

violent annihilation that threatened them. But the wealth they possessed is gone, and they have become a community of alms-seekers, forced to sell their sacred manuscripts for subsistence.⁶¹

⁶¹ For the bloody commotions which vexed Palestine in the last century, see Macalister and Masterman, *A History of the Doings of the Fellahin*, etc., *PEFQS* 1905, Oct. *et seq.* This work also frequently refers to Finn, *Stirring Times*, which throws much light upon the local troubles.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMARITANS.

§ I. THE SAMARITANS AT HOME.¹

In Chapter II. we observed that the land of Samaria as a geographical entity was identical with the Highlands of Ephraim. It is bounded on the north by the valley of Esdraelon, to which also belongs the plain of Dothan, with its deep inset into the hill-country. On the east is the Ghor, or valley of the Jordan, the plain of Beth-shean having been distinguished from the land of Ephraim politically as well as geographically from earliest times.² On the west the line of the lowlands marked the political boundary, the Phœnicians and Philistines being in possession of the coast, while Mount Carmel, though a spur of the Samaritan hill-country, was cut off politically by the highways which crossed it. Only on the south was there an uncertain border. There a long neck of highland connects Mount Ephraim with Mount Juda, cleft on either side by deep wadies, but without presenting no one strategic line of boundary. G. A. Smith has graphically discussed this debatable frontier,³ and points

¹ See Juynboll, *Hist. Sam.* 37; Neubauer, *La géographie du Talmud*, 1868, p. 168; Schürer, *GJV*, §§ 23, 24; E. Meyer, *Entstehung des Judenthums*, 1896, p. 105; Smith, *HG* cc. xii, xvii; Holscher, *Palästina in der persischen und hellenistischen Zeit*, 1903; Conder, *Samaritan Topography*, *PEFQS* 1876, p. 182 (with extensive treatment of the geographical references in the *Book of Joshua* and the *Chronicle Neubauer*).

² See *1 Sam.* 31, 10. It received a Scythian colony in the VIIth Century, and later became a member of the Decapolis.

³ *Op. cit.* c. xiii.

out that there were three possible lines, each of which became effective according to the comparative strength of the two political divisions of Israel. Our present interest in this question begins with the Post-exilic age.

As Meyer points out, those who worked on the walls of Jerusalem, according to the list in *Neh.* 3, were not settled farther north than Gibeon and the uncertain Meronot.⁴ According to *Neh.* 11, 25ff the Jews had pushed in the same age towards Joppa as far as Ono, Hadid, Lydda, a note disputed by Meyer and Hölscher, who hold that this datum represents the geography of the Chronicler; at all events Sanballat hailed from Beth-horon, and Ono in the Shephela belonged to his sphere of influence (6, 3). Thus in the first part of the Post-exilic period the district of Samaria lay close up under Jerusalem. But the powerful Jewish expansion began to drive back this northern boundary, as we learn from the Chronicler and from the colonization of extensive districts in the south of Samaria, witnessed to in the II^d Century B. C.⁵

In the Maccabæan age the northerly expansion of Judaism received the political endorsement of the Syrian kingdom; the three considerable cantons of Aphairema,—probably the city of Ephraim (*Jn.* 11, 54),—Lydda, and Ramathaim, perhaps the modern Beit Rima, NE of Lydda—were formally annexed to Judæa.⁶ This large acquisition of territory pushed the Jewish boundary far into the interior of Samaria, the place of Borkeos which Josephus notes as

⁴ *Op. cit.* 105; cf. Hölscher, *op. cit.* 26.

⁵ Hölscher holds, *op. cit.* 30, that in the late Persian age Juda actually controlled Samaria, adducing the Book of *Judith*, the traditions of which belong to the age of Ochus, while its action is laid in Samaria. (Cf. Torrey's identification of Bethulia with Shechem, *JAOS* xx, 160; also such passages as *Zech.* 11, 4ff. Cf. the story of Joseph's administration as tax-farmer over Samaria, Josephus, *AJ* xii, 4.)

⁶ See above, p. 79. For the data, see *1 Mac.* 11, 20ff: Josephus, *AJ* xiii, 4, 9. Cf. Schürer, *GJV* i, 233, and, for the due appreciation of the extent of the annexed territory, Hölscher, *op. cit.* 74.

the boundary in his day doubtless marking the extent of that annexation.

