

THE LAST ISRAELITISH BLOOD SACRIFICE

How the Vanishing Samaritans Celebrate the Passover on Sacred Mount Gerizim

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Illustrated with the only set of night photographs ever taken of this ancient ceremony, and numerous other unique pictures, by the American Colony Photographers, Jerusalem, Palestine

SHECHEM, Samaria, and Neapolis were once great cities of the ancient civilized world. Today their glory and importance are no more, save in history. Here alone we find a dying and almost extinct community of Samaritans, the remnant of a once numerous sect, whose persistent continuation and literal performance of the Passover Sacrifice have attracted the attention of students for more than three centuries.

Nablus, the modern Shechem, the only home of the Samaritans of today, is a town of about 27,000 inhabitants, lying some forty miles north of Jerusalem. The population is chiefly Moslem, the remainder being composed of various Christian sects, together with a mere handful of Samaritans. But as yet no Jew has settled there, the Biblical axiom still holding good, "for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

Besides being a center of trade, Nablus has gained a little fame for its soap, made of pure olive oil, a variety which, though crudely manufactured, is used almost exclusively by the people of the city, and is

much prized by the natives of Syria and Egypt.

The town nests in a confined valley running east and west, between twin mountains—Ebal, some 3,000 feet above sea-level, which looms up on the north, and the lesser Gerizim, about 150 feet lower, which closes in on the south, with its base in places only a few hundred yards from that of its mate.

From the lower slopes of Gerizim issue numerous and copious springs. The modern town has therefore crept up in their direction. These waters, after filling the demand made upon them by the city, find their way into extensive gardens to the west, where flourish fig trees, laden with delicious fruit, pomegranates hung with scarlet bloom and fruit, yellow quinces, walnuts, mulberries, olives, and occasional bitter-orange trees raised for the perfume extracted from the flowers. Among the trees many varieties of vegetables grow in abundance.

The houses of the town are dome-roofed and lattice-windowed, constructed from the soft, white limestone of Mount



NABLUS (THE MODERN SHECHEM), THE ONLY HOME OF THE SAMARITANS TODAY

The town nestles in the valley which lies between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. The picture is taken from the lower slopes of Gerizim, near Ras el Ain, while Mount Ebal is seen in the background (see map, page 16).

Ebal. The streets are picturesquely narrow and most of them are paved with cobble-stones, with here and there an arch thrown across and supporting a room above.

THE HOME CITY OF THE SAMARITANS

In the "souks," or markets, as in most Syrian towns, the stores are so small that the customer stands outside to examine the meager display of European and native (Damascene) wares. Here are rows of silversmith shops, where the artisans

work cross-legged, producing from crude silver elaborate ornaments for the peasant women. Here are the coffee shops, the street in front blockaded with men sitting upon low stools, sipping the thick, hot beverage from tiny cups and smoking the long, red-piped, bubbling narghile as they gossip and play a game of "tawla."

Next are the sweetmeat venders, from whose stalls large trays of "kanafie" protrude into the street. This pastry dish, for which Nablus is noted, has a filling of fresh, sweet cheese. After it is baked,



A STREET IN THE SAMARITAN GHETTO OF NABLUS

From the main market-place, long, dark, tunnel-like lanes lead to the Samaritan Quarter, at the foot of the sacred Mount Gerizim.



THE HILL OF SAMARIA

Omri, the sixth king of Israel, in the ninth century B. C., bought an isolated hill a few miles west of Shechem, where he built his capital and named it Samaria, after its original owner.



THE ACROPOLIS OF SAMARIA

The city of Samaria from its inception overshadowed its rival, Shechem, and perhaps under Roman rule attained the pinnacle of its glory. The Emperor Augustus presented it to Tirod the Great, who rebuilt and embellished it after the Roman style and renamed it Sebaste.

melted butter and thick syrup are poured over it until it is literally soaked with the mixture.

From the chief market-place the Samaritan Quarter of Nablus is approached from the north through long, tunnel-like lanes which lead to the very foot of the sacred mountain.

Just above the city, Gerizim is steep and rocky, and the trees disappear. In summer the mountain side is gray and barren, but in winter even the smallest

patches of earth are scratched with primitive plows and sown with wheat or barley.

THE FRIENDLY CACTUS

Across from the town the slopes of Fbal present a very different picture. Equally rocky, they are still perennially green with cactus bushes planted among the rock ledges, which are curiously studded with ancient sepulchers, whose open doors from a distance reveal only the



REBURYING AHAB'S PALACE: SAMARIA

The enormous quantity of earth removed by the American excavators in clearing these ruins was conveyed in baskets on the heads of women, who, like ants, formed an endless chain of toil, running back and forth. Once the archeological researches had been made, the ruins were again filled with the dust of remote ages, thus preserving them for future generations as well as returning the land to its owners in its original state.



RUINS OF THE ROMAN FORUM AT SAMARIA

Note the weather-beaten tops of the columns, while the lower parts retain their original whiteness, showing how deep these ruins were covered by debris when the work of excavation was undertaken, with the aid of American research funds, under the auspices of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

darkness within. Some of these tombs were rifled centuries ago; others have come to light within the past few years. Many have stone doors and stone hinges, with stone locks still in working condition if the keys, probably of bronze, could be found.

But the modern inhabitants do not pride themselves on this interesting cemetery, as did the peoples of bygone times. To the Arabs of today antique relics are of no import; but they feel justly proud

of the cactus or prickly-pear bushes, which present a weird spectacle and cover every available space in this oriental God's Acre. The fame of these bushes reaches as far as the Bosphorus, where the much-prized fruit is a favorite gift among the notables of Constantinople.

The prickly-pear cactus was first introduced into Palestine by the Crusaders; today it is grown throughout the length and breadth of the land, being valuable not only for its fruit, but also as an ex-



SAMARITAN GIRLS LEARNING THEIR ANCIENT HEBREW

Note the latticed windows, used so extensively in the East to prevent men in the neighborhood from looking into the women's apartments.



A VIEW OF MODERN SEBASTE AND THE SURROUNDING HILLS

After climbing to the zenith of might, Sebaste slowly relapsed into insignificance. Today, amid the rums of a splendid past, a squalid mud village occupies the site and retains the name.

cellent hedge. The natives, however, do not yet appreciate its great value as forage for cattle. The camels help themselves to it whenever they get a chance, their mouths being so tough that, regardless of the spines, they devour the leaves with unmistakable relish. The Ebal cactus' superiority lies in the extra large size of its fruit, the tenderness of its seeds, and its sweet and luscious flavor, due both to the peculiar soil and to the protection afforded from the cold north winds. The Arabic name for the pear, *sabbir* (patience), seems eminently appropriate to one who has innocently handled the un-

pealed fruit and had his hands filled with the microscopic spines, which can be extracted only by painful laboriousness.

SHECHEM, WHERE THE BIBLE INTRODUCES
ABRAHAM

The first city built in this valley was Shechem, which occupied a site a short distance to the east of Nablus. Here, at the highest point of the valley, where the rains to the east find their way to the Dead Sea and those to the west to the Mediterranean, is a small artificial hill. Recent excavations by archeologists have revealed a city wall encircling the re-



