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**JEWISH SECTS,
RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS,
and
POLITICAL PARTIES**

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Menachem Mor, Editor



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JOSEPHUS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SAMARITANS: A STUDY IN AMBIVALENCE

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1. The Samaritans as Independent of the Jews

The Samaritans represent an excellent case study of the limits of tolerance which the mainstream of Judaism demonstrated toward the challenging movements which grew up within it.¹ Other divergent movements, such as those mentioned in the Bible--Dathan, Abiram, and Korah (Numbers 16), or the Rechabites (Jeremiah 35)²--apparently disappeared within a short time or are shrouded in mystery. Though Josephus claims (*Ant.* 18.11) that the Essenes, who received so much attention in antiquity, particularly from him (*War* 2. 119-161), as well as the Sadducees, existed from the most ancient times (*ek tou panu arkhaiou*), we have no actual evidence of the existence of these sects prior to the second century B.C.E. In any case, we have no references to them after the destruction of the Temple in the year 70. The Samaritans are the only such group (prior to the emergence of the Karaites in the eighth century) for whom we have a continuous history covering many centuries to the present day.

Though the Samaritans regard themselves as within the mainstream, our concern here is to delineate the attitude of the mainstream of Jews or Israel toward the Samaritans. To do so we have eight major sources--the Bible, pagan writers, Josephus, the New Testament, Church Fathers, the Talmudic rabbis, inscriptions, and the writings of the Samaritans themselves.³ Each of them presents problems. Most of these are brief, late, apologetical, and/or polemical.

The Bible uses the name *Shomronim* once (2 Kings 17:29), but probably with the meaning "Samaritans" rather than "Samaritans." The references in pagan writers are extraordinarily few and brief. Such a passage as that in the first-century Curtius Rufus (*Histories of Alexander the Great* 4.8.34.9-11) does establish the independent existence of the Samaritans.⁴ He mentions the Samaritans as such. He, like other pagans, must have been aware of the separate existence of the Jews, who were so numerous and influential at this time. The references in the New Testament (Matthew 10:5; Luke 9:52, 10:29-37, 17:11-19; John 4:1-42, 8:48; Acts 8:25) are few and in a polemical context. The reference in the third-century Church Father Origen (*Against Celsus* 2.13), which states that after the Emperor Antoninus Pius had removed the prohibition of circumcision for Jews he still forbade the Samaritans to circumcise their sons, indicates that he chose to differentiate Jews from

Samaritans. The references to Samaritans in the Church Father Epiphanius, dating from the fourth century, are certainly in a polemical context.

Those in the rabbinic writings are more numerous. The redaction of the works is at the end of the second century at the earliest and, in the case of many of the *midrashim*, well into the Middle Ages; they, too, are in a polemical context. Even the dramatic discoveries of papyri at Samaria⁵ and the references to Samaritans in an inscription on the island of Delos in the Aegean Sea add little to our knowledge of the Samaritans, let alone to our perception of how they were regarded by the mainstream of Jews.

In the case of the Samaritans' own literature, very little of it, with the exception of the Scriptures, Targumim, and liturgies, can be definitely ascribed to the older period,⁶ prior to the Middle Ages. Thus, we are left with Josephus as the main source for knowledge of the Samaritans over a period of centuries and, in particular, for the attitude of the Jews toward them. Even in Josephus, we cannot always be sure that the word which is translated "Samaritans" may not refer to "Samaritans," that is, the inhabitants, not necessarily Samaritans, of Samaria. Josephus, too, has his prejudices; but he is less prejudiced than some have thought, particularly in the *Jewish War*. In any case, we shall note a good deal of ambiguity in his attitude.

Josephus would have us believe that he attempted to be objective: he tells us (*Life* 10-11) that he made a thorough investigation of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, submitted himself to hard training while passing through each of the three, and spent three years with a hermit named Bannus. The fact that he says (*Life* 10) that there are three sects--namely the three which he successively joined--indicates that he did not regard the Samaritans as a Jewish sect. The fact that in his rebellious youth he did not experiment with living as a Samaritan confirms this. Though the Jerusalem Talmud (*Sanhedrin* 10.6.29c) speaks of twenty-four sects of heretics, Josephus speaks of the sects as three in number, despite the fact that, on three additional occasions (*War* 2.119-166, *Ant.* 13.171-173, 18.11-22), he refers to *the* sects. He adds the Fourth Philosophy sect only to the last description as a background for the events leading to the Jewish uprising against the Romans in his own day.

One common characteristic of the three sects is their antiquity. According to Josephus (*Ant.* 18.11), they have existed from the most ancient times; the other sects of which the Talmud speaks were apparently of more recent origin or they were apparently much less important or influential. The Samaritans, even according to their most bitter opponents, possessed antiquity

and certainly in Josephus' day were numerous, important, and influential. Indeed, one would have thought that Josephus would include the Samaritans as one of the sects of Judaism, since they are similar to the Sadducees, who likewise did not accept such a basic principle as the Oral Torah. In terms of basic philosophy, one might argue that they are no more different from the mainstream of Judaism than the monastic-like Essenes, the main portion of whom refused to obey the crucial commandment of "be fruitful and multiply" and who, like the Samaritans, refused to offer or were debarred from offering sacrifices in the Temple (*Ant.* 18.19).

There are a number of indications that Josephus looked upon the Samaritans as a nation (*ethnos*) (*Ant.* 10.184, 17.20, 18.85), fully parallel to, and independent of the Jews, with political aspirations of their own. Hence, Samaritanism was unlike Christianity, which did not thus define itself. The very fact that he calls the Samaritans an "ethnos" is itself significant. An exhaustive examination of Josephus' use of this word indicates that he generally reserves it for either the Jewish nation or the Jewish people, whether in Judaea or in the Diaspora (253 times); or for other nations⁷ (124 times)--Idumaeans, Arabs, Gauls, Parthians, Pamphylians, Africans, Philistines, Alani, Medes, Cappadocians, Ethiopians, Moabites, Canaanites, Amalekites, Sikimites, Assyrians, Ammanites, Syrians, Ituraeans, and Germans. He speaks (*Ant.* 17.20) of someone of Samaritan origin "ethnos," where the term implies a categorization that depends upon birth in a nation, not upon adherence to a creed or a set of practices, hence, not as a variety of Judaism. On three occasions he uses "ethnos" to indicate tribes within the Jewish nation--namely the Hebrew tribes ruled by Saul and David (*Ant.* 6.63, 7.390) and the kinsmen within the Jewish state at the time of the outbreak of the revolution against the Romans (*War* 4.278). On seventeen occasions he employs it to indicate ethnic groups within a geographical entity, whether in the Persian Empire (*Ant.* 11.186, 187, 194, 215, 216, 272, 283, 285); in Egypt (*Ant.* 10.222, *Against Apion* 1.137); in Batanaea (*Ant.* 18.106); in Galilee (*Ant.* 12.331, *Life* 44, 45, 82); or the tribes allegedly removed from Cuthos which became the Cuthaeans (Samaritans, *Ant.* 9.279, 288). The last two cases indicate that Josephus looked upon the Samaritans as an ethnic entity rather than as a religious group or sect. In fact, and again very significantly, Josephus, despite the fact that he uses the word "ethnos" very frequently--401 times to be exact--he never employs it to refer to one of the sects of Judaism--whether Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, or Fourth Philosophy--or any other religious grouping.