For the Ist Christian Century we gain more definite details of the boundaries of Samaria, which are described with much exactness by Josephus. Samaria lies, says that historian,⁷ "between Judæa and Galilee; it begins at a village that is in the Great Plain, called Ginaia, and ends at the Akrabene toparchy." A little farther on he adds that on the boundary between Samaria and Judæa lies the so-called village Anuath-Borkeos.⁸ Now Ginaia is the En-gannim of the Old Testament, the modern Jenin, lying on the southern slope of Esdraelon.⁹ Akrabene, or Akrabatta, is the modern Akrahe, 8 mi. SE of Shechem. Borkeos is now generally identified with Berkit to the WSW of Akrahe, in the Wady Ishar; Anuath has not yet been located.¹⁰ These data place the frontier for Josephus's age along the line of the Wady Ishar, which, as Smith observes, is the northernmost of the possible natural boundaries between Judæa and Samaria. The Jewish boundary had thus advanced to within seven miles of Shechem and included the greater part of the ancient land of the tribe of Ephraim.¹¹ Moreover the western boundary of Samaria was thrust back, as we have seen, by the loss of the canton of Ramathaim, while the Jewish expansion to the northwest included the important cities of Modin, Lydda, Ono, Hadid, and stretched as far as Antipatris.¹²

⁷ *BJ* iii, 3, 4-5. It is uncertain just what was the relation of the city of Samaria to this district; Hölscher, *op. cit.* 97, following Marquardt, considers it to have been a member of the Decapolis.

⁸ Conder has a different translation, *PEFOS* 1876, p. 67.

⁹ It also appears as a border town in *Gittin*, vii, 6. The Gemara *ad loc.* also names Kefar Outhenai as on the border. Josephus narrates a bloody fight as occurring here between Samaritans and Jewish pilgrims, *AJ* xx, 6, 1.

¹⁰ The English Survey Map follows Conder's translation in widely separating Anuath and Borkeos.

¹¹ Mount Sartaba was also in the hands of the Jews; *Rosh-ha-Shana*, ii, 2.

¹² See Neubauer, *op. cit.* 86.

Thus by the Ist Century political Samaria had very much shrunk from its original equivalence with the Highlands of Ephraim. Between En-gannim and the Wady Ishar is a distance of 25 miles, between the Jordan and Sharon about 32 miles; but from this limited territory we must exclude the Jordan valley and a considerable Jewish territory in the southwest.

Within this circumscribed region we have no means of ascertaining how numerous or widespread the Samaritans were. There is nothing to show that they were found in the one Hellenistic city of the district, Samaria-Sebaste. Their metropolis was Shechem-Neapolis, and in this city and the villages of its neighborhood must have lain their centre of population. The Talmud throws very little light upon the localities of the Samaritan sect.¹³ We learn from it of two places with the name of Fondeka, i.e. "Inn," namely that of Ammuda, and that of Tibta towards Kefarsaba, i.e. Antipatris. There are still two localities with the same component to be found in Samaria: Fendakumia (Pentacomia), 4 mi. N of Samaria, and Fonduk, 7 mi. SW. We also learn of several Samaritan villages lying on the Jewish border: "The wine of Kador is prohibited because of the proximity of Kefar-Pagesh; that of Borgata because of Birat-Sariqa; that of En-Kushit (i.e. the Samaritan Spring, or Spring of the Samaritaness), because of Kefar-Shalem."¹⁴ Borgata is doubtless the Borkeos of Josephus; Salem can hardly be the town east of Shechem, but rather the Salem on the Jordan, which Josephus places 8 mi. S of Beth-shean.

The few other places connected with the Samaritans by Josephus and others are Tirathana, near Gerizim;¹⁵ Gittaim,

¹³ *Ibid.*, 172.

¹⁴ *Aboda Zara Jer.* 44d. The Babylonian parallel, *Ab. Z.* 31a, has the following variants: Ogdor, Parshai, En-Kushi. Cf. *Masseket Kuttim*, 25, which reads Pansha for Pagesh.