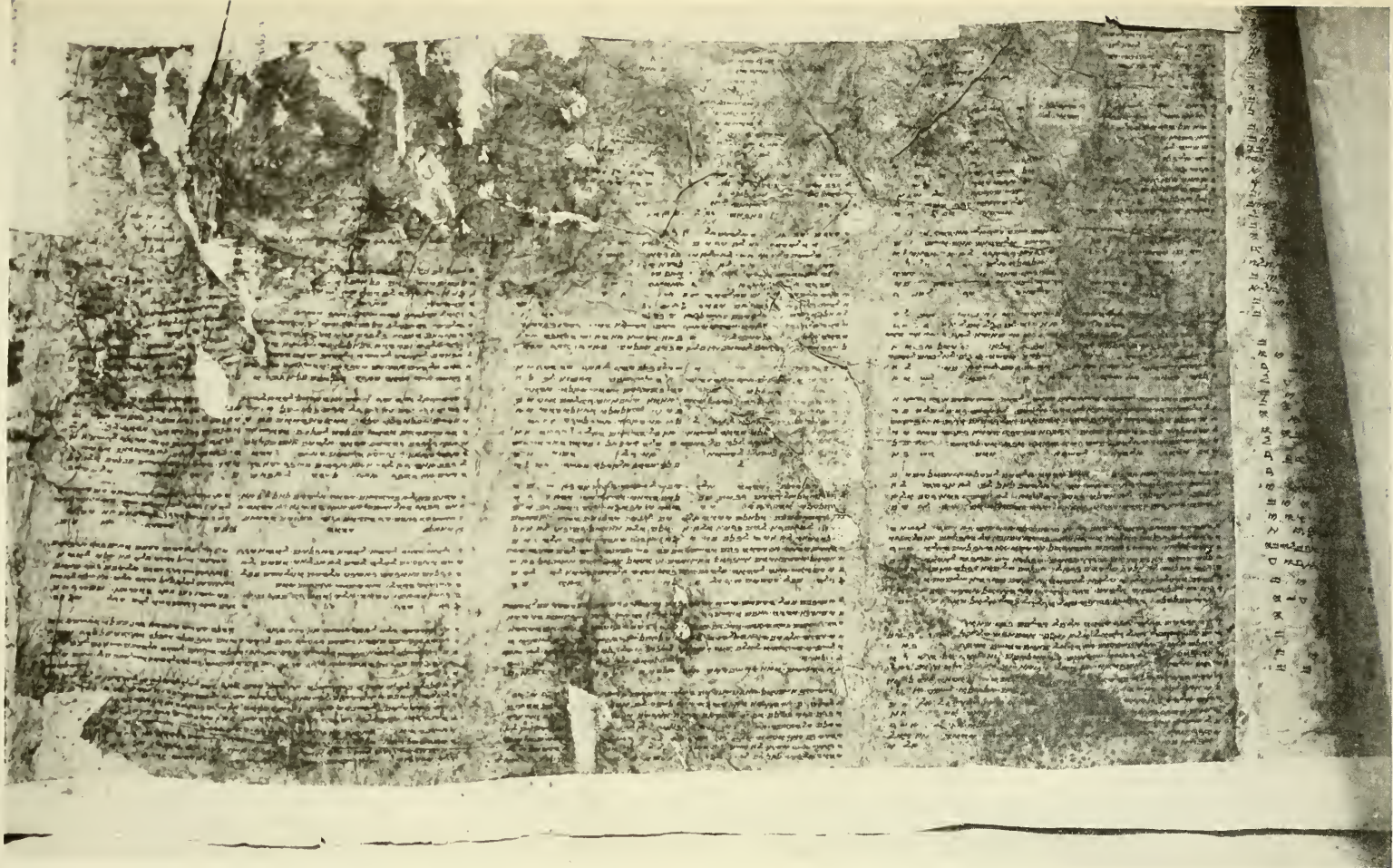
THE SAMARITAN SYNAGOGUE

This, the only house of worship which the Samaritans possess, is a very plain building and only a few hundred years old. In the recess to the left, behind ornamented curtains, are primitive safes and cupboards containing many parchments and Pentateuchs, among them the noted Abishua Codex (see illustration, page 12).



ONE OF THE SYNAGOGUE CURTAINS

This silken curtain, heavily embroidered in gold, is used in the synagogue to hang in front of the scroll chests. The designs represent the cup of manna, ark of the covenant, Aaron's rod blossoming, the seven-branched candlestick, the table of shew-bread, the golden censer, and other temple furnishings such as existed in the temple at Jerusalem.



THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPH EVER TAKEN OF THE ABISHUA CODEX, PROBABLY THE OLDEST COPY OF THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE IN EXISTENCE

The date inscription on the scroll presents to the Samaritan mind indisputable proof that it was written by the great-grandson of Aaron in the early years of the entrance of Israel into Canaan. This Scroll of Abishua, as it is known, has now for the first time been photographed from end to end and will be published in exact life size. It is hoped that when these photographic copies are available to Hebrew students new light may be thrown upon many Scriptural controversies.

mains of houses and have laid bare numerous ancient earthenware vessels.

As we look upon these primitive habitations, more than 3,000 years old, it is hard to realize that we are not actually looking on the oldest city built here, but upon a town that, at this early date, had already had a long existence.

It is at Shechem, then called "Sichem," and the plain of Moreh, into which the Shechem gorge opens at its eastern extremity, that Biblical history introduces Abraham, the father of the Hebrews, in Canaan. Likewise Jacob made this locality his first halt on returning from his sojourn with Laban in Haran. Here he purchased the parcel of ground whither, at a later date, Joseph's bones were brought from Egypt to be buried, and where today Jacob's well is pointed out as the spot at which Jesus and the Samaritan woman met (see map, page 46).

Immediately following the Israelitish invasion of Canaan and the taking of Jericho and Ai, Joshua built upon Ebal the first altar of sacrifice erected by his people in the new land.

The Shechem Valley now became the theater of the first general convocation, and, according to the Mosaic injunction, the whole congregation was assembled, "half of them over against Mount Gerizim and half of them over against Mount Ebal." From Ebal were to be proclaimed the curses against those who should forsake the law of their God, and from Gerizim the blessings that would result in the following of *Yahweh* (the unpronounced Hebrew name for God).

Here also, just before his death, Joshua addressed the last assembly of the people, making a covenant with them.

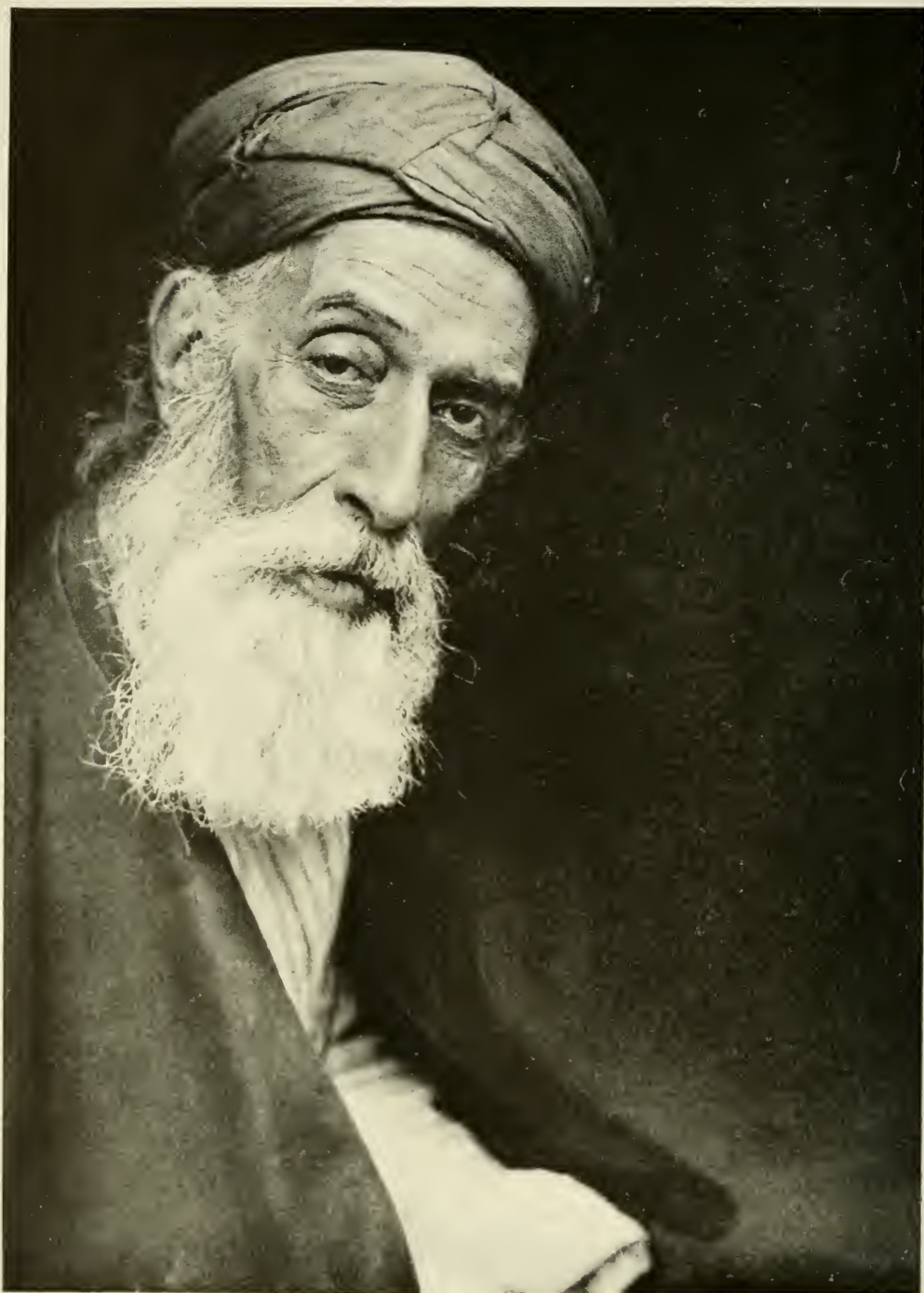
We now come to the broader period of its history. Ephraim, destined to figure as the leading tribe of the Northern Kingdom, had the lot of its possession fall to the district wherein Shechem lay. This territory was then known as "Mount Ephraim."

