

THE STRAINED RELATION BETWEEN SAMARITANS AND JEWS IN THE WORKS OF FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS

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Abstract: The strained relation between Samaritans and Jews as a fruit of long-term process from the division of the United Kingdom of Israel (ca. 931 B.C.E) became a dominant issue since the post-exilic period and became more pronounced in the first century C.E. Beside the Old Testament, the story of their relation which was full of conflict can be traced to extra-biblical sources. One of them is Flavius Josephus' works (ca. 70 to 100 C.E), i.e., *Jewish War* and *Jewish Antiquities*. The root of the conflict is related to the presence of the Second Jerusalem Temple. The peak of the conflict is the construction of the Mount Gerizim temple in which some Jews regarded the adherents of the Samaritan cult as schismatic. The founding of this rival temple of Jerusalem aggravated the bad relations between Samaritans and Jews. The destruction of the Mount Gerizim temple by John Hyrcanus was a crucial incident for their relations. The conflict between Samaritans and Jews still continued in the Roman period. By historical approach, this study would set forth the examination of some Josephus' accounts regarding the historical process of the estrangement and rivalry between Samaritans and Jews which resulted in the final split in second century B.C.E.

Keywords: Samaritans, Jews, Flavius Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, Temple, Jerusalem, Mount Gerizim.

Abstrak: Relasi tegang antara orang Samaria dan Yahudi merupakan buah dari proses yang panjang sejak pecahnya Kerajaan Israel Raya (931 B.C.E). Relasi mereka ini menjadi masalah dominan sejak periode setelah pembuangan dan semakin jelas pada abad pertama masehi. Di samping Perjanjian Lama, kisah tentang relasi mereka yang penuh konflik

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dapat dilacak dalam sumber-sumber di luar Alkitab. Salah satunya adalah karya dari Flavius Josephus (ca. 70 to 100 M), yaitu Perang Yahudi dan Sejarah Yahudi. Akar dari konflik itu adalah kehadiran Bait Allah Yerusalem Kedua. Puncak dari konflik itu adalah pembangunan Bait Allah di Gunung Gerizim dimana sejumlah orang Yahudi kemudian menganggap pengikut ibadah orang Samaria sebagai skismatis. Pendirian tandingan Bait Allah Yerusalem ini memperparah relasi buruk antara Samaria dan Yahudi. Penghancuran Bait Allah di Gunung Gerizim oleh Yohanes Hyrcanus menjadi insiden krusial bagi relasi mereka. Konflik antara orang Samaria dan Yahudi masih terus berlangsung pada periode Romawi. Dengan pendekatan historis, studi ini akan memaparkan penelitian kisah-kisah dari karya Josephus berkaitan dengan proses perpecahan dan persaingan antara orang Samaria dan Yahudi memuncak pada perpecahannya pada abad II SM.

Kata-kata Kunci: Samaria, Yahudi, Flavius Josephus, Sejarah Yahudi, Bait Allah, Yerusalem, Gunung Gerizim.

INTRODUCTION

In the first century of the Common Era, the relations between Samaritans and Jews were strained. The root of the problem is the dispute of the proper place of worship to God which was claimed by both of them. That is to say, both the Samaritans and the Jews were entangled in the competing claims of the Jewish temple at Jerusalem and the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, wherever their communities lived alongside each other, either in Palestine or in Diaspora.

At that time, the Samaritans could argue that sacrificial worship on Mount Gerizim had been commanded by God through Moses and instituted by Joshua. This claim was confirmed by the Samaritan version of the Decalogue which may have contained in its last commandment the explicit command to worship with sacrifices on Mount Gerizim.¹ In the same time, however, the Jews also defended their claim that Jerusalem

1 There is no doubt that the Decalogue has a special significance for the Samaritans as it has for the Jews. Regarding the emendation of the text of the Samaritan Decalogue, Ferdinand Dexinger notes as follows. "Massoretic Exodus-Decalogue (Exod 20:1-21)

temple on Mount Zion was the proper place of worship to God. Hence, it is obvious that a sort of rivalry of two centers of worship to the same God coloured the relations between Samaritans and Jews. It has to be noted from the first however that such a rivalry was not the result of a moment, but a fruit of long-term process which began at least with the division of the kingdom (ca. 931 B.C.E) which had given birth to the antithesis between North and South, between Israel and Judah. This rivalry, which was a dominant issue since the post-exilic period, seems to revive such an antithesis in the first century C.E.

In the New Testament (henceforth, NT) in particular the Gospel of Luke and the Fourth Gospel also echo such a rivalry. Some obvious instances could be seen in the Lucan narrative of the rejection of Samaritan villagers against Jesus in journeying to Jerusalem (Luke 9:52-56) and the famous passage from the Fourth Gospel, i.e., the conversation between Jesus and a Samaritan woman at Sychar (John 4:4-42). The NT writings however simply depict a little bit of how their rivalry actually was. Besides, they do not speak of the origin and the process at all.