¹⁵ *AJ* xviii, 4, 1: probably the modern Tire, 4 mi. SW of Shechem; Buhl, *Geographæ*, 200, 203.

the birthplace of Simon Magus;¹⁶ and Sychar, *Jn.* 4, 5, generally identified with the modern Askar.¹⁷

There remains for investigation the abundant geographical material contained in the Samaritan Chronicles, especially that of the *Chronicle Neubauer*. Unfortunately, partly because of the corrupt tradition of the text, and partly because the genealogical lists give no means of identifying the localities, our results must be very incomplete. It will be worth while however, although an exhaustive list is by no means pretended, to learn from some of the places that may be identified the extent of the Samaritan settlements.¹⁸

In the close neighborhood of Shechem we find mention of Salem, also apparently called Great Salem; Elon More; Askar; 4 mi. N, Tira-luza, i. e. Tulluza; 8 mi. E, Dabarin, if the modern Ain ad-Dabbur; to the south we can recognize Awurta; Bet-porik, i. e. Pherka; Akrabatta; within 10 mi. SW, Yasuf, Marda, Timnat-heres, Zaita (there is another Zaita to the W); Kurawa (to be placed here, and not at foot of Sartaba); to the W, Tul-karam, Kuryat-Hajja (8 mi.), Sarafin (9 mi.), Afra-Piraton,—either the Piraton to the west, or the Ophra-Ferata, 6 mi. SW of Shechem. In Bit-jan we may identify En-gannim. One of Baba Rabba's Wise Men "had his limit from the Great Meadow," i.e. the Great Plain of Josephus, the modern Merj ibn Amir.¹⁹ Taking these data as an average, we find that the Samaritans in their native land were centred about Shechem within

¹⁶ See Chap. XIII, note.

¹⁷ For the discussion of this problem, see above, p. 20. There is nothing to show that the Talmudic En-Socher was a Samaritan locality; but see Neubauer, *op. cit.* 170.

¹⁸ Conder in his article *Samaritan Topography* has treated these geographical references at length. The following identifications, which were worked out before I saw Conder's study, and which I let stand for what they may be worth, concern only the seats of the Samaritans.

¹⁹ *Abu'l Fath*, 130. Kefar-sabbala, *ibid.*, may be Kefar-saba, i. e. Antipatris.

a radius of eight or ten miles; the remainder of their territory was probably largely occupied by Jews and Pagans.

§ 2. THE SAMARITANS IN DIASPORA.²⁰

The commercial tendencies of the Samaritans early gave them an impulse westward to the opulent cities of the coast, especially to the metropolis Cæsarea, and to the towns of Philistia; the early rise of the Egyptian colony must have made the latter district a well-used thoroughfare for them. Accordingly we find that in the early centuries of our era the Samaritans pushed southwest into the flourishing region of the one-time territory of Dan; this movement must have been subsequent to the destruction of the Jewish state, which left the Samaritans a free foot in their expansion. Horon is referred to in the Chronicles as a Samaritan locality, and the inscriptions at Emmaus-Nicopolis reveal their presence in that place.²¹ We learn of them at Lydda at the time of the Muslim conquest,²² and later in the Fatimide capital of Palestine, Ramle, they formed an appreciable part of the population, while its suburb, Beit-Dagon, was a Samaritan town.²³ On the coast we find them at Akko; at Cæsarea, where they were numerous enough to carry on bloody feuds with Jews and Christians;²⁴ at Arsuf; Joppa; Ashkelon; Gaza and its port Maiumas. Gaza remained the chief

²⁰ Cf. the data from Jewish and Arabian sources given in Chapter VI; also Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Moslems*, 1890.

²¹ See Chap. XIV, § 4. A remark of R. Abbahu, in *Yebamot Jer.* 9d: "Thirteen cities reverted to the Samaritans in the days of persecution," may refer to this Samaritan expansion. Frankel, *Einfluss der palästinensischen Exegese*, 245, refers the note to the Hadrianic persecution; but see Appel, *op. cit.* 60; Taglicht, *op. cit.* 19.

²² See the list of towns in *Abu'l Fath*, 179.

²³ So the early geographers, Yakubi and Mukaddasi; Le Strange, *op. cit.* 403, 405. Clermont Ganneau, in his *Archæological Researches*, ii, 490, notes that the Life of Peter the Iberian (*Petrus der Iberer*, 59, 114), of the Vth Century, records that the town of Yebna, the Biblical Jabneel-Jamnia, was inhabited exclusively by Samaritans.

²⁴ See Chap. VI, § 3. According to both Samaritan and Byzantine notices Samaritan settlements existed on Mt. Carmel.

coastwise locality of the sect after the destruction of the more northerly cities in the wars of the Crusades.²⁵ Epistles in the Scaliger and Huntington correspondence were written at Gaza, and the *Chronicle Neubauer* refers to Samaritans settled there in the XVIIIth Century. These colonists, the same chronicle reports, were of the tribe of Benjamin. There is also frequent mention of members of the sect at Gerar.