The town of Shechem itself was apportioned to the Levites, since they, being a tribe of priests, received no inheritance except cities and their suburbs in which to dwell throughout all the tribes. Shechem was also selected as one of the cities of refuge, and throughout the Hebraic occupation held an important place.



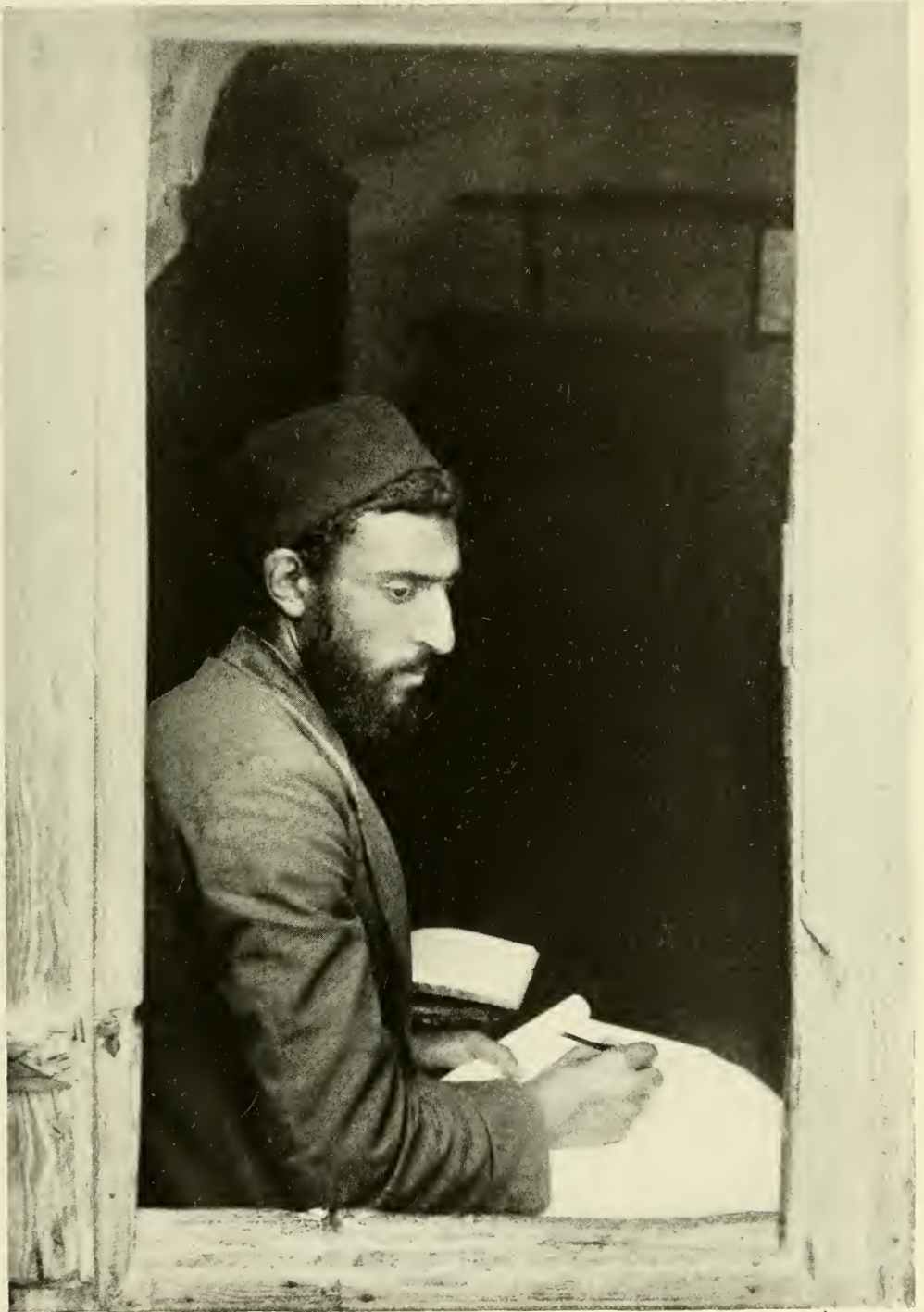
ABU EL HASSAN, SON OF THE LATE HIGH PRIEST JACOB

All the Samaritan priests wear long hair, which they wind under their dome-shaped fezzes. "And the Lord said unto Moses, speak unto the priests and say unto them that they shall not make baldness upon their heads; nor shall they shave off the corner of their beards' (Lev. 21 : 1-5).



JACOB, SON OF AARON, LATE SAMARITAN HIGH PRIEST

Members of the present priestly family trace their ancestry to the tribe of Levi. The direct Aaroiic line that existed till modern times has now failed.



A YOUNG PRIEST WRITING A SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

All the Samaritan Pentateuchs and prayer books, as well as the books used by the school children, are hand-written. Parchment was used up to two centuries ago; since then paper has come into vogue. Aside from the fact that the poverty of the modern Samaritan commends the use of paper, which is much cheaper, the orthodox scholar will not write on leather unless the hide from which it is prepared has been taken from an animal slaughtered by a priest.



THE VILLAGE OF ASKAR, ANCIENT SYCHAR

Just behind the village is Jacob's well. The mountain in the background is Gerizim, while the mosque on its summit marks the site of the Samaritan temple to which, no doubt, the Samaritan woman pointed when conversing with Jesus.

During the period of the Judges little of importance is heard of Mount Ephraim, except that Abimelech, son of Gideon by a Shechemite concubine, was made "King" of Shechem, and ruled three years.

With the advent of David came the Golden Age of the Hebrews. The capital was moved to Jerusalem, where, upon his succession, Solomon built the renowned Temple and established thereby a center of worship.

But this unified kingdom was short-

lived, and with the death of Solomon, his son, Rehoboam, proceeded to Shechem, where all Israel was gathered to make him king. Instead of this being consummated, ten tribes revolted and made Jeroboam, an attache of Solomon's court, king. Jeroboam selected Shechem as his home. Thus the northern ten tribes established the Kingdom of Israel, now forever rent from the Kingdom of Judah, which was composed of the two remaining tribes, Judah and Benjamin.



NEAR SYCHAR IS JACOB'S WELL; ITS DEPTH IS INDICATED BY THE LENGTH OF THE ROPE

To the east, towering above the encampment, is the loftiest of Gerizim's peaks, crowned with rums—a spot where once temples stood.



THE SAMARITAN PASSOVER CAMP, THE ONLY REMAINING ISRAELITISH CAMP IN THE WORLD

To the east, towering above the encampment, is the loftiest of Gerizim's peaks, crowned with ruins—a spot where once temples stood.



LAMBS SELECTED FOR THE SACRIFICE OF THE PASSOVER



THE CONGREGATION GATHERING FOR THE SACRIFICIAL CEREMONY

As they assemble one by one they spread small prayer cloths upon the ground. Upon these they stand with bare feet, having dropped their prayer slippers behind them.



THE SAMARITAN HIGH PRIEST JACOB LEADING THE PASSOVER SERVICE

Note the prayer cloth on which he stands. Some of these have the prayer-niche design identical with those of the Moslems. The Samaritans always face their Holy of Holies (the holy rock on the crest of Mount Gerizim) when worshipping.



THE TRENCH-ALTAR PREPARED FOR THE SAMARITAN PASSOVER

Two large copper kettles filled with water are placed over this altar. At a short distance, and higher than the altar level, is the *tanoor*, or ground oven, for the sheep-roasting. The men in the right background are tending the oven.

Omri, the sixth king of Israel, in the ninth century B. C., bought an isolated hill a few miles west of Shechem, on the north side of the valley, and there built his capital, naming it Samaria, after its original owner. At the time of the First Captivity the Kingdom of Israel lost its northernmost tribes and its possessions beyond the Jordan. From them Galilee was then created, while the remaining southern part inherited the name of its once important capital, Samaria, and became a State subject to Assyria. Thus was the land cut up into three districts—Galilee, Samaria, and Judea.