In his account of their origin (*Ant.* 9.279, 288-291), Josephus clearly looks upon the Samaritans as non-Jews who were brought from Persia to

Samaria by the Assyrians. They are coupled with the Idumaeans and the people of Coele-Syria and are distinct from the Jews. We find confirmation from the fact that the Persian king, Darius I, commands them to give up the villages which they had taken from the Jews (*Ant.* 11.61). It is clear that they are not Jews, inasmuch as they are listed (*Ant.* 11.174) with the Ammonites, Moabites, and all those living in Coele-Syria as continually plotting against and killing the Jews. And there is no indication either in the Bible or in Josephus that they were ever converted to Judaism through circumcision or through any other formal way.

The Bible (2 Kings 17:25) states that the Samaritans at first did not worship the Hebrew God. It states that the king of Assyria took the initiative to send them one of the priests of the ten tribes of Israel in order to teach them how to fear the Lord. Josephus, despite his obvious prejudice against the Samaritans, assigns the initiative to the Samaritans (*Ant.* 9.289): it is they who consult an oracle which tells them that they will gain deliverance from the pestilence that has afflicted them if they will worship the Hebrew God. It is they who send envoys to the king of Assyria asking him to send priests from the captives that he has taken in the war with the Kingdom of Israel. The implication is that they are genuinely seeking to be properly converted to Judaism. Josephus then editorializes (*Ant.* 9.291), and bitterly remarks that the Samaritans alter their attitude according to circumstance: when they see the Jews prospering they call them kinsmen, claiming (obviously falsely, from Josephus' point of view) that they are descended from Joseph; but when they see that the Jews are in trouble they declare themselves to be of a different race having nothing in common with them.

Further indication that Josephus regarded the Samaritans as being distinct from the Jews may be seen in the statement (*Ant.* 11.88.97): when the Jews were rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, the Samaritans accused them of fortifying the city for the purpose of revolt. Moreover, Josephus adds an extra-Biblical account (*Ant.* 11.114) of the Samaritans inflicting injuries upon the Jews in Palestine upon this occasion, and the consequent appeal of the Jews to King Darius of Persia.

That Josephus looked upon the Samaritans as utterly distinct from the Jews may also be seen in his account (*Ant.* 11.302-303) of the marriage of Nikaso, the daughter of the Samaritan Sanballat (*Ant.* 11.392) to Manasseh, the brother of the high priest Jaddus (Jaddua). Josephus adds that Sanballat's motive was to win the goodwill of the entire Jewish nation. Therefore, it is clear that Sanballat himself, as a Samaritan, was not a Jew. Josephus, moreover, goes further (*Ant.* 11.306) in stating explicitly that the Samaritan

woman whom Manasseh had married was a foreigner (*alophuloi*, "of another race"). This same word is used frequently in the *Septuagint* with reference to the Philistines, indicating that Josephus regards the Samaritans as being utterly different from Jews. Indeed, Josephus states (*Ant.* 11.307) that the elders in Jerusalem regarded this marriage as the beginning of intercourse with foreigners (again using the same word, "*alophulous*").

Josephus would have us believe that the Samaritans looked upon themselves as distinct from the Jews. When Sanballat petitioned Alexander the Great to grant permission for a temple to be built (*Ant.* 11.322), he explained that he had a son-in-law who was the brother of the high priest of the Jews. The clear implication is that Sanballat himself did not identify with the Jews. Furthermore, when Sanballat says that many others of Manasseh's countrymen (*homoethnon*)⁸ wish to build a temple, again the implication is that many members of the ethnic group known as Jews (since Manasseh was a Jew), in contrast presumably to Samaritans and other non-Jews, wished to build the temple.

Another indication that, in Josephus' eyes, the Samaritans are utterly distinct from the Jews is to be found in his account (*Ant.* 12.7-10): in the latter part of the fourth century B.C.E., Ptolemy Soter took many captives in Judaea and Samaria and settled them in Egypt. Josephus proceeds to differentiate between the Jews whom he brought and the others who joined them and, on the other hand, the Samaritans. The Samaritans, he says, quarreled with the descendants of the Jews, the chief point of contention being the sanctity of their respective temples in Jerusalem and on Mount Gerizim. The Jews and the Samaritans were each determined to keep alive their fathers' way of life and customs.

We are told (*Ant.* 12.156) that the Samaritans did much mischief to the Jews a century later by laying waste their land and by carrying off slaves. It is again clear that they are separate groups: if the Samaritans were a Jewish sect in Josephus' eyes, he would have said that the Samaritans did mischief to other Jews. Again, when describing (*Ant.* 13.74-79) the quarrel between the Jews in Alexandria and the Samaritans with respect to the merits of their respective temples, Josephus cites this as a case of *the Jews vs. the Samaritans*.⁹

We may further ask, as does Mor,¹⁰ why, if the Samaritans were a sect of Jews, and if they both suffered the same fate during the persecutions enacted by Antiochus Epiphanes, they did not co-operate and join together with the Maccabees against the Seleucids. It is clear that the two groups had

different goals and could not co-operate even when facing a common enemy. Indeed, according to Josephus (*Ant.* 12.258-261), when the Samaritans appealed to Antiochus Epiphanes, they clearly sundered themselves off from the Jews by explaining that their ancestors had observed the day called the Sabbath by the Jews and by commending the king for having dealt with the Jews as their wickedness deserved. In turn, they petitioned Antiochus not to punish them for the charges of which the Jews were guilty, insisting that they were distinct in race (*genet*) and customs.

Moreover, in view of the support which the Samaritans apparently gave to Antiochus Epiphanes, one would have expected Judas Maccabee to undertake to punish them as he did renegade Jews (1 Maccabees 7:6). And yet, neither 1 Maccabees nor Josephus says anything about such a campaign, perhaps because Judas regarded them as being non-Jews in the first place.¹¹

That the Jews and Samaritans are distinct from one another is again evident from Josephus' account (*Ant.* 13.74-79) of the quarrel, as he states it, between *the Jews* in Alexandria and *the Samaritans* who worshipped at the temple on Mount Gerizim: each group asserted that its temple had been built in accordance with the laws of Moses.

Further evidence that the Samaritans are distinct from the Jews may be seen in Josephus' account (*Ant.* 13.275) of King John Hyrcanus' attack on Samaria in the second century B.C.E.: Hyrcanus did so because he hated the Samaritans on account of the injuries which they had inflicted upon the people of Marisa, "who were colonists and allies of the Jews." The fact that Josephus contrasts the Samaritans with allies of the Jews indicates that he regards the Samaritans as non-Jews.¹²

There is another indication (*Ant.* 17.319) that the Samaritans are not regarded as Jews by Josephus: after the death of Herod, the Emperor Augustus treated them differently from the Jews. A fourth of their tribute was remitted by the Emperor because they had not joined the rest of the people in revolting. Inasmuch as political status, at least at that time, was an integral part of Judaism, failure to join the Jews was tantamount to a declaration that they were not Jews.