The narrative of the uprising under Justinian in 529 is witness to the extensive settlement of Samaritans in and about Scythopolis. From that point the Samaritans could easily pass the fords of Jordan into Peræa, and so Eusebius notes, in his *Onomasticon*, a Samaritan town, Thersila, or Tharsila, in this region,²⁶ which seems to have been a frequent place of refuge for fugitives and the ascetic sects of the community. We have already noted references to the Damascene colony, which was several times fed by forcible deportations, and whose size and wealth are reported by Benjamin Tudela and de la Valle, while as we have seen, it became a second home for the sect.²⁷ But its members spread still farther north through Syria; at Tyre (at least in the case of the distinguished theologian Abu'l Chasan, "the Tyrian"); at Baal-bek,²⁸ at Kefar Sima (near Beirut),²⁹ and at Tripoli, Hamath,

²⁵ Two Samaritan inscriptions have been found at Gaza, along with the probable remains of a synagogue; see Chap. XIV, § 4. The presence of the sect in that city about 300 may be testified to by the prayer made just before his death by the martyr Paul of Gaza at Cæsarea, in behalf of the Samaritans along with other unbelievers; Eusebius, *Mart. Palæst.* viii, 9.

²⁶ See Thomsen, *ZDPV* xxvi, 97, and for its location the accompanying map by Guthe.

²⁷ P. 138. See also Chap. XIV, § 4, for the Damascene inscriptions bearing witness to the wealth of the Samaritan colony.

²⁸ *Chron. Neub.* 461. The Samaritan scholar Muhadhhib (d. 1227) was vizier to a sultan of Baal-bek; Wüstenfeld, *Gesch. d. arabisch. Aerzte*, 121.

²⁹ I find I am unable to verify my note on this datum.

and Aleppo.³⁰ There is even evidence of their presence in Babylonia, in the IVth Century.³¹

There may be noticed here, for what it is worth, the interesting tradition of a diocesan organization of the Samaritans in Palestine established by Baba Rabba in the IVth Century.³² A priest was placed at the head of each of the districts or dioceses, which numbered twelve, if we include the "archdiocese" of Shechem, which belonged to the high-priest. We may suppose that these were administrative, particularly tithing districts, originating with the intention of incorporating more closely into the community the scattered bodies of Samaritans. The districts are:

- 1) From Luza (Telluza) to Galilee on the sea.
- 2) A district to Tiberias.
- 3) The country E of Gerizim to the Jordan.
- 4) From Kefar-Chalul to the Place of Justice (i.e. some governmental centre, not further defined).
- 5) From Horon to Philistia.
- 6) From Gaza to the River of Egypt.
- 7) From "Good-Mountain" to Cæsarea.
- 8) From the border of Carmel to Akko.
- 9) From Mount Naker to Tyre.
- 10) From the river Lita (Litany) to Sidon and the gulf (?).
- 11) From the mountain country of Galilee to the river (the upper Jordan?), to Lebanon, and all the villages about that mountain.

It will be noticed that these districts are listed according to the points of the compass, beginning with the east.

³⁰ See the Liturgy for the Dead, *DVJ* i, 417, which belongs to the time when the Damascene colony was important.

³¹ Gittin, 45a; see Frankel, *Einfluss* 251.

³² *Chron. Neub.* 440, and *Abu'l Fath*, 134; the text of the latter is defective and corrupt. In most cases the Hebrew personal names in the latter have pure Arabic names attached to them, indicating perhaps the purpose of a later scribe to bring the hierarchy up to date. Conder gives the list in *PEFQS* 1876, p. 194.