The best way to understand better the background of some passages in the NT is to find reference to extra-biblical sources related to the NT. One of them is Flavius Josephus' works. He was composing his works in the contemporary period of the NT authors (ca. 70 to 100 C.E). Two of all his works, i.e., *Jewish War*² and *Jewish Antiquities*³ contain a number of

is expanded in the Samaritan Pentateuch by insertion of Exod 13:11a; Deut 11:29b; 27:2b-3a, 4-7; 11:30 (after Exod 20: 17 MT) and Deut 5:24-27 (after Exod 20:18 MT) and Deut 5:28b-29; 18:18-22; 5:30-31 (after Exod 20:21 MT). The inclusion of the Gerizim verses (Dt. 27:2b-3a; 4-7;11:30) meets Samaritan interest alone. The *Sitz im Leben* for the insertion of the Gerizim commandment probably was the situation shortly after the Hasmonean destruction of the Samaritan temple in the second century B.C.E. The insertion itself might have taken place around the beginning of the Christian era." Cf. Ferdinand Dexinger, "Decalogue." In *A Companion to Samaritan Studies*, eds. A.D. Crown, R. Pummer, and A. Tal (Tübingen, 1993), p. 68.

- 2 *War* is Josephus' earlier work, written not long after the Jewish War of 66-70 C.E. On completion, Josephus presented it to Vespasian and Titus (*Ag. Ap.* 1:51). Since the work mentions the erection of the Temple of Peace in Rome (*War* 7.158-162) and since it is known from Cassius Dio (*Historia Romana* 66.15) that the temple was dedicated in 75 C.E., Josephus must have written between years 75 and 79 C.E., the latter being the year of Emperor Vespasian's death. Cf. Reinhard Pummer, *The*

narrative of the rivalry between Samaritans and Jews. Thus, it is undeniable that Josephus' works can be employed as an instrument to understand the historical background of some NT passages of the relations between Samaritans and Jews.⁴

The method I would apply in this study is first of all historical approach. I will begin this study by setting forth the examination of some Josephus' accounts regarding the historical process of the estrangement and rivalry between Samaritans and Jews which lasted until the final split in second century B.C.E.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SAMARITANS IN ANT. 9. 288-291 AND 2 KINGS 17:24-41

The first passage in *Antiquities* in which Josephus mentions Samareitai is *Ant.* 9.288-291, Josephus' version of 2 Kings 17.24-41. Here, Josephus speaks of the origin of the Samaritans, connected to the settlement the Cutheans in Samaria. The context of his narrative is some events after the downfall of the Israelite northern kingdom in 722/1 B.C.E in Assyrian period. It should be noted that Josephus neither connects the Samaritans with the wicked kings of the North, nor does he show any acquaintance with the Samaritan tradition — preserved in later Samaritan chronicles—that situates the parting of the ways between Samaritans and Jews in the time of Eli—riest and judge.⁵ Beside spelling out the origins of the Samaritans, Josephus also appears to underline the Samaritans in relation to the rites carried out by them (*Ant.* 9.290).

Samaritans in Flavius Josephus (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 129; Tübingen, 2009), pp. 60-61.

- 3 Josephus completed *Antiquities* in the thirteenth year of Emperor Domitian, when he was in the fifty sixth year of his life (*Ant.* 20.267), i.e., in 93/94 C.E. Cf. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 62.
- 4 It is noteworthy that Josephus' works are not the only extra-biblical sources which speak of the relations between Samaritans and Jews. In general, beside Josephus' works, at least there are eight types of sources dealing with the Samaritans, i.e., the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament), pagan writers, the New Testament, Church Fathers, the Talmudic, Rabbinic writings, inscriptions, and the writings of the Samaritans themselves.
- 5 Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 259.

There is no doubt that in narrating the origin of the Samaritans, Josephus had paraphrased the biblical story. Although the outline of Josephus' story is a little more similar to that of biblical story, some differences can still be found. Before examining Josephus' paraphrase in *Ant.* 9.288-291, however, it is better to see briefly the story of the origin of the Samaritans in 2 Kings 17. In biblical version, the Samaritan origin is linked to the captives whom the Assyrians had transferred from Babylon, Chutah, Avva, Hammat, and Sepharvaim to Israel's northern parts to repopulate the land. As a result of lions (2 Kings 17:26), the new settlers were forced to worship the God of Israel. At the same time, they also continued to worship the idols which they had brought with them from their native cities. Consequently, a syncretism in which the practice of pagan religion was mixed with Yahwist religion, which they acquired from the poor peasant Israelites who were left behind in the land, emerged (2 Kings 17:41). On the basis of this tradition, these syncretistic worshipers were considered to be the ancestors of the Samaritans.