A further indication that they are thought of by Josephus as distinct from the Jews is the fact that on at least two occasions (*War* 2.111, [= *Ant.* 17.342], 2.239-245 [= *Ant.* 20.132-136]) they send delegations separate from the Jews to Roman authorities; and in neither the *Jewish War* nor in the *Antiquities* do the Samaritans, in either the first century B.C.E. or in the first

century C.E., give any indication of claiming kinship with the Jews.¹³ There is likewise a contrast between the Jews and the Samaritans in Josephus' statement (*War* 2.111, *Ant.* 17.342) that on coming to power, the ethnarch Archelaus, himself the son of a Samaritan woman, treated not only the Jews but even the Samaritans with great brutality, whereupon, we are told, both parties sent deputies to the Emperor to denounce him. That the Samaritans are not merely a sect within Judaism would seem to be indicated by the fact that we never hear of separate delegations of, for example, Pharisees and Sadducees.

Moreover, it seems most probable that the Samaritan leader (*Ant.* 18.85-87) who, in approximately the year 36, attracted such a large crowd and who was ruthlessly suppressed by Pontius Pilate was viewed by him as having messianic pretensions and hence as a political rebel somewhat similar to John the Baptist as portrayed by Josephus (*Ant.* 18.116-119). The fact that his followers appeared in arms (*Ant.* 18.86), and that when the procurator Pontius Pilate came with his armed forces they fought him in a pitched battle (*Ant.* 18.87), would support the hypothesis that they intended to revolt against the Romans and to establish an independent state.¹⁴ The fact that the Samaritans (*Ant.* 18.88) had their own council (*boule*) is further indication that they were independent of the Jews. If, immediately thereafter, the Samaritans (*Ant.* 18.88) appealed to Vitellius, the Roman governor of Syria, charging Pilate with reckless slaughter, this does not prove that the real aim of those who gathered at Mount Gerizim was not messianic independence; it may indicate only that the Samaritan leaders did not share the enthusiasm of the messianic pretender and of the multitudes who followed him. Or, alternatively, it is simply that after the fact they tried to argue that Pilate had misconstrued their aims.

We may wonder, as does Coggins,¹⁵ that Josephus, in recounting this episode, shows almost no sign of anti-Samaritan feeling, this despite the fact that the Samaritans, in being armed, were certainly reminiscent of the Fourth Philosophy revolutionaries and despite the fact that in the *Antiquities*, as Schwartz¹⁶ has noted, Josephus is far more anti-Samaritan than in the *Jewish War*; but in this respect Josephus is similar to Tacitus, who though bitterly anti-Jewish, nevertheless is careful to give the impression of writing *sine ira et studio*, that is impartially, by noting (*Histories* 5.10.1) the responsibility of the procurators in provoking the Jews to rebellion. Moreover, Josephus may well have been influenced to adopt a more positive view of this incident in view of the fact that the Samaritans did not apparently, after all, join the Jews in the great rebellion against the Romans in 66-74--still another indication that the Samaritans did not regard themselves as Jews and were not so regarded by

the Jews, inasmuch as the revolutionaries, as we are told (*War* 2.562, *Gittin* 56a), forced those Jews who were lukewarm or opposed to the uprising to join them. This is particularly revealing, inasmuch as we hear (*War* 3.308), though this may reveal Josephus' animus against the Samaritans, that they were themselves contemplating the prospect of revolt. The fact, however, that early in the war the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim were slain in such large numbers--11,600, according to Josephus (*War* 3.315)--and to a man by the Roman general Cerealius would seem to indicate that they were armed and that they offered resistance.

Still another incident which would seem to confirm that the Samaritans are distinct from the Jews is recounted at length by Josephus in both the *War* (2.232-246) and the *Antiquities* (20.118-136), and confirmed by Tacitus (*Annals* 12.54), where we are told of a conflict between the Galilaeans and the Samaritans which resulted in the murder of some Galilaeans and the sack of several Samaritan villages in revenge. The fact that the attacks occurred while the Galilaeans were on their way through Samaritan territory to the Temple at the time of one of the three pilgrimage festivals would serve to indicate that the conflict was not between those Jews who lived in Galilee as against those who lived in Samaria but rather between the adherents of the Temple in Jerusalem and those who refused to accept the sacrificial cult, namely, those who did not accept the centrality of the Jerusalem Temple, that is, one must assume, the Samaritans. Moreover, it seems unlikely that the words "Galilaeans" and "Samaritans" are mere geographical terms, inasmuch as we do not hear elsewhere of any such dispute, whereas, according to Josephus (*Ant.* 20.118), it was the "custom" of the Galilaeans to pass through Samaritan territory on their way to the Temple, indicating that they frequently did so. That Tacitus (*Annals* 12.54.2), in connection with this incident, speaks of the feud between the Jews and the Samaritans as longstanding shows, at the very least, that he regarded them as being separate from one another.

The fact that the Galilaeans, in revenge for the murder of several of their number by the Samaritans, urged the Jewish masses (*Ant.* 20.120) to resort to arms would indicate that the conflict was between Jews and non-Jews; we must draw the same conclusion from Josephus' remarks (*Ant.* 20.122) that the procurator Cumanus armed the Samaritans and marched out against the Jews, that (*Ant.* 20.125) the leaders of the Samaritans met with Ummidius Quadratus, the Roman governor of Syria, and accused the Jews of sacking their villages, and that the Jews, in turn (*War* 2.240, *Ant.* 20.127), blamed the Samaritans. In his decision (*War* 2.242-243, *Ant.* 20.132) Quadratus speaks of the dispute not as being between the Samaritans and the Galilaeans but rather as being between the Samaritans and the Jews; likewise,

the Emperor Claudius himself hears the case as presented by the Samaritans and the Jewish leaders (*War* 2.245, *Ant.* 20.135) and orders three of the most prominent leaders of the Samaritans to be executed. It is hard to believe that if the Samaritans were Jews the Jews would have accused them thus, knowing that if they won the Samaritans would, in all likelihood, be put to death.

If Josephus views the Samaritans in religious terms and emphasizes, in particular, the centrality for them of Mount Gerizim, this may be due to two factors in particular. In the first place, Josephus was himself a priest and, as we can see from the tremendous amount of attention that he gives to the Temple and the priesthood in the *Antiquities*, he looked upon the sacrificial cult as central. Moreover, he viewed them in religious rather than in political terms because he defined Judaism thus, opposed as he was to those groups, notably the Sicarii and the Zealots, who looked upon Judaism as primarily a political entity. But we may guess that this is a misreading of the Samaritans, who, as we can see from their several revolts to establish their independence, regarded themselves, as did the Jews, as a nation.

Finally, we may remark that there is pagan evidence, albeit from a later date, namely from the beginning of the second century, that the Samaritans constituted a separate religion; for we read (*Historia Augusta*,¹⁷ *Quadrige Tyrannorum* 8.3) a letter ascribed to the Emperor Hadrian, who reigned from 117 to 138, that there is no chief of the Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, and no Christian presbyter who is not an astrologer, soothsayer, or anointer; here the Jews, Samaritans, and Christians are distinct and separate groups. A similar distinction is evident from the declaration (*Historia Augusta*, *Antoninus Heliogabalus* 3.5) of the Emperor Elagabalus, who reigned from 218 to 222, that the religions (*religiones*) of the Jews and the Samaritans and the rites of the Christians must be transferred to the temple which he built on the Palatine Hill in Rome.

