

And another. Professor Marshall Randles complains that, a comma having fallen out, his new book was described last month as *The Blessed God Impassibility*. In reality *The Blessed God* is the title, and *Impassibility* the sub-title. But Professor Randles should have made the matter right at an earlier stage. For both on the back of the book and on the title-page are found *The Blessed God Impassibility* without any punctuation.

Of the recent discoveries in early Christian literature one of the most important is a Syriac version of the *Testamentum Iesu Christi*. The fortunate discoverer was Rahmani, the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch, and the place of discovery

was the metropolitan library at Mosul. Rahmani lost no time in publishing his discovery, with a Latin translation and notes. Various learned articles have appeared upon the work, especially noteworthy being one in the *Guardian* of 6th Dec. 1899, by Professor Collins, and another in the issue of 11th April 1900, unsigned. But the best news is that Professor Cooper of Glasgow is editing the work for English readers, including an English translation by Canon Maclean. As the value of the work is chiefly liturgical, Professor Cooper is just the man to edit it, and he is to illustrate it copiously with ecclesiological, liturgical, theological, and historical notes. Messrs. T. & T. Clark have undertaken its publication.

## The Samaritans.

BY THE REV. J. E. H. THOMSON, D.D., SAFED, PALESTINE.

It is implied in Sargon's Khorsabad inscription that he left the majority of the Israelites still inhabiting Central Palestine. This is confirmed by what we learn of those present at Josiah's Passover (2 Ch 34<sup>9</sup>; Jos. *Antiq.* 4. 5). Yet the land had been much wasted by civil wars and by the campaigns of successive Ninevite monarchs, so room was left for the introduction by Assurbanipal (Ezr 4<sup>10</sup>) of colonists who would act as a bridle on the natives. It is evident that these colonists were soon absorbed by the remnant of the Israelites and commingled with them. This mixed people are the Samaritans of the New Testament and the Apocrypha. When the Captivity of Judah returned, the Samaritans desired to unite with them, but their advances were rejected by Zerubbabel. Still intercourse sprang up, and there resulted intermarriage among the leading families of the two communities. Ezra and Nehemiah, when they arrived in Jerusalem, put down forcibly the party that desired closer union with the Samaritans. Josephus relates (*Antiq.* xi. 8. 2, 4) that Manasseh, brother of Jaddua, high priest in the days of Alexander the Great, married the daughter of Sanballat, a leading Samaritan, and was in consequence of this deprived of his priesthood and driven into banishment. He was received by his father-in-law, who erected a temple on Mount Gerizim, and made Manasseh high

priest. Notwithstanding this, the Samaritans do not seem to have been excluded from the inner courts of the temple (Jos. *Antiq.* xviii. 2. 2), an indirect proof that their Israelitish origin was acknowledged. Josephus alleges that under Epiphanes the Samaritans rededicated their temple to Zeus Hellenius. After the Maccabæan struggle had ended, John Hyrcanus marched against the Samaritans, captured Samaria, and burnt the temple; it never seems to have been re-erected. This embittered the hostility of the Samaritans against the Jews—they hindered Galilean Jews from passing through their territory to Jerusalem (Jos. *Antiq.* xx. 6. 1; Luke ix. 53), endeavoured to confuse the Jews in proclaiming New Moon (Rosh hashshana, 2 *b*), and even defiled the temple (Jos. *Antiq.* xviii. 2. 2). When they were placed under his jurisdiction, Herod endeavoured to ingratiate himself with the Samaritans by adorning Samaria with stately colonnades. He changed its name to Sebaste, in honour of Augustus, to whom he erected there a magnificent temple. When Judea became a Roman province, Samaria was conjoined with it. During the Jewish war the Samaritans did not escape; under Vespasian's orders, Cerealis slew 11,000 of them who had entrenched themselves in Mount Gerizim.