In biblical scholarship, it is generally accepted that 2 Kings 17:24-41 is a composite account which is neither an accurate description of the events following the Assyrian conquest of Samaria, nor can it be used to explain the make-up of the population in Israel. The historical reality in both cases was different. In any case, the material in 2 Kings 17 still remains as the main source of Josephus' story. Besides, it is still not clear whether 2 Kings 17 is speaking of the political or religious dimension. However, so far as 2 Kings 17 speaks of the origins and organization of those who came to settle in the territory of the old northern kingdom, it has an underlying political dimension.⁶ The evidence of such dimension can be inferred from the name *הַשָּׁמֶרִיטִים* (MT) / *Σαμαρείται* (LXX) (2 Kings 17:29) which most likely means "Samaritans" which refers to the inhabitants in the north.⁷

⁶ Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 259.

⁷ The name *הַשָּׁמֶרִיטִים* occurs only here in the Old Testament. Some often translate it "the Samaritans." The translation "the Samaritans" is probably also found a reference in LXX which reads *οἱ Σαμαρείται*. The LXX translation also occurs in Josephus and the

In addition, the biblical account never mentions specifically Cutheans as the name of people. It is only said “the people from Cuthah” rather than the Cutheans. According to 2 Kings 17:24-29, the people from Cuthah is basically simply one of the people who are subjected by the policy of forced migration. Since they were brought into the region replacing the deportees which primarily were the aristocracy within the city of Samaria, it can be supposed that they were a minority.⁸

Josephus’ story of the origin of the Samaritans focuses on *Ant.* 9.288-290. In this section, Josephus actually resumes his account of the replacement population established by the Assyrians in the former territory of Israel, begun by him in *Ant.* 9.297 (2 Kings 17:24) “And after removing other nations from a region called Chutos — there is a river by this name in Persia -, he (i.e., Shalmaneser) settled them in Samaria and in the country of the Israelites”); and interrupted by the extended intervening segment (9:280-287) dealing with the dating of the Israel’s demise in relation to the other significant biblical event (9: 280-282) and the extra-biblical documentation concerning Samaria’s conqueror, Shalmaneser (9:283-287).⁹

In *Ant.* 9.288-291, Josephus would show that the Samaritans are the descendants of foreigners (the Cutheans) who had been brought from outside of Palestine to Samaria by the Assyrians. They are clearly distinct from the Jews. But, at the same time, they were the true converts to the Jewish religion because they eventually worshiped “the Most High God.” In this connection, Josephus’ portrayal of the Samaritans in *Ant.* 9.288-291 shows itself to be more positive than does the source i.e., 2 Kings 17: 17:24-41. In addition, it must be noted, as Pummer argues, that Josephus’ remarks about the origin and nature of the Samaritans

NT. Nonetheless, considering the context of the passage, the proper meaning probably refers to the Samaritans as an inhabitant of the land of Samaria.

8 Cf. Anderson, R. T., Giles, T. *The Keepers. And Introduction to the History and Culture of the Samaritans* (Peabody: MA, 2002), pp. 15-16.

9 Cf. Begg, C.T and Spilsbury, P., eds., *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary* (Vol. 5 Judean Antiquities Book 8-10), edited by Steven Mason (Leiden, Boston: MA, 2005), p. 202.

were meant not only as a portrayal of the Samaritans in the Assyrian period, but also in the first century C.E.¹⁰

THE BEGINNING OF THE STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN SAMARITANS AND JEWS IN *ANT.* 11.84-108 AND EZRA 4

The importance of examining *Ant.*11.84-108 is to see how Josephus describes the beginning of the tension between Samaritans and Jews prior to the construction of the Samaritan Temple. In this section, Josephus shows that the tension emerged in the Persian period when the Jewish exiles came back to Judah to rebuild their temple as well as a new Jewish community in Jerusalem. Josephus' story is based on the biblical account, namely, Ezra 4/ 1 Esdras 5:63-70.¹¹ Before examining Josephus' story, it is better to see briefly the story of the tension in Ezra 4.

Ezra 4 sets forth the conflict between the Northerners and the returned exiles at Jerusalem in the contexts of the rebuilding of Jerusalem Temple. It is stated that the Northerners has initiative to participate in the building of the Temple (cf. Ezr 4:2). But, the Returnees reject it with the reason that it is only the Jews that have privilege to build the Temple (cf. Ezr.4:3). Subsequently, the Northerners attempt to stop the progress of the building of the Temple (cf. Ezr.4:4-5).

It has to be noted that the biblical account contains no direct reference to the Samaritans nor any reflection of the tension between Samaritans and Jews in the context of religious group. This is affirmed

10 Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 80.