SEBASTE, CITY OF HEROD

The city of Samaria, from its inception, overshadowed its rival, Shechem, and probably attained the height of its glory under Roman rule; for the Emperor Augustus presented it to his procurator, Herod the Great, who rebuilt and embellished it after the Roman style, and renamed it Sebaste (Greek for Au-

gusta). Much of Herod's work still remains, notably a double colonnade encircling the hill's crest.

An Arab proverb says, "Beyond every mountain ascent there is a descent." And Sebaste, after climbing to the zenith of power, slowly relapsed into insignificance; so that today, amid the ruins of its splendid past, a squalid mud village bears the once grand title (the name in Arabic being slightly altered to "Sebastieh"). Here is a rare instance, possibly the only one in Palestine, where the Greek name has outlived the older Semitic form.

Sebaste had become a place of no importance more than four centuries before the Emperor Vespasian founded Neapolis (New City) in the Shechem vale, west of the older town, in 67 A. D. This "New City" soon outstripped the older Shechem, and in the fourth century became one of the foremost cities of Palestine—a distinction which it still enjoys under its Arabic name of Nablus.



THE ANCIENT HEBREW PRAYER POSTURE SURVIVES TODAY ON MOUNT GERIZIM

So reverent were the ancient Hebrews that the name of their God never was pronounced publicly, a fact which gave rise to the "coined word." Jehovah, by which the God of the Old Testament Israel now is known. The proper term was "Yahweh." When this word occurred in Hebrew texts another name, "Adonay," was substituted by the priest, and to warn the reader against pronouncing the Holy "Yahweh" the substitute word frequently was printed under the true name. When the Christian translators of the Middle Ages undertook to make the Bible intelligible to the peoples of Europe they apparently did not know what to make of this double term, so they combined the consonants of "Yahweh" with the vowels of "Adonay" to form the "Jehovah" of the King James version.

The Samaritan religion is closely akin to that of the Jews, the chief differences being that the cult of the former centers about Gerizim, while that of the Jews centers about Zion, and that the Samaritan canon of Scripture is restricted to the Pentateuch, or "Five Books of Moses." The later writings, including the Prophets and Psalms, the Samaritans repudiate as uninspired.

In view of the similarity in their beliefs and practices, it seems strange that there exists and always has existed the fiercest animosity between Jew and Samaritan, but it is the animosity that invariably exists between an original and a schism.

The Samaritans maintain that they are the remnants and descendants of the once great tribe of Ephraim, and that the split between them and the Jews came about through the maladministration of the priesthood by Eli's sons. Followers of the Jewish Church are looked upon as dissenters from the pure faith of Israel, and the forming of a center of worship in Jerusalem by Judah is condemned upon the ground that the land of Ephraim, with Shechem and its mountains, figured in the earliest history of the Hebrews; that here the first Israelitish altars were erected, and that these were the only specific parts of the Land of Promise mentioned by Moses in the wilderness.

THE RENOWNED SAMARITAN SCROLL PHOTOGRAPHED AT LAST

The most precious document of this sect is the renowned Samaritan scroll Pentateuch. This scroll is some seventy feet long, and toward the end its columns are divided vertically by a small gap, often occurring between the letters of the same word. Into this gap is carried and written any letter that occurs in the lines which fits into the writing of the date, so that when reading the text it fills its place, while on the other hand these separated letters when read collectively from the top of the column to the bottom, like the Chinese, spell out the name and date of the writer, etc., thus making it impossible for the date to have been of a later writing than that of the scroll itself.

The Samaritans assert that the scroll

was written by Abishua, the great-grandson of Aaron, in the early years of the entrance into Canaan, but no impartial student will allow it this very remote origin, although it is believed to be the most ancient copy of the Pentateuch in existence.

So jealously guarded is this scroll that few non-Samaritans have ever seen it, and many of the Samaritans themselves have not seen it except as it is exhibited on rare occasions at feasts, rolled up and covered with a silken cloth and with but one column exposed.

The scroll has recently been photographed from end to end, and will soon be published for the benefit of Hebrew scholars.

It is, of course, impracticable to display this very fragile parchment continually, but it is unfortunate that the modern Samaritans impose upon their guests by showing them a scroll of much later date than the one which all so covet to see. The imposition has gone further, for all photographs made heretofore supposedly of the original Abishua scroll, as it is called, have in reality been of the later copy.

While the Jews have scattered all over the world since the captivities and have absorbed much that is foreign, in many instances adapting their religious practices to their new environment, the Samaritans have during the same lapse of time lived in the land of their forefathers, among Semitic peoples akin to the Hebrews, and because of this fact have handed down to the twentieth century a glimpse of the old Jewish Church almost in its purity. A notable instance of the survival of an ancient religious ceremony is the celebration of the Passover Sacrifice.

One of the distinctive differences between the Samaritan and the Jew lies in their methods of computing the calendar. Instead of adopting the lunar year solely, the Samaritans base their calculations on the moon but they arc at the same time also governed by the movement of the sun. The system is so complicated as to form one of the chief studies of the young priests. Basing their authority on the first chapter of Genesis for thus differentiating from the Hebrew calendar,



KILLING THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE

The caldrons of water are already boiling. "Then shall all the convocation of the assembly of Israel slay it between the two evenings." As these words are read, with one deft stroke downward, each of the three slaughterers cuts the throat of one lamb and jumps to the next.



THE SPITTED SACRIFICIAL LAMBS

On oaken spits slightly longer than the depth of the ground oven, the dressed lambs are placed lengthwise, the heads hanging down. "Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof."

they point out that, in the history of creation, when the sun and moon arc introduced, it is said of them jointly, "Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years" (Gen. 1:14). For the above reasons the Samaritans some years celebrate their Passover with, or nearly with, the Jews, while at other times their fourteenth of Abib comes a month behind.

PREPARING FOR THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

A few days before the Passover the Samaritan ghetto becomes the scene of

much activity. Mules and donkeys are loaded with tents and other necessities, while young and old, sick and well, quit their homes to make the pilgrimage to Gerizim, in obedience to the command. "Thou mayest not sacrifice the Passover within any of thine own gates, but in the place which Yahweh thy God shall choose to make a habitation for I[is name]." Often, persons seriously ill are carried in their sick beds to the camp, and here not infrequently babes are born.

Prior to the date appointed, much time is spent in arranging the camp, rebuilding the *tanoor*, or ground oven, used in

roasting the sacrifice, and in procuring the necessary wood and brush for fuel.

The ascent to the camp spot on Gerizim requires usually an hour, whether mounted or on foot. Nablus is left behind by a path leading up from its western suburbs, and passing the Samaritan cemetery, an open field, its rocky and stone-strewn surface overgrown with weeds on which donkeys and cattle may be seen browsing. The trail leads up in short, stiff, winding courses through a slight depression where olives and other trees grow vigorously. The way soon becomes so steep that beasts as well as pedestrians are forced to halt at intervals for breath. But the time is not wasted, for the view of the town in its glaring whiteness below, fringed with verdant gardens and nestling between the twin mountains, is a scene truly beautiful.

THE EXCAMPMENT OF THE ISRAELITES

Once up this steep ascent, the ridge is gained. Along it the path, now fairly level, leads to a slight depression in the saddle, where suddenly the visitor sees before him more than forty white Egyptian and Damascus tents, the only veritable Israelitish encampment of religious significance in the world.

A pity it is that these more modern tents are used instead of the primitive goat-hair ones of the Bedouins, which would more nearly, if not entirely, resemble those used during the Exodus.

To the east, towering above the encampment, is the loftiest of Gerizim's peaks, crowned with ruins, a spot where once temples stood.

It is Passover eve. Selected sacrificial lambs are contentedly wandering about, unconscious of their impending fate. They have been purchased some days in advance of the Passover, in obedience to the law, "in the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb. . . . Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. . . . And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month."

But the scene is not quiet. Scores of people, non-Samaritan, young and old, have come up to "smell the air," for to the Nablus people, and especially for the

lads, it is a day of excitement not to be missed.

The camp ground is a small, elongated field, the property of the Samaritans. No special system is observed in pitching the tents, beyond leaving a path between the two uneven rows. Each family has one tent; a few have two.

At the eastern extremity of the camp is the *kiniseh* (synagogue), where the religious rites are observed while in camp. It is a small, oblong plot surrounded by a low rubble wall except to the east, where terrace above terrace, now much dilapidated, rises in step form to the mountain crest beyond.

THE TRENCH-ALTAR

At the northern end of this space, or prayer inclosure, a trench has been dug and lined with uncut stone. "An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me. . . . And if thou wilt make an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."