The conversation of our Lord with the woman of Sychar (Askar? Jn 4), and the subsequent adhesion

to Him of many of her fellow-villagers, indicate an openness of mind on the part of the Samaritans not exhibited by the Jews. The gratitude of the Samaritan leper contrasted with the ingratitude of the nine Jewish lepers (Lk 17<sup>11</sup>) is a parallel instance. Although in the preparatory mission of the apostles our Lord forbade them to go into any city of the Samaritans, He yet regarded them with a certain amount of favour, as may be seen in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. This may have occasioned the taunt, 'Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil' (Jn 8<sup>48</sup>). The rise to influence of Simon Magus, in the years immediately succeeding the Resurrection, indicates the previous presence of Messianic expectations among the Samaritans. If Hilgenfeld is right in assigning a pre-Christian date to the Samaritan poem discovered by Merx, then the view above is confirmed. When Philip came to Samaria (Ac 8<sup>4ff.</sup>) the Samaritans manifested the same open mind to his preaching as to that of our Lord. The subsequent arrival of Peter and John deepened the impression made by Philip. The Christianity of the Samaritans early manifested a heretical type in Dositheus, Simon Magus, and Menander.

While there seems to have been a large Samaritan Church, there was a still larger residuum. These Samaritans frequently caused trouble under the Christian emperors. At length (529 A.D.), after a sedition more violent than any previous, during which they murdered the Christian bishop and set up a king to themselves, Justinian sent an army against them, drove them from their synagogues, and brought them completely into subjection. In little more than a century after this, Palestine fell into the hands of the Moslems, but there is no record of any resistance on the part of the Samaritans to the conquerors.

The Samaritans are lost sight of till Benjamin of Tudela comes into contact with them in the twelfth century. He reckons them at about 1000 in all, of whom 100 were resident in Nablûs; there were other communities in Ascalon, Cæsarea, and Damascus. Since the end of the sixteenth century they have been frequently visited by travellers, and there have been several instances of correspondence between Samaritans and the learned men of Europe. That with Joseph Scaliger was the first; but the most

important was that with Sylvestre de Sacy, in the second decade of the present century. At that time, besides the community in Nablûs there were a few Samaritans in Gaza. There had been Samaritan communities in Cairo and Damascus till the latter half of last century. These, including that in Gaza, were violently put down by the Moslems.

In Nablûs the Samaritans inhabit a narrow quarter to the north-west of the city. Formerly they had many synagogues, but these have been wrested from them by the Moslems, and now they have only one, and it is small and dark. They number in all about 160, and are not likely to increase, as they marry only among themselves. They are tall, handsome, and good-looking, and, unlike the Jews, appear to be very cleanly.

In their theology the Samaritans are monotheists,—their creed is summed up in the phrase: 'Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one Lord.' When in reading the Law they come to the sacred name יהוה, they avoid pronouncing it, and say *Elohem* (Elohim). They believe in good and bad angels, and give them names which partly agree with those in the books of Enoch. They do not practise, as do the Jews, prayers to saints or for the dead. In regard to inspiration they consider only the Pentateuch inspired. They expect a Messiah to come, whom they call מָלִיכִי : he is to be prophet, priest, and king, and is to find again the Tables of the Law and the sacred vessels, to conquer seven nations, and bring back the Jews to worship in Gerizim. After living to the age of 110 years he is to die full of honour; however, he is not to be superior to Moses, and this is indicated by the fact that while Moses lived 120 years, the *Tāhēb* is to live only 110. An ancient Samaritan poem discovered by Merx (Hilgenfeld's *Jahrbuch für Theol.*, 1894, pp. 233-244), addressed to the *Tāhēb*, reveals their Christology, so to say, to be in greatest harmony with that ascribed to the Samaritans in Jn 4. In eschatology they believe in the resurrection of the dead and in a final Judgment; they hold that the last Judgment will occur at the expiry of 7000 years from the Creation. They believe in the forgiveness of sins by God on repentance and prayer, and so do not think sacrifices needed for atonement.