Proofs for the early origin of this document are found in the presence of only Hebrew names in the earlier text, and in the omission of reference to Damascus. It is to be observed that Peræa and Judæa are not included, so that the scheme is not a merely ideal allotment of the Holy Land among the true Israel. That the Diaspora was found in Galilee is proved by references to the colonies at Safed and Hazor (Hazorim) in the Arabic period.³³

We have already noted the reports of Josephus and the Samaritan traditions concerning the Diaspora in Egypt.³⁴ The sect seems to have experienced like fortunes to the Jews in the Hellenic period, being drafted to the Greek cities in the Nile valley by deportation or as mercenaries, and also being attracted thither by the advantages of commerce. There are papyrus references to an Egyptian village named Samaria in the IIIrd Century B. C.³⁵ From an Epistle of 1808 we learn that the Samaritans had ceased to exist in Egypt for a hundred years;³⁶ but the colony must have failed much earlier, for in 1616 de la Valle found at Cairo a synagogue with only seven families, and Huntington, in the latter part of the same century learned on the spot that but one of the sect, an old man, still survived.³⁷

A curious note appears in the geographer Idrisi (XIIth Century), who, in describing the islands in the upper part of the Red Sea, says ³⁸ that "the one called Samiri is inhabited by a race of Samaritan Jews. They can be recognized as such because when one wishes to injure another, the latter says to him: 'Do not touch me (*la misas*).' They descend from the Jews who worshipped the golden calf at the time of Moses." This incorporates a frequent

³³ *DVJ* i, 417.

³⁴ See p. 75.

³⁵ See Schürer, *GJV* iii, 24.

³⁶ *N. et E.* 69. For some mediæval references, see above, p. 137.

³⁷ Juynboll, *Hist. Sam.* 45, referring to the xxxiii Epistle of Huntington.

³⁸ *Clima*, ii, § 5; tr. Jaubert, i, 135.

Muslim reference to the Samaritans.³⁹ Such an immigration to the far south is not improbable in view of the extensive Jewish Diaspora in Arabia.

There is much significant evidence to the effect that the Samaritans in pursuit of trade were scattered over the western world. Their inscriptions have been found at Athens.⁴⁰ Members of the sect were extensively engaged in banking at Constantinople, where "Samaritan" was synonymous with "accountant."⁴¹ The repressive edicts of the Christian emperors can best be understood as directed especially against the Samaritans who were spread over the empire engaged in trade and banking, thus provoking the jealousy of fanatical Christians. Indeed we learn by chance that about A. D. 500 there existed a Samaritan community in Rome. Cassiodorus Senator has preserved a letter of the emperor Theodoric calling attention to a complaint made by "the people of the Samaritan superstition," who have had the effrontery to declare that the Church had appropriated a building which was once a synagogue of theirs, and to demand their rights.⁴² The capital may not have been the only place in the western world where the hardy sect possessed its synagogue.

But the fearful persecutions the Samaritans have sustained have nearly accomplished their purpose. According to the Epistle of 1808 the Samaritans were to be found only at Nablus and Joppa, and then numbered 30 families and

³⁹ E. g. *Koran*, xx. 97. (The Koranic legend has it that "the Samaritan" made the golden calf.) The Samaritan fear of contact with aliens is a characteristic of the sect. Biruni reports that they were called the La-Mesasiyye, "the Touch-me-nots"; de Sacy, *Chrest. arabe*, i, 305, 340. This scholar also calls attention to the poet Mutanabbi's reference to this Samaritan characteristic; Calcutta ed., 331; de Böhlen, *Comm. de Motenabbio*, 116.

⁴⁰ *Corpus inscript. Attic.* nos. 2891-2893.

⁴¹ Edict ix, of Justinian, c. 2; Osenbrügger, *Corpus juris civilis*, iii, 696, and ed. Bekker, Pt. ii, vol. ii, p. 1158: τοῦ γε ὑπογραφέως οὗτος Σαμαρείτας καλοῦσι.

⁴² Cassiodorus Senator, *Variæ*, iii, 45 (*Migne*, lxix, 600).

about 200 souls, equally divided between the two towns.⁴³ To-day they are to be found only in their ancient holy city, numbering, as we have seen above,⁴⁴ 152 souls of whom nearly two-thirds are males.

To sum up these facts, we may judge that the Samaritans enjoyed their greatest expansion in numbers and importance under the Roman empire. But their fortunes began to diminish through the persecutions of the Christian establishment, and Islam, at first favorable, ultimately only aggravated the downward course of the fortunes of the sect. In the first centuries of the present millennium, according to the few figures we possess, the Samaritans could have numbered only a few thousands in Syria, and in many of the places where we find them located the communities consisted probably of not more than the *personelle* and families of a few banking-houses. With this paucity in numbers for a millennium and more, the existence of the sect stands as an additional proof of the stiff-neckedness, or to use a modern term, of the "staying powers" of the blood of Israel.

⁴³ *N. et E.* 69.

⁴⁴ *P.* 24.