11 In this regard, it is important to take attention of what Pummer argues. He suggests that in his narratives about Samaritans and their antagonism to the returnees, Josephus bases his narratives on 1 Esd. 5:63-70. The only exceptions are an addition, in 114-119, which has no parallel in the Bible, and 174-175 which are based on Neh.4:1. The text of 1 Esdras underlying Josephus account is very close to that of the LXX. That Josephus follows 1 Esdras 2-9 - rather than the canonical Book of Ezra - in *Ant.* 11:1-58, the story of Ezra, is generally accepted. He does not reproduces 1 Esdras verbatim, but paraphrases and modifies it. Cf. Pummer, *the Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, 81. I prefer to explore Ezra 4 rather than 1 Esd. 5:63-70 for the study of this section simply to show the point of the pivotal point of the beginning of the estrangement between Samaritans and Jews.

by the fact that the author does not make specific the identity of the adversaries. They are simply called with the labels “adversaries of Judah and Benjamin”¹² and “the people of the land.”¹³ Thus, the tension depicted in Ezra 4 refers more to a political rather than religious tension between the Northerners and the Returnees at Jerusalem.¹⁴

By contrast, in his paraphrase of Ezra’s story, in *Ant.*11.84 Josephus instead explicitly specifies the Samaritans as “those who hates the tribe of Judah and Benjamin.” He does not cite any reason for their hatred.¹⁵ Likewise, Josephus also replaces the term “people of the land” by the term “Cutheans//Samaritans” in *Ant.*11.88 (the Cutheans by which the Samaritans have this appellation). It is not easy to determine Josephus’ reason to paraphrase “adversaries of Judah and Benjamin” and “the people of the land” with “the Cutheans (the Samaritans).” Most likely, Josephus intended to make clear the biblical accounts which was much less precise. As a result, his paraphrase instead reflects the anti-Samaritan polemic in Josephus.

According to Josephus, the starting-point of the tension between Samaritans and Jews begins when the Samaritans claim the right to share in rebuilding of the Second Temple of Jerusalem and its worship (*Ant.* 11.85-88). However, their request was eventually rejected by the Jewish leaders on the grounds that they alone had received authorization from Persian authorities to carry out the rebuilding of the temple. Despite

12 These adversaries can be identified as descendants of foreigners forcibly resettled in the region of Samaria after the incorporation of the Northern Kingdom into the Assyrian empire in the late eighth century.

13 In Ezra-Nehemiah the terms “the peoples of the land” (Ezr 10:2, 11 Neh.9:24; 10:31-32(30-31) or the “the peoples of the lands” (Ezr 3:3; 9:1-2,11; Neh. 9:30) refer to the inhabitants of either Judah or neighboring provinces (Samaria, Idumea, etc.) who are outside the *golah* community.

14 Cf. R. J. Coggins. “The Old Testament and Samaritan Origins.” In *ASTI* 6 (1968), p. 43.

15 Pummer suggests that the reason of their hatred can be traced back in the previous sections. The events described in *Ant.* 11.61 (Darius orders “Idumaeans and Samaritans and those in Coele-Syria to give up the villages which they had taken from the Jews and now held, and that an additional fifty talents should be given for the building of the temple) and *Ant.* 11.76 (the annoyance that Judah’s neighbours felt when the returnees built an altar in Jerusalem) have something to do with the Samaritan hatred. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, 88.

that, the Jews offered the Samaritans the right to worship in the temple when it was completed. But, this reply, presented by Josephus as a generous offer, was interpreted by the Samaritans as a rebuff. In their indignation, they then attempted to prevent the rebuilding temple by making alliance with “the nation of Syria” (*Ant.* 11.88-89). Here, Josephus presents that the Samaritans prefers to associate themselves with the heathen rather than to acknowledge God’s true community. They then attempted to persuade the Persian authorities to withdraw the permission given to the Jerusalem community to rebuild the temple (*Ant.* 11.97). Finally, their schemes were in vain and the Jerusalem temple was rebuilt (*Ant.* 11.106-108). In brief, the rebuff of the Jewish leaders and the attempt of the Samaritans to prevent the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple, can be regarded as the beginning of the tension between Samaritans and Jews.

The point to be noted here is that in indirect way, Josephus demonstrates that the root of the tension is related to the presence of the Second Jerusalem Temple. From now on Josephus never leaves the pivotal role of the temple in his accounts concerning the tension between Samaritans and Jews.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MOUNT GERIZIM TEMPLE (*ANT.* 11. 302-347)

The leading events to the establishment of the Samaritan temple can actually be traced back to the Persian period. According to Josephus, Darius of Persia (Darius III, 336-331 B.C.E, not Darius II, 423-404 B.C.E) sent to Samaria a man named Sanballat to be satrap, a Cuthean by birth, from which were the Samaritans also descended.¹⁶ Apparently, in order to cement goodwill with the Jews in Jerusalem, this Sanballat gave his daughter Nikaso to a certain Manasses (Manaseh), the brother of the

16 The remark about Sanballat and the *Σαμαρείς* being descended from Cuthean race occurs only here in the narrative. Literally, this phrase should be translated “Cuthean by birth from which the *Samaritans* also descended.” However, most translation renders *Σαμαρείς* here as Samaritans.