2. The Samaritans as a Jewish Sect¹⁸

And yet, there are a number of indications outside of Josephus that the clear-cut division between the Jews and the Samaritans so emphasized by Josephus had not taken place until a later period. The Samaritans themselves, according to their *Sefer Ha-Yamim*, insist that they are the direct descendants of the Joseph tribes, Ephraim and Menasseh, and that they are, in fact, the true Jews. Presumably, they realized that inasmuch as in ancient times there was such great respect for antiquity¹⁹ their legitimacy as a religious movement would be questioned unless they could prove their antiquity. Thus, Coggins²⁰ has noted that the Jewish community at Elephantine in the fifth

century B.C.E. apparently felt no qualms about appealing²¹ to the authorities in both Jerusalem and Samaria, untroubled, it would seem, by the fact that the Jews and the Samaritans were at odds with one another.

It is often stated that the fact that the Samaritans built their own temple on Mount Gerizim brought about the final break with Jerusalem. However, the mere fact that the Samaritans did not accept the Temple in Jerusalem but worshipped at their own temple on Mount Gerizim was in itself not sufficient to have them declared to be non-Jews, as we see in the case of the Temple of Onias in Leontopolis in Egypt. In that case we are told (*Mishnah, Menahoth* 13:10) that while the priests who have ministered there are disqualified from serving in the Temple in Jerusalem the sacrifices themselves in Leontopolis are not to be considered as offerings to idols.²² We may further note, as does Hall,²³ that in no tractate of the *Mishnah* is there the slightest suggestion that the practice of idolatry exists among the Samaritans. Nor, for that matter, do the Samaritans receive any attention in the Talmudic tractate *Avodah Zarah*, which deals with idol worship among non-Jews.

The rabbis themselves were quite clearly ambivalent with regard to the status of the Samaritans, as numerous writers, most recently Schiffman,²⁴ have shown.²⁵ As late as the second century we find a dispute (*Qiddushin* 75b) between Rabbi Akiba, who says that the Samaritans embraced the Torah, that is, converted to Judaism, out of conviction, and Rabbi Ishmael, who declares that they did so out of fear and presumably were not legitimate proselytes, whereupon Rabbi Eliezer offers a midway position in stating that some of them are true proselytes while others are not.²⁶ Somewhat later in the century we find a dispute (*Tosefta, Terumah* 4:12 and 4:14) between Rabbi Judah the Prince and his father Rabbi Simeon II ben Gamaliel II, in which the former declares that a Samaritan is like a non-Jew, whereas the latter insists that he is like a Jew in all respects; the fact that, according to the latter, a Samaritan is *like* a non-Jew indicates that he is really a Jew.

Moreover, the *Mishnah* (*Berakhoth* 7:1) rules that a Samaritan may be counted as one of the three necessary for reciting a special formula in the grace after meals—an indication of their acceptance, *de facto* at least, as Jews. The ambiguous status of Samaritans is reflected in the statement ascribed to the first-century Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (*Mishnah, Qiddushin* 4:3) that one who is of doubtful status, such as a foundling or a Samaritan, may not marry a Jew. Moreover, an anonymous passage in the *Mishnah* (*Kethuboth* 3:1), which may be attributed to the second-century Rabbi Nehuniah ben ha-Qanah,²⁷ requires a monetary penalty from a man who has sexual relations with a Samaritan girl; since non-Jewish girls are excluded from this law,

apparently the Samaritan girl is regarded as Jewish or, at any rate, is not definitely a non-Jew.

That the Samaritans are not non-Jews would seem to be indicated by the anonymous *Mishnah* (*Sheqalim* 1:5), which states that it is not permitted to accept from a non-Jew or a Samaritan the half-shekel which all Jews are required to contribute to the Temple. Schiffman,²⁸ who notes that a similar passage, but not mentioning the Samaritans by name, is to be found in the *Tosefta* (*Sheqalim* 1:7), where it is attributed to the early second-century Rabbi Akiba. He concludes that the reference to the Samaritans was introduced into the *Mishnah* by Rabbi Judah the Prince at the end of the second century, since the view here expressed agrees with that of Judah the Prince, as noted above, in the *Tosefta, Terumah* (4:12, 4:14).

The important point, it would seem, is that the Samaritans, even though they are not treated as Jews, are here enumerated separately from non-Jews. Similarly, when it comes to the question as to whether one can assume that tithes have been taken, the Samaritan is coupled (*Mishnah, Demai* 3:4) with the *'am ha-'aretz*, who is certainly a Jew, albeit one who is not careful in such matters. In both cases, they can be relied upon not to replace the already tithed produce with untithed produce. According to this passage in the *Mishnah*, if produce is left with a non-Jew it is definitely considered to be untithed.

The anonymous ruling (*Tosefta, Pesahim* 2:1), dated to the end of the second century,²⁹ states that Samaritans have an obligation to abstain from eating leaven during Passover and that their leaven, if owned during Passover, may not be eaten by Jews thereafter; we must conclude that the Samaritans, at least so far as this law is concerned, are regarded as Jews or, at any rate, are not regarded as non-Jews, inasmuch as non-Jews are permitted to own leaven during Passover.

The *Mishnah* (*Rosh Hashanah* 2:2) states that "once the Samaritans³⁰ became corrupted," the rabbis decreed that the new month should be announced through messengers rather than through torches. This indicates that the Samaritans had changed in the course of time and that at some time before the end of the second century, when the *Mishnah* was redacted, the Samaritans were apparently more trustworthy. A similar point of view is reflected in the dialogue (*TJ, Avodah Zarah* 5.4.44d) between some Samaritans and Rabbi Abbahu (ca. 300 C.E.). They asked him why he regarded them as Gentiles in all ritual matters whereas the previous generation of Jews had found their food and wine acceptable. His reply was that their fathers had not corrupted

their ways whereas they had. Inasmuch as the wine of Gentiles is prohibited (*Mishnah, Avodah Zarah* 2:3), it would seem that at one time, presumably before the fourth century, the Samaritans were not regarded as non-Jews.

For Josephus, as a priest, the Temple in Jerusalem was central. Even so, there are indications that he is ambivalent on the question of whether the Samaritans are really separate from Jews. Someone who did not worship at the Temple was not excluded, *ipso facto*, from the Jewish fold. We call attention to the fact that the exclusion of the Essenes from the Temple in Jerusalem (*Ant.* 18.19) did not prevent Josephus from including them in every one of his listings (*War* 2.120-161, *Ant.* 13.171, 18.18-22) as one of the sects of the Jews. Furthermore, there is every reason to believe, as Dexinger³¹ remarks, that in Judaism there was more tolerance for non-fulfillment and yet belonging than in a religion such as classical Christianity, where the rational denial of religious truths leads to exclusion.