The Samaritans adhere rigidly to the ceremonies enjoined by the Law, differing from the Jews on the side of greater simplicity and of closer con-

formity to the letter of the Law. Indeed they claim that their name 'Samaritan' does not refer to Samaria, but to the fact that they are *shōmērim*, 'guardians' of the Law (Epiphanius, *Haer.* ix.). Circumcision is observed without the Jewish additions. The great Day of Atonement they hold by a continuous service in the Synagogue, and a Fast of twenty-five hours. In celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles they do not, as the Palestinian Jews, make booths outside, but adorn their rooms with branches. They keep the Passover the evening before the first full moon in the Greek Nisan (April). Formerly they held it in their own quarter, but rather more than half a century ago they got, through the intervention of the British Consul General, restored to them the privilege of celebrating it on the top of Mount Gerizim on the site of their ancient temple (Stanley, *Sermons on the East*, p. 175, n. 2; Robinson's *Researches*, vol. ii. p. 282, n. 1). A day or two before the Feast the whole Samaritan community, save those ceremonially unclean, encamps on the top of the mountain. Throughout the day preceding the Passover evening they make preparations for it. When sunset is approaching, the men of the Samaritans form a circle, and while the high priest is reciting the portion of the Law describing the Passover, six or seven lambs are brought forward and killed. Boiling water is then poured on the carcasses, and the wool is plucked off. When this is ended, the right fore-leg, with the shoulder, is cut off, and the lamb is disembowelled; thereafter it is suspended on a post seven feet long.

These poles or spits with the suspended lambs are then placed, point downwards, in a pit in which brushwood has been burning for some hours. The pit is then covered with a hurdle on which grass is laid, and the whole plastered with mud so that no smoke exudes. At the expiry of three hours the lambs are taken out and placed severally in new baskets; these are removed a little way off where a sheet is spread, and there the lambs are eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs by men 'with staves in their hands and loins girt.' When all have eaten, everything that remains is burnt in the fire, so that nothing is left until morning.

The synagogue service of the Samaritans differs little from that of the Jews. They read only the Torah; they stroke their face and beard at the recurrence of the name of God, and use frequent prostrations. The Samaritan marriage is simpler than the Jewish; the Samaritans are practically monogamists, and divorce is rare. In regard to the burial of the dead, the Samaritans, to avoid ceremonial uncleanness, hire Moslems to do what is necessary.

Although the Samaritans speak Arabic, the Law is read in Hebrew. The script in which their manuscripts are written is that found on the Maccabæan coins. There is extant in several codices a Targum in a form of Western Aramaic commonly called Samaritan. The ancient codex of the Law which they show—if the characters used in it were those generally in use when it was written—cannot well be dated later than the end of the second Christian century.

## Contributions and Comments.

### On the Khabiri Question.

PROFESSOR KÖNIG does not appear to have seen what I have written about the Khabiri of the Tel el-Amarna tablets, though it is now an old story. Years ago I showed that they could not be the Hebrews. The name, in fact, is simply the Assyrian *Khabiri*, 'confederates,' which is met with in several cuneiform texts (e.g. K, 890, 8), and was probably a loan-word from Canaan. In 1889 I suggested that Hebron (Khibur, in Egyptian) was their meeting-place (*Proc. S.B.A.*, June 1889). The Semitic equivalent of the Sumerian

'*sagas*'<sup>1</sup> was *khabbatu*, 'plunderer,' or 'Bedâwi' (*W.A.I.*, ii. 26, 13; 49, 34; etc.). Rubute may be a Rabbah as well as a Rehoboth, though I should prefer Professor König's identification. As for the 'mountains of Sêri,' I pointed out as long ago as 1891 that they have, of course, nothing to do with Edom, but are 'the mountain(s) of Seir,' which formed the frontier between Judah and Dan (Jos 15<sup>10</sup>; see *Records of the Past*, new ser. v. p. 69).

A. H. SAYCE.

*Dahabia Istar, Helwân, Egypt.*

<sup>1</sup> Not ideographs, but a Sumerian word borrowed from the Semitic *sagâsu*.