Across this altar two large copper kettles, filled with water, are placed. Beyond the northeastern end of the inclosure, and higher than its level, is the *tanoor*, or ground oven, for the sheep-roasting. It is a pit, the depth equal to a man's height, from five to six spans in diameter, and lined in a circular form, like a well, with rough stones. Here the rock crops out so near the surface that, in order to get the *tanoor* deep enough, it has to be built partly above the surface and a terrace filled in about it, thus of necessity elevating it above the rest of the space devoted to the Passover observances.

It is about three hours before dark as we arrive, and since the Samaritan time starts its count from sunset, let us forget our Western watches while we remain on Gerizim's heights.

On approaching the camp, one of the first things to attract our attention is the cloud of smoke pouring forth from the *tanoor* and curling skyward from beneath the kettles, for five hours of steady heat produced by burning "saris" brush and thorn bushes are required before the oven is ready for fleecing the sheep.



THE SALT COVENANT

As the preparation of each lamb is completed much salt is rubbed into the flesh. "And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt, neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering."



"NEITHER SHALL YE BREAK A BONE THEREOF"

No forks, knives, or spoons are used at the feast and great care is observed not to break a bone. The fingers are the Samaritan's only eating utensils on this occasion.



EATING THE PASSOVER

The members of the six families collect, each around one of the lambs—men, women, children, and nursing babies.

To escape the confusion caused by the swarms of sight-seers, boys galloping about on their horses or urging on lazy donkeys, hawkers calling out in loud voices as they peddle small cakes, oranges, or sweetmeats, we follow a friend, one of the priests, up to the crest of Gerizim. This, to the Samaritan, is the holiest part of the earth and crowded with sacred spots and associations.

THE SACRED SITES OF GERIZIM

Here one is shown the place where Joshua built the first altar of sacrifice

with twelve stones taken from the Jordan. Just above it are the foundations of St. Mary's Church, built by the Emperor Zeno and restored by Justinian. Adjoining these ruins is a small domed mosque, Sheik Ghanim, now in a neglected condition. A Moslem shrine and a Christian church each in succession built on the site from materials supplied by the remains of a Roman temple!

Proceeding southward along the outmost ledge of the plateau, the priests point to spots where tradition says the altars of Adam and of Xoah stood. Be-



"YE SHALL LET NOTHING OF IT REMAIN UNTIL THE MORNING"

The feast itself is of Miort duration. After the meat has been eaten the high priest, leaning picturesquely upon his staff, recites a short prayer. Every bit of bone remaining is now collected and taken to the altar. "And that which remaineth until the morning ye shall burn with fire." Note the two crouching figures in the foreground busily engaged in collecting and eating fragments of the roasted meat.

low is the path by which Adam was expelled from Paradise, after having been created from the dust of Gerizim.

Beyond is the altar of Seth, a stone circle with a pavement of large uncut stones (probably of megalithic origin).

Just beyond Seth's shrine, farther south, is a ditch sunk into a rock protruding boldly from the mountain side. It is the Samaritan rival to Mount Moriah, in Jerusalem. Here the Samaritans believe that Abraham prepared to offer up in sacrifice his only son, and just behind is the place where the ram was found caught in the thicket.

Almost at our feet, far below, in the plain of Askar (Sychar), lay Jacob's well, concealed beneath an uncompleted church erected upon Crusader foundations. Under the spell of the hour and the scene, one could almost picture the Samaritan woman pointing to Gerizim and saying to Jesus, "Our fathers worshiped in *this* mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (John 4:20).

THE SAMARITAN HOLY OF HOLIES

In the center of the plateau is a large flat rock which the Samaritans call "Kuds el Akdas"; for, according to their tradition, it formed the Holy of Holies of their temple. They approach it only on certain festal occasions and with bared feet. This rock at once calls to memory the rival Rock Moriah lying beneath the gorgeous Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.

Although less extensive than that from its taller mate, Mt. Ebal, which cuts off the distant Galilee view northward, the scene from Gerizim is broad and grand. In the spring the Plain of Morell, or Sychar, just at its feet, is a patchwork of small fields in different stages of growth. Near the village of Askar (Sychar), watered from a copious spring, large patches of onions and garlic flourish, their green varying with that of the waving barley and wheat beyond and contrasting with the bare and rocky surrounding hills. The elevations are dotted with villages, and among them, to the southward, is Awerta, where, under the shade of a great tree, the tombs of

Aaron's son and grandson, Eleazer and Phinehas, lie.

Directly to the east, separated from the foreground by the deep Jordan chasm, rise the Mountains of Gilead. Eike Moab, of which they are a continuation northward, they are suffused with a mysterious and fascinating translucent blue, resembling some precious stone, and never cease to captivate the vision, especially upon clear days. The highest peak, Jebel Osha, crowned by the reputed tomb of Hosea, stands out conspicuously. Towering at the head of the Jordan Valley, Hermon, with its perennial snow-cap, closes the northern limit of this eastern view.

At the foot of Mt. Ebal and bordering upon the plain directly below us are the excavations of ancient Shechem. Near them a small white dome marks the traditional site of the tomb of Joseph. Southward the view stretches over the long mountain range which is the backbone of Palestine, rising between the Phœnician plain and the deep Jordan chasm. When viewed from the Mediterranean, the only break seen in the range is this Valley of Nablus, while its rivals in historic importance, Jerusalem and Hebron, are hidden from view. Mizpah is easily visible, but no glimpse of Jerusalem save a little of its suburbs under favorable conditions.

Turning westward, the mountains and hill country, dotted with villages, drop off gently into a plain which extends to the blue Mediterranean. The ruins of Caesarea, which under Roman rule became the most important city and seaport in Palestine, and often connected with the history of the Apostles and the early Church, are visible under favorable conditions; also the orange groves of Jaffa.

Now the sun is soon setting, and we shall have to hurry back to camp if we are to see all the service which commemorates the Exodus from Egypt.

PRAYER POSTURE AND ROBES SIMILAR TO MOSLEMS

As we descend, white-robed figures are seen collecting about the smoking trench-altar. As they slowly gather one by one they spread on the ground small prayer cloths, upon which they stand with bare



THE BURNT OFFERING

All the viscera are emptied of undigested food and then thoroughly salted and with the fat from the inwards and kidneys are placed upon cloven pieces of wood laid across one end of the trench-altar. The burning goes on slowly till the early morning hours.

feet, having discarded their prayer slippers.

While witnessing this ceremony we were impressed by the striking resemblance to the Moslem garb and posture during prayer. The clothing of the Samaritan on this occasion is, in the main, white, the outside garment being a *jubbic* made of muslin, identical in cut with that worn by Mohammedan religious sheiks and by the old-style city Moslems, who happily are not adopting western ideas and modes of clothing. Around a dome-shaped fez the priest winds a white turban, sometimes embroidered in amber silk.

The older men of the laity use the same turban, with the customary flat-topped fez, while the young men and boys, like the Mohammedan youths, wear no turbans and are usually clad in white shirts and drawers. The Samaritans, except when in prayer, wear deep wine-colored turbans, as the result of an edict of one of the caliphs, to distinguish them from their Mohammedan neighbors, for originally they wore white and were often mistaken for Moslem sheiks learned in the Koran. Similarly, the Jews formerly used black as a distinguishing hue.

Before all prayers, the Samaritan goes through prescribed ablutions, washing with water three times each the hands, mouth, nose, face, ears, and feet, in this order, and, like the Moslem, he spreads the prayer cloth, which in some instances has the *mihrab* design.

FACING THE HOLY OF HOLIES

Now all have congregated. The venerable high priest, Yakoub (Jacob), feeble and infirm, clad in a pale-green *jubbic*, takes his place in front of the congregation. The two second priests, Ishak (Isaac) and Tewfik, stand slightly behind the high priest. Then come in rows the elders according to rank. Now all the males of the community are present, the smallest boys lining up at right angles to the foremost ranks.

On every hand the walls and terraces are jammed with onlookers, mostly boys and youths of Nablus.

Facing the holy rock on the crest eastward, the worshipers now-bow to the earth in prayer, for the Samaritans al-

ways face their Holy of Holies wherever they are.

The service begins with a prayer written some seven centuries ago by the priest Hassan el Suri. As it is repeated in concert, the rows of the older men and the priests kneel, or rather sit upon their heels, with hands on the knees or outstretched to heaven whenever any petition is asked. They bow their heads in unison, touching their foreheads to the ground. Some of the younger men standing behind, also with outstretched hands, join in the prayer. Throughout the service it is most interesting to watch the tiny little fellows, each beside his parent, while all follow in the repetition with as much earnestness as the grown-ups and entirely unconscious of their surroundings.