It would seem significant that Josephus, despite his numerous allusions to the Samaritans, did not regard the difference in the text of the Pentateuch or the rejection of the Oral Torah or the difference in the calendar as being of sufficient importance to even mention them. The fact that the Samaritans had a text of the Pentateuch which differed from that of central authorities of Judaism in Jerusalem in approximately six thousand places³² is not in itself grounds for their being excluded from Judaism. We now see that the Dead Sea Sect had a text of the Torah which likewise differed in numerous places from the text which has come to be known as the Massoretic Text. As to the rejection of the Oral Torah, the same was true of the Sadducees, who are not read out of the Jewish fold but are regarded by Josephus as one of the Jewish sects in each of his enumerations (*War* 2.119, *Ant.* 13.171, 18.16-17). As to having a different calendar--an issue which would seem to be so central in Judaism--the Dead Sea Sect likewise, with their solar calendar, differed but were apparently not read out of the fold.

Furthermore, in Josephus there are indications that the Samaritans looked upon themselves as Jews. In the first place, we may note a significant and--in view of Josephus' anti-Samaritan prejudice--a surprising change in Josephus' paraphrase of the Biblical account of the origin of the Samaritans. Where the Bible (2 Kings 17:33) states that the Cuthaeans feared the Lord but also continued to worship their own gods, in Josephus (*Ant.* 9.289-290), once the Cuthaeans are informed by an oracle that they should worship the Most High God, they ask the king of Assyria to send them some priests from the captive Israelites; and they proceed, after being instructed by them, to worship this God. Hence, this would imply that they had been fully converted to

Judaism. There is thus no indication in Josephus that the Samaritans practiced any kind of syncretism, whereas if there were we would have expected Josephus, in view of his hostility to the Samaritans, which is much stronger in the *Antiquities* than in the *War*, to mention this.

Furthermore, we are told (*Ant.* 9.291) that when the Samaritans see the Jews prospering they call them their kinsmen ("*suggeneis*," that is related by birth), on the ground that they are descended from Joseph and thus are related to them through their common origin, but that when they see that the Jews are in trouble they say that they have nothing in common with them and declare that they are aliens of another race (*alloethneis*). The fact, as noted by Hall,³³ that in neither the *War* nor in the *Antiquities* does he give any examples where the Samaritans, during the century before and after Jesus, deny their kinship to the Jews shows that in Josephus' own day the Samaritans had not yet broken away completely from Judaism, at least in their own perception.

In addition, we hear (*Ant.* 11.85) that when the Jews, after the return from Babylonian captivity, were rebuilding the Temple, the Samaritans approached the chiefs of the Jewish families and asked to have a share in the building. Their argument was that they had been no less loyal than the returning Jews in their worship of God, that is, in effect, that they were sincere converts. Their help is declined on technical grounds, namely that the kings of Persia had granted permission only to the returnees. The very fact, however, that the high priest (*Ant.* 11.87) says that he will allow them to worship in the Temple is evidence that he regarded them as Jews, inasmuch as non-Jews were forbidden to enter the Temple precincts (*War* 5.194, 6.125; *Ant.* 15.417).

The marriage of Manasseh, brother of the high priest, to Nikaso, daughter of Sanballat the Samaritan (*Ant.* 11.302-312), presents another illustration. A close reading of the fact that the elders in Jerusalem considered this marriage a stepping-stone for those who might wish to marry foreigners would indicate that they regarded the marriage itself to be legal. Perhaps they looked upon the Samaritans as one of the groups whom the high priest and his family were forbidden to marry, but they feared that it would lead others to go beyond the law and marry outright foreigners.³⁴

Further indication that the Samaritans were, indeed, part of the Jewish people may be seen in Josephus' explanation (*Ant.* 11.340): when the Samaritans came to court Alexander, they are described as apostates (*apostatou*, "deserters, rebels") from the Jewish nation (*ethnous*), clearly

implying that they were, in origin, part of the Jewish people but that they had defected. We may note that in all the other six (or seven) occasions (*Ant.* 10.220, 221; 11.22, 24; 14.433 [alternate reading]; *Against Apion* 1.135, 136) when Josephus uses the word "apostates," it always refers to a rebel, hence one who is originally part of a nation or empire. The fact that Josephus refers to the Samaritans here as apostates and hence not as foreigners but as heterodox Jews who are, indeed, of Jewish origin seems to be in direct contradiction to his statement elsewhere (*Ant.* 9.290) that they were Cuthaeans from Persia and therefore non-Jews. That Josephus is, however, biased against the Samaritans seems to be evident from the fact that Josephus not only calls them apostates but regards them as liars in that they assert that they are Jews when they see the Jews prospering.

Josephus goes on to say that when the Samaritans saw that Alexander had singularly honored the Jews, they decided to admit (*homologeîn*) that they were Jews. The implication is that the Samaritans really were Jews but that up until that time they had declined to acknowledge it. Josephus, with his anti-Samaritan bias, then proceeds to say (*Ant.* 11.341) that the truth is that they have no kinship with the Jews (clearly implying that others thought that they were related) but that when they see some good fortune come to the Jews, they grasp at the connection (*koinonîai*, "communion, association, partnership") with them, and say that they are related, and trace their descent from Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph.

When, according to Josephus (*Ant.* 11.343-344), Alexander the Great asked them who they were, they replied that they were Hebrews (*Hebraioi*) but were called Sidonians of Shechem. Apparently this answer did not satisfy Alexander, or perhaps it surprised him, since he had been briefed by the Jews to regard them as non-Jews. He asked them again whether they were Jews (*Ioudaioi*).³⁵ Thereupon apparently drawing a distinction between Hebrews (presumably the descendants of Abraham) and Jews (the descendants of Judah in particular), they denied that they were Jews.

A hint that the Samaritans are Jews but rebellious in their views may be gathered from the fact that, according to Josephus (*Ant.* 11.346-347), after Alexander's death whenever anyone was accused by the people of Jerusalem of eating unclean food or violating the Sabbath or committing any other sin, he would flee to the Samaritans, saying that he had been unjustly expelled. It would seem unlikely that a Jew, after being expelled, would feel at home in an environment that was intrinsically removed from Judaism.

Likewise, according to Josephus (*Ant.* 12.257), when the Samaritans saw the Jews suffering misfortunes at the hands of Antiochus Epiphanes in the second century B.C.E., they no longer admitted that they were kin (*sugge-neis*). The implication was that they were really related to them by birth. Similarly, in the *Second Book of Maccabees* (5:22-23), Antiochus Epiphanes regarded the Jews and the Samaritans to be a single group, inasmuch as we read that Antiochus left viceroys to maltreat the people (*to genos*), mentioning viceroys for Jerusalem and Gerizim.³⁶

Again, in the dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans in the presence of Ptolemy Philometor (*Ant.* 13.74-79), it is significant that there is no reference in the remarks of the Jewish representatives to the foreign origin of the Samaritans; and both the Jews and the Samaritans assert that their respective temples had been built in accordance with the same laws of Moses.

Still another indication that they were regarded as Jews is the fact that John Hyrcanus, whose policy it was to convert non-Jews in Palestine to Judaism (*Ant.* 13.257), did not do so with the Samaritans but rather destroyed their temple (*Ant.* 13.281).