high priest, Jaddus (Jaddua) (*Ant.* 11.302-312).¹⁷Regarding this marriage, Pummer suggests that the reasons why Sanballat gave his daughter to Manasses were that “he knew that Jerusalem was famous city and its kings had given much trouble to the Assyrians and the inhabitants of Coele-Syria” and that “this alliance by marriage would be a pledge of his securing the goodwill of the entire Jewish nation.”¹⁸Pummer’s argument seems to pertain to a political reason. Instead, Magen suggests that by this marriage, Sanballat hoped that the offspring of the Jewish priest who married his daughter would be fit priests in all respects.¹⁹ In any case, through this marriage, Sanballat primarily intended to establish relationship with the Jewish community in Jerusalem.

According to Josephus, Sanballat also promised to build a temple on Mount Gerizim, like the Jerusalem temple where Manasses would

17 Josephus in this story speaks of one Sanballat. But, in fact, “this Sanballat” refers to two Sanballat. The question of who truly Sanballat is, is well explained by Purvis. He says, “...Sanballat is the common element in the two stories of the expulsion of a Jerusalem priest, the one an expulsion by Nehemiah (Ne.13:28) and the other an expulsion by the elders of Jerusalem shortly before the time of Alexander the Great (*Ant.*11.321-325). In each case, Sanballat is said to have been the father-in-law of the disenfranchised priest; and yet the priests involved are two different people (uncle and nephew) and the marriages and expulsions take place at two different times. It can be suggested that intermarriage between the high priestly family of Jerusalem and the ruling family of Samaria took place on more than one occasion in which in each of these two situations, the governor of Samaria had the name Sanballat. In the first instance (Ne. 13:28) the governor was the contemporary of Nehemiah. In the second instance (*Ant.* 11.321-325), the governor a contemporary of Alexander the Great, who bore, through the common practice of papyronomy, the same name as his illustrious ancestor. Because of the duplication of the incident of intermarriage, in which a Sanballat was father-in-law on each occasion, Josephus was able to use the person of Sanballat to provide a connecting link between the Persian and Greek periods. By recognizing only one Sanballat and by coalescing events of two different periods, he was able to provide the necessary nexus for continuity in his historical account...” J. D. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of Samaritan Sect* (Harvard Semitic Monographs vol. 2; Cambridge, MA 1968), 102-103.

18 Pummer, *the Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 160.

19 Based on the archeological evidence, Yitzhak Magen notes that there obvious evidence speaking of the priest in Samaria which came from the Judah. Some discovered the inscription with the title “priest” and the numerous Hebrew names there. So, although the historical recreation might be a bit far reaching, the archeological discoveries on Mount Gerizim, lend credence to such story. Cf. Y. Magen, “The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim in the Light of the Archeological Evidence,” *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.*, eds. O. Lipschits, G. N. Knoppers, and R. Albertz (Winona Lake: IN, 2007), p. 189.

serve as high priest as well as civil leader of Samaria after Sanballat's death.²⁰ Josephus also notes that at the same time, many priests, who had contracted similar marriages, left Jerusalem and joined Manasses in Samaria.

Close to these events, Alexander the Great entered the scene. His conquest led Sanballat to transfer his allegiance to him. After supporting Alexander and his armies suffered from logistic difficulties while besieging Tyre, Sanballat convinced him to permit the Samaritans to build a temple on Mount Gerizim. As soon as receiving permission from Alexander, he devoted all his efforts to the construction of the temple and it was duly built.

After the story of the construction of the Samaritan temple, in *Ant.* 11, 340ff Josephus tells once more the ambiguous nature of the Samaritans. It is stated that the Samaritans, seeing that Alexander had honored the Jews, professed themselves as Jews (cf. *Ant.* 9, 291). Furthermore, Josephus also points out two characteristics of the Samaritans. *First*, their chief city at that time was Shechem, which lay beside Mount Gerizim. *Second*, they were renegades of the Jewish nation.²¹ Besides, Josephus designates the Samaritans as Sidonians in Shechem (*Ant.* 11.344) and the Shechemites (*Ant.* 11.346). In addition, their temple, after the death

20 Concerning the promised temple which is said to be similar to be the one in Jerusalem. In *Ant.* 11.310 and in *Ant.* 13.256 Josephus notes again that the temple on Mount Gerizim was built "after the model of the Sanctuary at Jerusalem" It should be noted as well that Josephus makes similar statements about the temple in Leontopolis. In several places in *War* 1.33 and *Ant* 12.388; 13,63,67,72,285; 20,236) Josephus claims that the temple in Leontopolis was modelled on the one in Jerusalem. In contrast to these claims, he states in *War* 7. 426-432 that the Leontopolis sanctuary "was not like that in Jerusalem, but resembled a tower." Perhaps Josephus intended to say that these temples, i.e., Mount Gerizim and Leontopolis were Jewish, but inferior. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 110.