Simultaneously with the beginning of the service the sacrificial lambs have been driven into the inclosure and wander about at will, grazing upon the few tufts of green or treading upon the high priest's prayer rug till driven off.

The prayer is ended with a loud Amen! Whereupon all rise and remain perfectly erect, while in silence they repeat another prayer, called "Akid el Niyeh," a meditation which denotes the consecration of their souls to prayer. It consists of repeating the five articles of their creed—belief in God, in Moses, the Pentateuch, Mount Gerizim, and the Day of Judgment.

This and the story of creation precede all prayers. When ended a hymn is sung in praise of Yahweh, the little fellows stretching their mouths to their utmost capacity, while the older leaders, turning about from time to time, prompt and encourage the others to more fervent utterances. All these prayers, readings, and hymns are, of course, in the Samaritan Hebrew, the oldest form of that language in use.

Next, from the hand-written Pentateuch which each carries, they read in unison 21 selections, in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are mentioned ("in-memory of the fathers"). During the reading each time God's name is mentioned the men stroke their beards downward thrice. Likewise whenever passages are recounted enjoining them to remember their God, they bow, swinging the body



BETROTHED

Among the Samaritans, as with most Orientals, the parents of the children arrange the matches. The betrothal often takes place when the bride and bridegroom are mere infants, while early marriages are the rule.

forward from the hips, in token of reverence and submission.

The high priest, who has been facing the crest of Gerizim with the congregation, now turns about and repeats an antiphon, to which the leading men reply, and in conclusion a psalm is sung.

The aged high priest now mounts the fragment of an ancient column and in a low, quavering voice sings a short hymn.

With his eyes upon the setting sun, he reads the first twelve verses of the twelfth chapter of Exodus, wherein are given the first commands regarding the observance of the Passover.

KILLING THE SACRIFICE

In the meantime the youths and boys have carried out the lambs and are holding them in a circle about the trench-altar, where the caldrons of water are already boiling.

Over the lambs stand three slaughterers with glistening knives of razor sharpness, for, like the Jews, only those recognized as knowing the laws regarding *kosher* and *taraf* (ritually clean and unclean meat) are allowed to do the killing. As the reading proceeds, it is so arranged that, as the passage "then shall all the convocation of the assembly of Israel slay it between the two evenings" is spoken, at the word "slay," with one deft stroke downward, each of the three slaughterers cuts one throat and jumps to the next.

In a few seconds all have been sacrificed, the white clothing of the boys holding the struggling lambs being much bespattered with blood. Thus the passage "between the evenings" the Samaritans translate to mean between sunset and dark, the twilight hour in these lands being very short. "Thou shalt sacrifice the Passover in the evening, at the going in of the sun, at the very time thou earnest forth out of Egypt."

As the slaying commences the great throngs of Samaritans and Gentiles cease to crowd about the priest who is reciting and press around the altar. All is a veritable Babel, with prayers repeated, shouting, singing, and clapping of hands.

The joy exhibited is akin to that of our children on Christmas morning or when around the blazing tree, and reminds one of the light-heartedness of the Jews when celebrating the feast of Purim, commemorating as it does the destruction of their enemy, Haman. During all this excitement some of the little Samaritan girls and boys make their way among the sacrifices, and the latter with their finger ends dot their faces with daubs of the paschal blood.

One of the young priests collects a quantity of the fresh blood in a basin and

with a bunch of wild thyme vigorously stirs it; then rushes away to put a dab of it above each tent door. Upon returning he empties the remainder into the fiery ditch. "And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and strike the lintel, . . . for the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel the Lord will pass over (Passover) the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come unto your houses to smite you" (Ex. 12:22, 23).

Incidentally it is of great interest that the thyme is used. Botanists have differed as to what herb the hyssop might be. Here we learn that this wild thyme's properties which keep the blood from coagulating. Besides, this custom having been handed down in unbroken succession, little if any room is left for doubt as to its identity with hyssop.

UNLEAVENED BREAD AND BITTER HERBS

While the lambs are giving their last life struggle, youths pass among the people bearing large trays piled high with bitter herbs, a sort of wild lettuce that grows on Gerizim, rolled in thin sheets of unleavened bread. Rolls are distributed among non-Samaritans as a token of friendship.

As the killing of the lambs commemorates the sacrifice that saved the first-born of the Hebrews from the fate of their Egyptian neighbors, so here also the eating of the bitter herbs and unleavened bread is, a reminder of the bitterness of the Egyptian tyranny and the haste with which Israel left the land of the Pharaohs. "And they baked unleavened bread of the dough they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victuals" (Ex. 12:39).

The bread is identical with that used by the Bedouin and journeying peasants, since the baking-apparatus is simple, portable, and quite likely is akin to that used during the Exodus. The loaf resembles a gigantic but very thin pancake, being pliable and not crisp like the "motsis," or unleavened bread used by the Jews at Passover. ■ ■ ■

At the sacrificial altar the older men



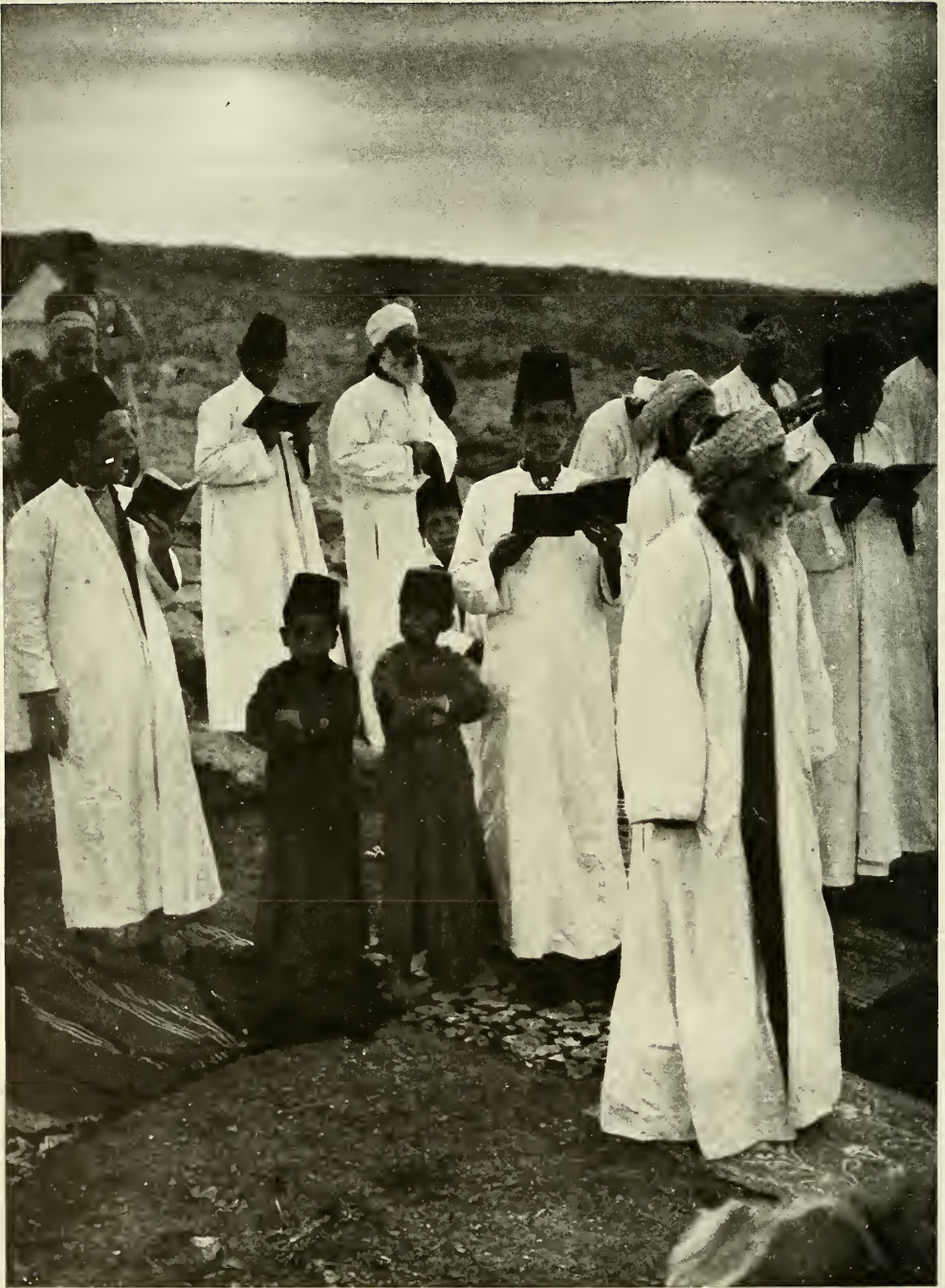
A SAMARITAN BABY

When photographed, this child was the picture of health. Shortly after, he became ill and the mother always attributed the misfortune to the "evil eye" of the camera or of the photographer.

and some of the priests, who now stand about those to whom is delegated the task of dressing the lambs, have kept up the reading of the story of the Exodus as far as to Miriam's song of triumph. Eftengwhile, as soon as the lambs have become lifeless, boiling water from the Caldrons is poured over them, while several boys, and men crowd about in the semi-darkness and pluck off the wool instead of skinning the victims, the object being to protect the flesh while roasting in the ground oven.