The fact that Herod, who was so eager to dispel the innuendoes of his non-Jewish ancestry, married a Samaritan (*War* 1.562, *Ant.* 17.20),³⁷ Malthace, indicates that he felt confident that Jewish public opinion would not look upon her as a non-Jew. Herod (*Ant.* 16.225) showed his regard for Jewish sensibilities by making the marriage of his sister Salome with Syllaeus the Arab conditional upon Syllaeus' conversion to Judaism,³⁸ but he apparently had no fear of adverse reaction on the part of the people to his own marriage to Malthace. There is no indication that Herod made her conversion to Judaism a condition of the marriage nor is there an indication that she converted to Judaism. Presumably she did not have to do so. Furthermore, when the son named Joseph, of Herod's brother, also named Joseph, married Olympias (*War* 1.562, *Ant.* 17.20), the daughter of Herod and Malthace, there is no indication that Herod or his brother insisted on her conversion to Judaism. Nor is there any indication that their daughter Mariamme (*Ant.* 18.134) converted to Judaism to marry Herod, the brother of Agrippa I and the grandson of Herod the Great. Apparently, the reason was that she was already regarded as Jewish.

The fact that Herod (*Ant.* 17.69) appointed a Samaritan named Antipater as his agent to take care of his son, also named Antipater, indicates that relations between Jews and Samaritans were not so strained. Herod, generally careful to avoid antagonizing his subjects without reason, would not have

appointed a Samaritan if the Samaritans were regarded as clearly non-Jewish or if they were utterly hated.

Both Jews and Samaritans objected to Archelaus, son of Herod the Great by the Samaritan Malthace, on other grounds (*War* 2.111, *Ant* 17.342), but there was no objection to him as a non-Jewish king, at least as reported by Josephus, even though the Bible (Deuteronomy 17:15) specifically requires that the king be "one from your brethren," which the Talmud interprets to mean a born Jew.³⁹ Furthermore, there is no indication that Archelaus showed favoritism to the Samaritans; indeed, both Jews and Samaritans complained about him to the Emperor Augustus (*War* 2.111, *Ant*. 17.342).

Relations between Jews and Samaritans were not as strained as would seem evident from the statement in the New Testament (John 4:9) that Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. For example, a contemporary of Jesus, Agrippa I, later to become king of Judaea, was able (*Ant*. 18.167) to borrow the huge sum of a million drachmas from a man of Samaritan origin who happened to be a freedman of the Emperor.

Most recently further evidence has come to light indicating a Samaritan presence at Masada. This suggests that the Samaritans joined the Sicarii in the defense of Masada. Talmon⁴⁰ has now published a papyrus fragment in Samaritan handwriting which was found in a room near the synagogue at Masada. The fragment contains a reference to Mount Gerizim written as a single word, as the Samaritans write it.⁴¹ Inasmuch as it is practically certain that this is a Samaritan fragment, the most likely conclusion is that the Samaritans were among the revolutionaries who co-operated in the defense of Masada.

In summary, the period of the Second Temple was, as Baron⁴² has remarked, without doubt a prolific period in the history of Jewish sects--twenty-four sects, according to the Jerusalem Talmud (*Sanhedrin* 10.6.29c). These sectarian movements show both great strength and variety, and we would have expected Samaritanism to be included as one of these. However, Josephus, like the rabbis, is ambivalent with regard to the Samaritans, at times referring to them as a separate national entity and at other times looking upon them as a variety of Jew. Finally, though the *Antiquities*, written a decade and a half after the *War*, is more strident in its anti-Samaritanism, there is no discernible difference between the two works on the question of whether the Samaritans are or are not an entity separate from the Jews. It would appear that the separation of the Jews and the Samaritans, like that of the Jews and the Christians, was not sudden but took place over a considerable period of

time and was accompanied, as we would guess, since we are talking about Jews, by considerable debate.

Endnotes

1. Despite the profusion of scholarship on the Samaritans (see my *Josephus and Modern Scholarship (1937-1980)* [Berlin, 1984], 528-541, 946), there has been nothing like a systematic attempt to assess Josephus' attitude toward the question of whether they were or were not part of the Jewish people. James A. Montgomery, in entitling his fundamental work *The Samaritans: The Earliest Jewish Sect* (Philadelphia, 1907), came to a premature conclusion. Recently Rita Egger, *Josephus Flavius und die Samaritaner: Eine terminologische Untersuchung zur Identitätsklärung der Samaritaner* (Freiburg and Göttingen, 1986), after systematically examining all the passages in Josephus in which he refers to Samaritans and the people who inhabited Samaria, concludes that Josephus knew that the Samaritans were not identical with the other people who lived in Samaria but that confusion was created, at least in part, by his assistants and by the translation of his work from the original Aramaic into Greek. We may respond, however, that the major references to the Samaritans are in the *Antiquities*, and that it is in the *War* and not in the *Antiquities*, as we learn from Josephus himself (*Against Apion* 1.50), that Josephus had assistants. She concludes that Josephus himself, contrary to the view generally held by scholars, was not anti-Samaritan but rather viewed the Samaritans as part of the Jewish people and was objective in commenting on them; on the other hand, he was anti-Samaritan and regarded their ancestors as Persians who had settled in Samaria. But, as Egger herself admits, Josephus sometimes uses "Samaritans" for both of these groups, and it would seem that Jews deliberately obscured the difference in their desire to distance themselves from both. Moreover, if, as Josephus (*Life* 12) asserts, after experimenting with the other sects, he chose to identify with the Pharisees, we would certainly expect that he would adopt the strong anti-Samaritan stance that, on the whole, marked the Pharisaic attitude, based primarily on their refusal to accept the Oral Torah and the primacy of Jerusalem.

2. Diodorus Siculus (19.9), in the name of Jerome of Cardia, speaks of the asceticism, particularly the prohibition of drinking wine, of the Nabataeans at the end of the fourth century B.C.E. in language very similar to that used by Jeremiah in describing the Rechabites. Moreover, the *Mishnah* (*Ta'anith* 4:5) indicates that the seventh of the month of Ab was reserved for the wood offering of the family of Yonadab, the son of Rechab, the founder of the group, thus indicating that the family still survived; and we hear (*Genesis Rabbah* 98.13) that Jose ben Halaftha, in the second century, claimed to be a direct descendant of the Rechabites. But there is no indication that the Rechabites survived as an organized sect.

3. To these may probably be added the reference in Ecclesiasticus 50:25-26 to the foolish people who dwell in Shechem, who, says the author, are no nation [*ethnos*]. The general interpretation, as Ferdinand Dexinger, "Limits of Tolerance in Judaism: The Samaritan Example," in E. P. Sanders et al. eds., *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, vol. 2:

Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period (Philadelphia, 1981), 104 and 335, n. 92, remarks, is that the Samaritans are here referred to.

4. The Samaritans are here mentioned as having burned the Macedonian governor, Andromachus, who had been placed in charge of Syria during Alexander the Great's sojourn in Egypt. According to Curtius Rufus, those Samaritans who were responsible were punished by Alexander after his return in 331 B.C.E. Because we know from Josephus (*Ant.* 11.321-345) that the Samaritans and the Jews went to great lengths in vying with one another in courting Alexander's favor, we may assume that Curtius Rufus knew enough to distinguish the two groups.

5. See Frank M. Cross, "The Discovery of the Samaria Papyri," *Biblical Archaeologist* 26 (1963): 110-121; "Aspects of Samaritan and Jewish History in Late Persian and Hellenistic Times," *Harvard Theological Review* 59 (1966): 201-211; and "Papyri of the Fourth Century B.C. from Daliyeh," in David N. Freedman and Jonas C. Greenfield, eds., *New Directions in Biblical Archaeology* (Garden City, 1969), 60-64.