21 Egger understood the phrase "was inhabited by renegades (apostates) of the Jewish nation" as referring to two different groups: Samaritans and "apostates from the Jewish nation." These two groups were connected with each other by Josephus (or his source[s]). Egger, *Josephus*, 78. Contrast to her argument, Pummer suggests that even if there were two different groups living in Shechem, Josephus aims only at Samaritans, the descendants of the renegades (cf. *Ant.* 11. 306-312 and *Ant.* 11.346-347). Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 125.

of Alexander, became a place of refuge for anyone who got into trouble in Jerusalem. This is confirmed by what Josephus says in the final section of *Ant.* 11.346-347, "Whenever anyone was accused by the people of Jerusalem of eating unclean food or violating the Sabbath or committing any other such sin, he would flee to the Shechemites saying that he had been unjustly expelled (accused)."²² It implies that Josephus regards the Samaritans are in the category of the Jewish apostates and are those who will gladly accept the same kind of people. Nevertheless, it is not certain whether the Samaritans would have seen themselves as 'Shechemites' or identified with such designation.

Back to the story of the construction of the Samaritan temple, Josephus seems to have employed Nehemiah 13 as the biblical source. The fact that the expulsion of a relative of the Jerusalem high priest for his marriage to a daughter of Sanballat shows a remarkable similarity between *Ant.* 11, 302f and Neh. 13:28.²³ Two problems, however, remain here.

The first is the problem of chronology. The dating of the events as described in the two sources would differ by more than a century since Nehemiah's activity is usually dated in the fifth century B.C.E, whereas Josephus links his story with the time of Alexander the Great, ca. 330 B.C.E. The second is the problem of discrepancy on family relation with regard to the expelled priest who was married to a daughter of Sanballat. In Nehemiah 13.28 this priest is called "one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest." In Josephus' account, however, this priest,

22 It is noteworthy of the different version of the verb used in *Ant.* 11. 346. The last word varies between different versions, ἐκβεβλήσθαι "expelled" and ἐκκεκλήσθαι "accused."

23 In this case, Coggins notes "It might be true that Josephus based on the biblical tradition. However, with regard to this story, it seems that he simply picked up a piece of information in Nehemiah 13, more precisely, Ne. 13:28. From this, he elaborated it to be a story. It is interesting that the main section in Josephus, i.e., *Ant.*11, which is a long and very involved account which occupies more than fifty sections of the book as the first substantial section of the whole work has no any significant biblical basis, except, a piece of information noted in Ne. 13.28, that is, the expulsion of a relation of the Jerusalem priest for his marriage to a daughter of Sanballat." Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 262.

namely Manasseh, is the brother of Jaddua, known (from Neh 12:11) the great-grandson of Eliashib and the grandson of Joiada (Jehoiada). This would make the expelled priest of Josephus account the nephew of the expelled priest of Nehemiah 13:28.²⁴ On the basis of these two problems, it is not easy to determine precisely whether Josephus has elaborated directly the biblical record or only the creation of his imagination based on the episode mentioned in Nehemiah. In any case, it has still been argued that Josephus account preserves the historical memory of the incident stated in Neh.13:28.

It is striking that Josephus elaborated a few of biblical account (Neh. 13:28) and expanded it as a story. By elaborating it, he certainly has a certain intention. In this regard, he, like other ancient historians, was not relating events for their own sake or for the purpose of presenting a dispassionate record. His account certainly has an apologetic intention.²⁵ There is no other purpose than the discrediting of one of the most distinctive and treasured features of the Samaritans: their holy place and temple. This is done in particular by emphasizing the fact that those who involved in the construction of the Mount Gerizim temple were the apostates and renegades from the true Jewish community, i.e., those guilty of mixed marriage. In addition, Josephus intentionally seems to have tried to discredit Samaritan claims by connecting the temple with Manasseh as a bribe for his apostasy.²⁶ In short, he narrates this story with anti-Samaritan bias in attempt to blacken the origins of the Samaritan priesthood.

The other important question is the precise date of the construction of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim. There are no biblical records which narrate in detail the process of the construction of this temple even though several allusions to Mount Gerizim are found in either the OT or the NT.²⁷ On the contrary, Josephus as an extra-biblical source

24 Cf. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch*, p. 100.

25 Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 262 .

26 Cf. Brindle, *The Origin and History of the Samaritans*, p. 69.

27 For instance, in the OT, Genesis 35:4; Joshua 9:4; 24:1, 26. Judges. 9:6,7. Deuteronomy

instead sets it forth even though Josephus' accounts are not far from some errors.