THE RITUAL INSPECTION

Next the ritual inspection takes place, for as each lamb is fleeced it is suspended



SAMARITANS AT PRAYER ON THE EVE OF THE PILGRIMAGE

During the entire week following the Feast of the Passover, the Samaritans remain encamped upon Mount Gerizim. On the last day of the encampment they begin at dawn a pilgrimage to the crest of the sacred mount. Before setting forth on this pilgrimage, however, the men spread their prayer cloths and repeat the creed and the story of the creation in silence, after which, in a loud voice, they read in unison the Book of Genesis and the first quarter of the Book of Exodus, ending with the story of the Passover and the flight from Egypt.



COLLECTING FOR EVENING PRAYERS ON GERIZIM

Before all prayers the Samaritan observes prescribed ablutions, almost identical with the present customs of the Moslems, and like them he now spreads his prayer cloth.

by its hind legs on a long pole resting on the shoulders of two of the men. The work of removing the offal, the heart, liver, and lungs is done by lantern light. Great care is taken throughout this inspection not to mutilate a bone, for the command "neither shall ye break a bone thereof" is strictly observed. Any carcass found ritually unfit is put on the burning altar and consumed with the offal. This, however, is a rare exception. The last time it happened was some five years ago, when a lamb was found minus a kidney.

Unlike the Jews, who will not eat of the hind quarters of any animal until all the sinews have been entirely removed, the Samaritans claim to know exactly the cord the angel touched while wrestling with Jacob at the ford of the Jabbok, and now a deep incision is made in the flank and it is taken out. "And Jacob was left alone; and there Wrestled a man with him. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint. . . . Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the



THE SAMARITANS ASSEMBLED UPON THE SACRED ROCK

A few of the devout members of the congregation do not dare advance to the rock itself because of certain scruples regarding their ablutions. These individuals may be described in the background kneeling like their brothers on the rock, their faces turned toward the holy spot.

sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day" (Gen. 32: 24-32Y

Deep gashes are made in the fleshy parts in order that the salt may penetrate, while the right shoulder is cut off to be roasted on a separate spit, being a priestly portion. Pieces of the head are also reserved for the priests. Only the males of the priestly family and women of the same blood, if unmarried into other families, may partake of them. "And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep; and they shall give unto the priests the shoulder and the two cheeks."

Xow an oaken spit, the length being slightly greater than the depth of the ground oven, is thrust through each dressed lamb lengthwise, the head hanging downward. To prevent the meat slipping off, a wooden pin is driven through the spit three or four spans above the lower end, and on it rests a cross-board.

As the preparation of each lamb is completed, much salt is rubbed into the flesh. "And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt, neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: and with all thy offerings thou shalt offer salt" (Lev. 2: 13).

THE BURNT OFFERING

This mandate is also closely observed in the matter of the burnt offering, for the viscera as collected are emptied of undigested food and then thoroughly salted, and, with the fat from the inwards and the kidneys are placed upon cloven pieces of wood laid across one end of the ditch-altar, and the fuel under it now is ignited from the fire beneath the caldrons. The burning goes on slowly till the early morning hours.

But long before these preparations have been completed the readings have come to an end, while all those at work and the onlookers shout incessantly, "We call and



HANDS OUTSPREAD TO HEAVEN

“And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he rose from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven,” It was then the custom with the Hebrew nation, as still with the small remnant of the Samaritans, to spread forth the hands toward heaven. One object entirely out of harmony with the picturesqueness of this scene is the 20th century steamer chair in the center of the group of worshipers. It appealed to the Samaritans, however, as a convenient resting place for the sacred scroll in preference to the quaint but clumsy wooden stands of the synagogue.

we affirm, there is no God but God.” In fact, they aim to keep this up all night, but there are numerous interruptions.

Once the service has come to an end, all those not engaged bow forward and kiss the hand of the high priest, saying in Hebrew, “Every year may you have peace.” He in turn gives each his benediction and retires to his tent.

HOW THE MEAT IS COOKED

It is now only about four hours before midnight and the sides of the ground oven are glowing with heat. The white-robed figures, with much shouting and commotion, bring the spits forward, holding them in a circle about the fiery pit. With loud voices they repeat, “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord;” and passages of Scripture in which they are admonished to observe diligently the law.

Suddenly the spits are simultaneously lowered into the oven and a wickerwork lid made of sticks placed over the top, the spits protruding slightly and so held in place. Grass, sod, and mud, previously collected for the purpose, are placed over this, closely sealing the lid, so that no smoke or steam can escape, and thus extinguishing the fire; but the heat of the stones is sufficient to roast the tender mutton. “Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the pertenance thereof” (Ex. 12:9).

THE EVENING PRAYER

Once these duties are over the men again collect for prayer. It is now well into the night. Beginning, as usual, in silence, with their creed and the repetition of the story of creation, Pentateuch selections pertaining to the Passover and



SAMARITANS BAKING UNLEAVENED BREAD

The bread is made with flour quickly kneaded with water only and baked on a convex disk of sheet-iron. It is identical with that used by the Bedouin and journeying peasants. Since the baking apparatus is so simple and portable, the bread probably is much the same as that used during the Exodus. The loaf resembles a gigantic but very thin pancake.

the patriarchs are read. Between the first selections hymns are sung.

A lengthy rotation now takes place: Joshua's prayer, one that Samaritan tradition asserts he was in the habit of using; singing the song of Moses at the Red Sea, and the "Angel's Song." The main feature, however, is the clothing of the high priest or his representative with a silken cloth. The priest now presents

to view one of the ancient Pentateuchs, one in book form, written on parchment.

It is an impressive sight when these white figures in the bright moonlight, kneeling thrice and prostrating themselves to the ground, always toward their Holy of Holies, repeat in unison, "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt; this is that night of the Lord to

be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."

Thus the three Passover services are ended. The first, before the lambs are slaughtered, is called "Salat el Dabih" (Sacrificial prayers); the next, while the fleecing is taking place, "Salat el Jismeet" (Scalding prayers), and "Salat el Garub" (Sunset prayers). Under ordinary circumstances prayers are always said at even, but since the Passover service is the more important, the evening prayer is unavoidably delayed.

WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

During the afternoon and the early evening the women have played no role in the scene. They have kept to their tents, while those unable to make their ablutions, and therefore prohibited from eating the Passover, are confined in one tent.

Like the older but now passing Jewish and native Christian custom, the Samaritan women do not strictly hide from men, but only veil when on the street and keep out of the way when strangers are present.

The present paper is written after having witnessed the Passover ceremony four times—twice before the great world conflict and twice during it. The first occasion was when the author was a youth, the second in 1914.

On both of those occasions the women were hardly seen, eating their portion of the sacrifice in the tents, some of the little girls alone showing themselves. During the years of the war this phase of the scene materially changed. There were no tourists or professors, with large cork hats and western clothing; no note books and pencils; no inquisitive questions to embarrass the women or to mar the ancient atmosphere of the spectacle.

Once the sacrifice had been slain, the crowds from Nablus, smaller these years than usual, descended and the Samaritans were left alone. In the moonlight there was no sight nor sound foreign to the surroundings to distract one's attention, and the imagination was given rein. The conception wandered back thousands of years, and one only awoke with a start to the reality of living in the twentieth century when a sudden flash of magnesium

powder lit up the sky and then left all in deep darkness.

The evening prayers over, some retire to rest in their tents, some pray or read to keep awake, while not a few sit around the smouldering altar watching that every scrap is burned.

No sooner are we left alone with the Samaritans than the women begin to appear. They whose lives are so immersed in small things that they seldom leave their homes, the older women having no education at all, find great pleasure in the freedom of sitting around the sacrificial altar, conversing in their native tongue with Mrs. Whiting, and enthusiastically displaying their babies, awake or asleep, at this late hour.