6. See the discussion by R. J. Coggins, "Samaritan Traditions," in his *Samaritans and Jews: The Origins of Samaritanism Reconsidered* (Atlanta, 1975), 116-131.

7. Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. 1 (New York and Philadelphia, 1952), 168, is incorrect when he states that next to the Jews the Samaritans are the only group in Palestine's heterogeneous population to merit the designation *ethnos* in Josephus' *Antiquities*. The term is also found with reference to the Idumaeans (*War* 1.123, *Ant.* 14.300), the Philistines (*War* 5.384), the Moabites (*Ant.* 1.206, 10.182), the Canaanites (*Ant.* 3.301, 4.3, 4.300, 5.49, 5.55, 5.58, 5.88), the Amalekites (*Ant.* 6.138, 9.188), and the Ituraeans (*Ant.* 13.319).

8. Dexinger (1981), n. 3, 103, argues that the use of this term indicates that the Samaritans regard themselves as fellow countrymen of Jews, but a closer look at the context indicates that the fellow countrymen are either Manasseh's fellow countrymen or perhaps (if we read *heautoi*) his own fellow countrymen, but with no indication that the Jews and Samaritans are fellow countrymen.

9. Stanley J. Isser, *The Dositheans: A Samaritan Sect in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 1976), 5-11, argues that this narrative is clearly not historical but a typological legend: the story of rivals arguing before a ruler on condition that the loser be put to death.

10. Menachem Mor, "Samaritan History: The Persian, Hellenistic and Hasmonaean Period," in Alan D. Crown, ed., *The Samaritans* (Tübingen, 1989), 15.

11. James D. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect* (Cambridge, Mass. 1968), 112-113, speculates that perhaps the Samaritans supported the Maccabean revolt and notes that, according to Samaritan traditions, there were three significant religious movements in Palestine during the Hasmonaean period, namely the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Hasidim, and that the last of these was made up of Samaritans. According to 1 Maccabees (2:42), at the beginning of the revolt, Mattathias

received the support of the Hasideans or Hasidim. Purvis suggests two other possibilities, namely that the Samaritans might have been dealt with harshly by Judas or that the silence of Josephus at this point indicates that the Samaritans were of no great concern to Judas.

12. R. J. Coggins, "The Samaritans in Josephus," in Louis H. Feldman and Gobei Hata, eds., *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity* (Detroit, 1987), 267, is here unnecessarily skeptical about the translation "Samaritans," and says that the Greek word here, *Samareusin*, may also mean "Samaritans," that is, merely inhabitants of Samaria, many of whom, of course, were not Samaritans.

13. Coggins, 267, is consequently mistaken when he declares that all the allusions to the Samaritans in the period of Roman rule that have survived imply that they were a religious group within the broader spectrum of Judaism.

14. Coggins, 267-268, objects to my translation (*Josephus*, vol. 9, Loeb Classical Library [London, 1965], 61) of the word "ethnos" as used by Josephus with regard to the Samaritans (*Ant.* 18.85) by "nation," arguing that this seems too limited and precise; he says that "people" would probably convey the sense more satisfactorily. But if my appraisal of this particular incident is correct, it is precisely a political uprising that Josephus is describing; and the Samaritans themselves certainly looked upon themselves as a nation, albeit a nation in subjection. In an unpublished paper, "Josephus on Jewish-Samaritan Relations under Roman Rule (63 B.C.E. - 70 C.E.)," which he has been kind enough to send me, Aryeh Kasher argues that the Samaritans were armed not because of fear of the Roman procurator but rather because of their desire to take precautions against a possible attack by their domestic rivals, the citizens of the Sebasteian *polis*. But we may remark that the fact that they had been gathered by a messianic-like leader would indicate that their aim was nothing less than complete independence.

15. Coggins, 268.

16. Seth Schwartz, *Josephus and Judaeon Politics* (Leiden, 1990), 83, n. 100. We may note that the whole incident is omitted from the account of Pilate's procuratorship in the *War* (2.169-177). That Josephus is more favorably inclined toward the Samaritans in the *War* than in the *Antiquities* may also be seen in the fact that he omits from his account of Coponius' procuratorship in the *War* (2.117-118) the incident, so damning to the Samaritans, of the scattering of human bones in the Temple precincts by the Samaritans (*Ant.* 18.29-30). Similarly, a comparison of the account in the *War* (2.232-246) with the account in the *Antiquities* (20.118-136) of the conflict between the Galileans and the Samaritans during the procuratorship of Cumanus reveals the same greater damning of the Samaritans in the *Antiquities*; thus, for example, in the *War* (2.233) Cumanus treats the request of the Jews to punish the Samaritan murderers as less important than other affairs on his hands, whereas in the *Antiquities* (20.119) Cumanus is actually bribed by the Samaritans and consequently neglects to punish them.

17. To be sure, Ronald Syme, *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta* (Oxford, 1968), 219, argues at length that the *Historia Augusta* is a historical romance by a fraudulent author, but he admits (177) that a wealth of valuable details can be disengaged from it. The author, he remarks (204), "comports himself as the new Suetonius, and he enters into competition with the historians, modestly adding novel and precise detail, the product of scholarly research."

18. Coggins, see n. 12 above, 258, says that it is certainly possible that the fact that Samaria is included in Josephus' description of Jewish territory (*War* 3.48-50) is evidence that the Samaritans were not distinguished from the rest of the Jews except insofar that they were heterodox. But we may counter by saying that the fact that Samaria is included in Jewish territory does not mean that there was no separation between Samaritans and Jews. Rather, this indicates that the province of Samaria was in Jewish hands.

19. Cf. the remark of Celsus (ap. Origen, *Against Celsus* 1.14) equating "ancient" with "wise." Indeed, for Celsus, as Henry Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement, and Origen* (New York, 1966), 23, remarks, it is axiomatic that nothing can be both new and true. Hence, Origen's repeated insistence in that treatise that Christianity is not new but rather a continuation of Judaism.

20. Coggins, see n. 12 above, 264.

21. See James R. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 3rd ed. (Princeton, 1969), 492.

22. It is also possible that there was a temple at 'Araq el-Emir in Transjordan. A palace built there by Hyrcanus of the House of Tobias in the early part of the second century B.C.E. that has been excavated has been thus identified by Paul W. Lapp, "The Second and Third Campaigns at 'Araq-el-Emir," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 171 (1963): 8-39; and by Edward F. Campbell, "Jewish Shrines of the Hellenistic and Persian Periods," in Frank M. Cross, ed., *Symposia Celebrating the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the American Schools of Oriental Research 1900-1975* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), 162-164. Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford, 1978), disputes this view, inasmuch as, he says, it does not fit in with the historical circumstances of that time, since, unlike Leontopolis, which was some distance away from Jerusalem, 'Araq el-Emir was not. But, in any case, we do not hear anywhere that those who built such a temple or sacrificed there are declared to be non-Jews.

23. Bruce W. Hall, *Samaritan Religion from John Hyrcanus to Baba Rabba: A Critical Examination of the Relevant Material in Contemporary Christian Literature, the Writings of Josephus, and the Mishnah* (Sydney, 1987), 302.

24. Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Samaritans in Tannaitic Halakah," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 75 (1984-85): 323-350.

25. A major difficulty in considering the question of the rabbinic attitude toward the Samaritans is that in the printed editions of rabbinic texts. Christian censors substituted the word "*Kuthim*" (i.e. Samaritans) for various terms for non-Jews. See William Popper, *The Censorship of Hebrew Books* (New York, 1969), 59.

26. In the tractate *Kuthim* (Higger, 66) even Rabbi Ishmael agrees that originally the Samaritans were genuine proselytes.

27. See Schiffman, 333.

28. Schiffman, 337.

29. See Schiffman, 348.

30. The Cambridge manuscript has "*ha-minim*" rather than "Samaritans," but, as Schiffman, 345, n. 85, remarks, this must be an error.

31. Cf. Dexinger, 112: "Put in Christian theological terms, this would mean that Judaism can have not only a church of sinners as in Christianity, but also a 'church' of heretics."

32. Most of these are, to be sure, superficial and often merely of an orthographical nature, but there are a number of variants of a more fundamental kind. See Martin J. Muller, "The Transmission of the Biblical Text" in Martin J. Muller and Harry Sysling, eds., *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Assen, 1988), 95-96.

33. Hall, 167.

34. See Schiffman, 334.

35. A similar distinction is apparently made by Theodotus, the author of an epic poem, which, according to Alexander Polyhistor (fragment 1, lines 3, 5-6, as cited by Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.22.1), is entitled "On the Jews" (*Peri Ioudaion*); but in the poem itself the term used to describe the Jewish people, both in his own summary of the contents (fragment 2, line 1, as cited by Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.22.2) and in the lines of poetry actually quoted from Theodotus (fragment 4, line 18, as cited by Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.22.6), is not "Jews" but "Hebrews" (*Hebraioi*). It is usually said that Theodotus was a Samaritan, inasmuch as the poem seems to be preoccupied with Shechem, the "sacred city" (fragment 1, line 16, as cited by Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.22.1) of the Samaritans; but this view is no longer unchallenged, and there is good reason to think that the author was a Hellenistic Jew. For an exhaustive summary of the arguments on this issue see Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, vol. 2: *Poets* (Atlanta, 1989), 58-68.

36. This is the conclusion of Morton Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics That Shaped the Old Testament* (New York, 1971), 189-190.

37. We may guess that Herod favored Samaritans because they had a common enemy, the Hasmoneans. In the case of the Samaritans, they apparently had not forgotten that it was the Hasmonean king John Hyrcanus who had razed their temple on Mount Gerizim.

38. Aryeh Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans and Ancient Arabs: Relations of the Jews in Eretz-Israel with the Nations of the Frontier and the Desert during the Hellenistic and Roman Era (332 BCE-70 CE)* (Tübingen, 1988), 163-164, argues that Herod's motive in insisting on Syllaeus' conversion was not consideration for public opinion in Judaea but rather a clever stratagem, namely his hope to demonstrate his senior status in the political partnership which was about to be formed between Syllaeus and himself. Syllaeus' reason, namely that if he submitted to conversion he would be stoned to death by the Arabs, was just an excuse, says Kasher. However, if we may judge from the similar statement (*Ant.* 20.39) by Helena, the mother of Izates of Adiabene, that his conversion would produce much disaffection among his subjects, presumably because it would entail denying all other deities, we may, it would seem, take Syllaeus' explanation at face value. Kasher, in his unpublished paper (above, n.14), says that Herod should not be suspected of wishing to respect Jewish religious law in that he did not even refrain (*Antiquities* 15.253-254) from giving his blessing to the marriage of his sister Salome to Costobar the Idumaeen, an idolater dedicated to the Cos rite. But a close examination of the passage in Josephus shows that it was not Costobar but his ancestors (*Antiquities* 15.253) who had been priests of the Cos (*Koze*) rite. Moreover, Josephus (*Antiquities* 15.254) states that Hyrcanus a century earlier had altered the way of life of the Idumaeans and had forced them to adopt the customs and laws of the Jews, that is, he had converted them forcibly to Judaism. Hence, Costobar was, it would seem, a Jew at the time of his marriage to Salome.

39. That this law was clearly meaningful at this time is to be seen from the rabbinic passage (*Mishnah, Sotah* 7:8) that when Agrippa I, a generation later, reached this passage in Deuteronomy, he burst into tears, presumably because he was part-Edomite.

40. Shmaryahu Talmon, "Fragments of Scrolls from Masada," *Eretz-Israel* 20 (1989): 283-284, (in Hebrew). Talmon, in a letter to the author for which I am grateful, notes that Yigael Yadin, the excavator of Masada, did not identify the fragment as Samaritan but rather suggested that its lettering be compared with the writing on the coins from the revolt. To date none of the fragments found at Masada has been submitted to a Carbon 14 test, and there is no plan to do so. The technique cannot be easily applied to very small fragments, inasmuch as some of the material is destroyed in the process. In addition, the margin of error is too large when one is concerned with comparatively restricted time spans. A new method of applying the Carbon 14 test has been used on some Qumran fragments which allows for a margin of error of no more than 25 or 30 years, but the results of these tests, taken in July, 1990, have not yet been made known. As to palaeographical criteria, they cannot be easily established, since we have no examples of the early Samaritan script on soft material. Lapidary inscriptions from Mount Gerizim which are available cannot easily be compared with the Masada papyrus, inasmuch as the writing technique is very different. Talmon cautiously declines to conclude from this small find that the Samaritans joined the Sicarii in the defense of

Masada, though he is convinced of a Samaritan presence at Masada, just as the fragment of *Shirot Olat Hashabbat* found at Masada, as well as some other small fragments which he has published, appear to indicate the presence of Qumranians at Masada. Pummer, in a letter to the author for which I am grateful, has expressed doubt as to whether the writing on this papyrus is distinctively Samaritan. He thinks that the writing is a palaeo-Hebrew script that was used in other writings of the time from Qumran.

41. For a similar spelling see the inscription discovered in 1979 in Delos and published by Pierre Bruneau, "Les Israélites de Delos et la juiverie délienne," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénistique* 106 (1982): 465-504; and commented upon by A. Thomas Kraabel, "New Evidence of the Samaritan Diaspora Has Been Found on Delos," *Biblical Archaeologist* 47 (1984): 44-46; and "Synagoga Caeca: Systematic Distortion in Gentile Interpretations of Evidence for Judaism in the Early Christian Period," in Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs, eds., *To See Ourselves as Others See Us: Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (Chicago, 1985), 220-224. Reinhard Pummer, "Argarizim: A Criterion for Samaritan Provenance?," however, argues that the mere fact that Mount Gerizim is written as a single word, "*Hargerizim*," is not necessarily proof of Samaritan provenance, especially since the *Vetus Latina*, which is certainly not a Samaritan document, twice (2 Maccabees 5:23 and 6:2) has the form "*Argarizim*," and since the fragments of Giessen papyri (13, 19, 22, 26), which most probably do not belong to the Samareitikon, have the form "*Argarizim*." I wish to express my gratitude to Reinhard Pummer for calling my attention to his article on this subject.

42. Baron, *A Social and Religious History*, see n. 7 above, 2.26.