At this point, Yitzhak Magen argues that the discoveries of Mount Gerizim reveal Josephus' error in attributing the construction of the temple to the time of Sanballat, governor of Samaria during the reign of Darius III when the land of Israel was conquered by Alexander the Great. Josephus apparently made an error in dating between the construction of the temple and the establishment of the city surrounding the temple. In fact, the Mount Gerizim temple was built during the time of Nehemiah and his contemporary, Sanballat the Horonite (mid-fifth century B.C.E), while the city surrounding Mount Gerizim was established after the destruction of Samaria by Alexander the Great. The temple itself had already stood for more than a century at the time of Alexander's conquest. For this reason, it seems that Josephus used the date of the establishment of the city to the date of the construction of the temple.²⁸ If the temple was built during the transition between the Persian Empire and the rise of the Macedonians in the East, Sanballat's request admittedly was made as a petition for formal approval.²⁹ In brief, on the basis of the archeological testimonies from Mount Gerizim, Magen points out that there were two phases to the Mount Gerizim temple. It was first built in the Persian period and later rebuilt in Hellenistic period. Thus, the archeological testimonies clearly have shown Josephus' errors in describing the historical facts of the construction of the Samaritan temple.³⁰

In this connection, Pummer suggests that the narrative of the construction of the Samaritan temple as well as the Samaritan community at Shechem, constitutes the second narrative of Josephus about the origins of the Samaritans. He explains that in reality Josephus

11:29-30; in the NT John 4:20

28 Cf. Magen, *The Dating of the First Phase*, p. 192.

29 Cf. Mor. "The Persian, Hellenistic and Hasmonaean Period." In *The Samaritans*, ed. A.D. Crown (Tübingen, 1989), pp. 7-8.

30 For the details of this point, see Magen, "The Dating of the First Phase," pp. 190-193.

presents two explanations of the origin of the Samaritans, i.e., one in connection with the conquest of the North by the Assyrians, and one in connection with Manasseh and Sanballat.³¹ This double origin is problematic only if one assumes that Josephus was always consistent and never contradicted himself. In fact, it is not surprising for Josephus often did contradict himself, and his two accounts of Samaritan origins are one example.

In any case, the construction of the Samaritan temple of course had confirmed the existence of the Samaritans as a religious group.³² Besides, such a construction certainly had created a sort of rivalry between two religious centers of worship. Josephus tells that Sanballat established the Samaritan temple to YHWH-God Almighty which is in the same time God to whom the Jerusalem temple was built. It is confirmed by the designation of the Samaritan temple as “a temple like that at Jerusalem” (*Ant* 11. 310) and the priest who served there came from the Jerusalem temple. If so, Josephus seems to admit implicitly that the Samaritans belong to the Jews, even though *expressis verbis* he claims that they are not. It is quite different to what he had claimed earlier in *Ant.* 9 that they were descended from the settlers whom the Assyrians brought into Israel and thus were Cutheans (foreigners). This fact may point out that he reflects the ambiguous attitude of his contemporaries towards the Samaritans.

The existence of the Samaritan temple then became the great stumbling block between Samaritans and Jews and was a constant source of vexation, frustration, and embarrassment to the religious leaders of Jerusalem. Hence, it would also have been sufficient cause for some Jews to regard the adherents of the Samaritan cult as schismatic. In short, the founding of this rival temple of Jerusalem did more than anything else to aggravate the traditional bad relations between Samaritans and Jews.

31 Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 74

32 Cf. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch*, p. 7.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MOUNT GERIZIM TEMPLE AS A CRUCIAL INCIDENT

Two matters to be noted with regard to the construction of the Samaritan temple are (1) that this temple had led the Samaritans to be more aware of their identity as a distinct religious group from the Jews and (2) that the role of the Samaritan temple as a religious and cultural center was firmly established with the development of Shechem after Alexander the Great captured Samaria and made the city a Greek colony.³³ Such a self-awareness of the Samaritans eventually would play a crucial role in making more strained their relations with the Jews in the following periods. This fact is described by Josephus in *Antiquities* 12. In exploring this, we simply deal with the periods from the beginning of Antiochus Epihanes IV's persecution until the destruction of the Samaritan temple by John Hyrcanus I.

Still in the line of this study, it is better to examine briefly Josephus' story of the disputes in Egypt (Diaspora) between Samaritans and Jews, placed by Josephus in the second century B.C.E (*Ant.* 12.7-10 and *Ant.* 13.74-79).³⁴ Josephus describes how the descendants of Samaritans and Jews who had been settled in Egypt in the time of Ptolemy Soter, quarrelled with each other because each group maintained their ancestral way of life and customs. On the one hand, the Jews affirmed that the Jerusalem temple was the holy one and required that sacrifice be sent there; on the other hand, to do so, the Samaritans instead insisted that they should go to Mount Gerizim. Josephus also tells the story of a formal debate that took place between the Samaritans and the Jews in Alexandria over the competing claims of the Jerusalem and Samaritan temple. The point of such a story is that a widening dispute between

33 Cf. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch*, p. 109.

34 Notice that there are two passages which refer to this story, that is, *Ant.* 12.7-10 and *Ant.* 13.74ff. The first is made without further elaboration and linked with the persecution of Antiochus Epihanes. On the contrary, the latter consists in the occasion for a more elaborate story and being linked more generally within the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180-145). Cf. Coggins, *Samaritans and Jews*, p. 97. More about the Samaritan Diaspora, see A. D. Crown. "The Samaritan Diaspora." In *The Samaritans*, ed. A. D. Crown (Tübingen, 1989), pp. 195-217.