OPENING THE ROASTING PIT

Thus the three to four hours between putting the lambs to roast and the time of the feast roll quickly by. Incidentally we retire to our tent and dine on roast lamb, killed and prepared by peasants of the neighboring villages in identically the same style as the paschal lambs, except that the skin is removed, for no non-Samaritan is ever allowed to partake of the sacrifice. "And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the Passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof."

It is because of this injunction that the Samaritans so scrupulously collect and burn any scraps cut away during the inspection, and that the burning altar is so rigorously guarded.

Even after the ceremony is at an end, the ditch and oven are filled with stones lest any remaining charred bone or fragment fall into the possession of a Gentile.

As the midnight hour approaches, the sleepers are awakened by callers and suddenly the camp is again astir. The youths with hands and hoe remove the seal from the oven, and clouds of steam pour out; so that, even with the aid of a lantern, little can be seen. It is interesting to notice the air of hurry, although time is of no consequence. The cover is now lifted with much shouting and screaming, and the same prayer said as when the lambs were placed in the oven. At once the spits are withdrawn and closely guarded while the meat is slipped off, each lamb



WAVING THE SACRED SCROLL, ONE OF THE CEREMONIES DURING THE SAMARITAN
PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY ROCK, WHICH FOLLOWS THE
CELEBRATION OF THE PASSOVER

The high priest, taking the sacred scroll from its resting place, holds it in his arms. Then he raises it over his head and the copper case is unfolded, so that the parchment is exposed toward the devotees, who stroke their faces and beards in reverence.



SAMARITAN PIRGRIMS AT PRAYER IN FRONT OF THE HOLY ROCK

During the greater part of the service the high priest with staff in hand stands facing the sacred scroll, which has been placed before the Rock. He leads the congregation in reading.



THE BIBLICAL SALUTATION : PALESTINE

Embracing one another, the head is put on the other's shoulder or neck, the latter being bent forward, and in doing so the cheek or neck is kissed, alternating from one shoulder to the other. "And Esau ran to meet him (Jacob) and embraced him, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him." The Samaritans are the tallest people in Palestine.

into one of the great copper pans, the shoulders being put with the portion for the priestly family and taken to the prayer inclosure, just beyond the still burning altar.

EATING THE MEATS OF THE PASSOVER

Some of the flesh, being overdone, falls from the spits, and one of the men volunteers to rescue it. Winding bits of sacking about his hands to prevent blistering them, he is lowered into the oven. Quickly the meat is collected in a basket.

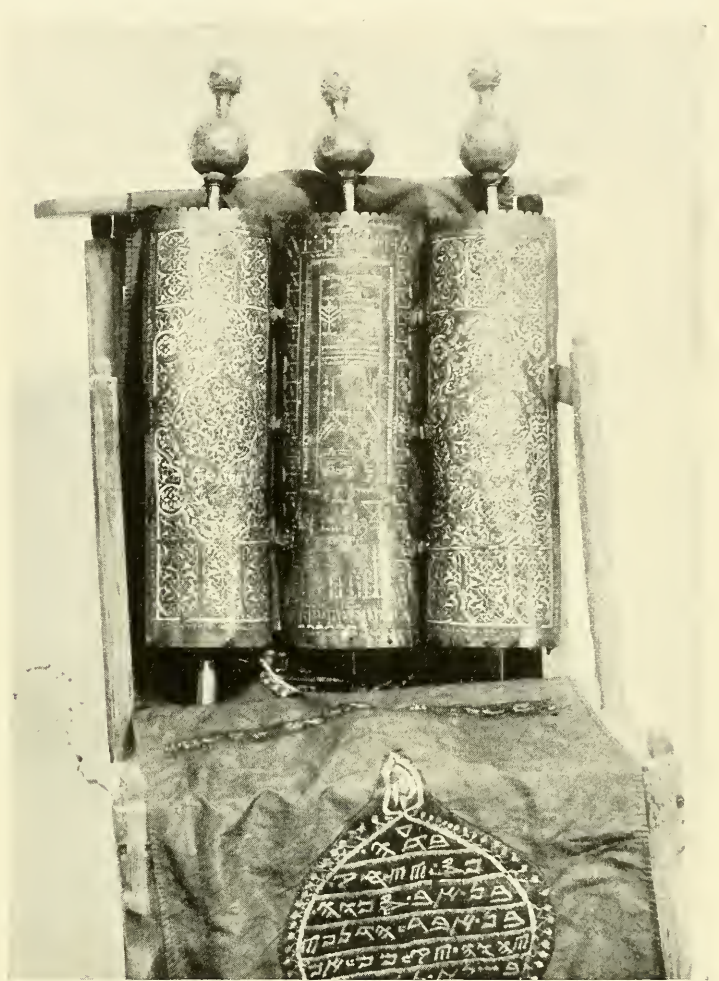
Only two men have remained near the pit, and they become so engrossed with the meat basket that the man in the pit is temporarily forgotten. The heat is more than anyone can endure longer than a few seconds, but the shouts of the unfortunate go unheeded until a Gentile sends his fellows to the rescue.

The members of the six Samaritan families have now collected each around one of the lambs—men, women, children, and nursing babies. The elders and the priests arrive, each girded about his

outer clothing, shod and bearing a staff or cane in imitation of the equipment on the flight from Egypt. Now the meat is sprinkled with minced bitter herbs, and straw trays of unleavened bread are placed at hand. The high priest, in the midst, in quavering tones, says: "In the name of God I call, 'Hear O Israel, our God is one God,' " etc., while all voices join in singing an ancient Exodus hymn in which mention is made of the multitudes of Israel that left Egypt as the issue of only seventy souls who went down into that land in the days of Joseph.

Every one now begins to eat ravenously, pulling the meat from the bones with the fingers. No forks or knives are used, and great care is observed not to break a bone. The flesh is consumed quickly, for the devout are truly hungry, having eaten little substantial food during the previous day. "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. And thus shall ye eat it: with your loins girdled, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand: and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's Passover" (Ex. 12 : 8 and n).

Those who are unable to leave their tents because of sickness have a portion sent to them, and, no matter how ill, they always partake of a little. Even the nursing babies have their lips touched with a morsel, all in literal compliance with



THE SACRED SCROLL OF THE SAMARITANS USED ON GERIZIM
(REAR VIEW)

The scroll is contained in a copper case inlaid with silver and gold, with designs representing the temple sacrificial altar, table of shewbread, the golden censer, cup of manna, and other temple furnishings.

the command that any one refraining from eating it shall be cut off from Israel.

Within a few minutes the meal is over and the high priest, leaning picturesquely upon his staff, recites a short prayer. Every bit and bone remaining is now collected and taken to the altar. Across the end where the offal has been burned the wickerwork oven cover is now thrown, and upon it all the spits are piled, together with the bones and leavings. A fire is lighted under them. Every person now washes with hot water from the ket-



Drawn by A. II. Bnmstead

A MAP OF ASIA MINOR AND THE HOLY LAND

Showing the home cities of the Seven Wise Men of ancient Greece (see the succeeding article) and the land of the Samaritans. (Note, in the small inset map, the relative location of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal and the historic cities, ancient and modern, which have clung to their slopes—see text, pages 1-21).

ties, pouring it over his hands from ewers, so that it also flows into the ditch-altar, lest even this infinitesimal quantity of the sacrifice should fail to be destroyed by fire. "And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth until the morning, ye shall burn with fire" (Ex. 12 : 10).

Thus the sacrifice and ceremony commemorating the Exodus are ended.

Each celebrant now goes to his tent for a few hours' sleep. **Early the next morning the congregation again gathers for prayers, the day being observed as a Sabbath: the first day of the feast of unleavened bread.**

As the onlooker retires to his tent or descends the path to Nablus in the hush of early morning, the scene, brightly lit by the moon, is one not to be forgotten.

From beyond the camp a great white clotid of smoke curls skyward. Now and then a red flame licks the sky or a white, ghost-like figure adds some fuel. It is a picture which cannot be reproduced with the camera; only to the mind's eye can it be painted. The wood-cuts and steel-engravings found in our old family Bibles, where the Tsraelitish camps are shown with the pillar of cloud and fire, come nearest the present reality, but are lacking in color and atmosphere.

As we turn for one last glance at the moon-lit camp and the redder glow of the flame with the pillar of smoke, we cannot but realize that here we have seen the eating and burning of the last Hebrew blood sacrifice, and there comes the thought that it may never be seen again, for the Samaritans are a dying people.

NOTE: The Author apparently confused the daylight portion of the 14th (Passover) with the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.