the mother of Gnosticism. So far as we have been able to sound the obscure ages of Samaritan religion, even according to the hostile Jewish evidence, we can find no syncretistic features therein, no native tendency to Gnosticism. Simon Magus appears not as a type of Samaritanism, but only as an incident; doubtless there is exaggeration concerning the universality of his influence upon the Samaritans, as recorded in *Acts* and by Justin. From what we learn of his doctrine in these two sources, he probably found his following rather amongst the Hellenistic population of Samaria, than in the Samaritan sect. His claim to be the Great Power of God represents nothing we find in Samaritan doctrine, whose Messianism was of a very primitive type. Further, he left behind no influence, either upon Samaritan religion or upon its historical traditions. Samaritanism was touched by like influences on the circumference, as appears from the sects described above, but the latter seem to have been of small importance and to have separated from the orthodox community, and so were soon lost. Whatever may be the worth of the tradition of the syncretistic origin of the Samaritan sect found in 2 *Ki.* 17, the Samaritans by the 1st Century A.C., had been for centuries nothing else than a Jewish sect.

It is true that, as we saw in the Chapter on Samaritan theology, there are considerable traces of an incipient Gnostic speculation, as in the childish inquiries into the origin of certain mystic things like the Book of the Law, or of such a personage as Moses. But, as abundantly appeared in that Chapter, all these speculations have their parallel in orthodox Judaism. Critical comparison and chronology indicate that in such developments the Samaritans were borrowing from the far stronger-minded Jewish theology; there is no original phenomenon of the kind in the former sect. In fact in these developments of Samaritanism, appearing especially in Marka, we have nothing else than a

faint reflex of that process in Judaism which is a form of Gnosticism, and to which the technical name of Kabbalism had best be given. This tendency appeared already in New Testament times, and was serious enough to require the attention of the *Epistle to the Colossians*; it constantly manifests itself in the Talmud, still more in the Midrashim, while the later Kabbala worked out the process into a logical philosophy. Yet Samaritanism, while a debtor in part to Jewish Kabbalism, never went the whole length; for such speculations its dry, unimaginative genius seems to have been unfitted. In a word Samaritanism cannot be held responsible for Simon Magus, or for the Gnostic developments of which the Christian heresiologues have made him the archetype.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> The chief advocate of an extensive Gnosticism, even veritable Simonianism, as existing in Samaritan literature, is that assiduous scholar Heidenheim; see especially *BS* ii, p. xxxv. But he advances no proofs for anything but what is found in incipient Jewish Kabbalism. He takes the frequent divine epithet קַיִם as representing the Simonian expression *ἐστὼς*, *Clem. Hom.* ii, 22; yet the term is used by Philo, *De nom. mut.* 1052. The Glory is only an ancient Jewish theologumenon, equivalent to the Shekina. We may also cite such Kabbalistic phrases as "the Line," by which God created the world, and "the treasury of knowledge"; *BS* ii, 57, v. 6; 85, v. 12. Some other like instances are given above, Chapter XII, § 3. But no theory of a developed Gnosticism or Kabbalism can be built on these meagre data. Reference may be made to Cowley's pertinent remarks on the subject, *JQR* viii, 571.