Samaritans and Jews over the true temple, whether that of Jerusalem or that of Mount Gerizim was already spreading into Diaspora.³⁵

Back to the relations between Samaritans and Jews, to begin with, it is necessary to examine Josephus' account of Antiochus Epiphanes IV period. To a considerable extent, Josephus follows I Maccabees, both in details recorded and in the overall view of cause and progress of the revolt. Interestingly, the important sections, largely concerned with the Samaritans, that is, *Ant.*12.257-264, have no parallel in Maccabees.³⁶ This is pertinent to a letter written by the Samaritans and addressed to King Antiochus Epiphanes IV. Josephus describes the Samaritans as a group, approaching and appealing to Antiochus Epiphanes IV, repudiating any links with the Jews but stressing on their different origin and religious practice by calling themselves as "Sidonians in Shechem" (*Ant.* 12. 259-260). As a result, the persecution towards them was ceased. The Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim is henceforth to be known as that of Zeus Helenios (*Ant.* 12.261). The Samaritans had repudiated any links with the Jews, would show a sort of rejection to take part on Jewish rebellion against Antiochus Epiphanes IV.

Now, the questions is who had written the letter to the king, whether it was the Samaritans or the Samaritans which called themselves "Sidonias in Shechem."³⁷ It is in fact not easy to determine it. The fact that Josephus asserts in that letter that their forefathers had the custom of observing Sabbath and offered sacrifices on the Mount Gerizim temple points out that they were the Samaritans. Strangely, at the same time, they also claimed themselves to be originally Sidonians. By this term, it could be suggested that probably they could be the Samaritan Hellenists who preferred to cut ties with their ancestor' belief and customs and to

35 It is interesting that this account was written by Josephus at a time when both the Jerusalem temple and that on Mount Gerizim had been destroyed. Clearly, the importance of the place of worship was in a sense symbolic, yet should certainly not be underestimated on that account. Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 264.

36 Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 265.

37 The same term ,i.e., οἱ ἐν Σικίμοις Σιδώνιοι is also used by Josephus in *Ant.*11.344.

adopt the Hellenistic way of life.³⁸ However, they also could be the Samaritans as inhabitants who probably did not belong to the Samaritans. It may be due to the historical explanation that there were actually colonies of Sidonians in different Palestinian cities whose words are quoted in Josephus' source.³⁹ Another interpretation is offered by Pummer. He argues that the Samaritans called themselves 'Sidonians in Shechem' in order to underline their claim that they are Canaanites - Phoenicians who lived in Shechem, i.e., heirs of the ancients Shechemites so that their status would raise in the sight of the Greeks.⁴⁰ On the basis of many interpretations as to who these Sidonians actually were, this designation in Josephus eventually still remains unexplained.

However, in view of the strongly polemical tendencies of the material in Josephus dealing with the Samaritans, most likely, in literally viewpoint, the term "Sidonians" had come to be a derogatory term.⁴¹ In other words, the designation "Sidonians of Shechem" may come from the anti-Samaritan polemic in Josephus. Thus, it could be suggested that Josephus uses this term to show that the Samaritans intends to separate and make themselves distinct from the Jews.

The other matter we must note concerning anti-Samaritan polemic is the title "temple for *Zeus Hellenios*" (*Ant.* 12.261) for the Samaritan temple, attributed by Josephus. Such a title is different from that of II Maccabees 6:2. According to II Maccabees 6:2, the dedication of the Samaritan temple was to *Zeus Xenios*, which stressed the divine protection of strangers. This title would have been less offensive than *Zeus Hellenios*. Presumably, Josephus or the source on which he drew, has modified the tradition of such a title to take more hostile approach to the Samaritans. What is evident here is that the change of the name

38 For two group of the Samaritans in the Hellenistic periode, namely the conservative Samaritans and the Samaritan Hellenist, see Mor, *The Persian, Hellenistic and Hasmonean Periode*, pp. 14-15.

39 Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 266.

40 Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 167.

41 Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 266.

of both temples shows that in the beginning of his persecution (167 B.C.E), Antiochus Epiphanes IV apparently did not distinguish between Samaritans and Jews as he believed that they professed the same religion.

The most significant incident for the Samaritans is the destruction of their temple on the Mount Gerizim and Shechem, their chief city, by John Hyrcanus I. Concerning the dating of this destruction, a number of arguments have arisen. According to the “old” reading of Josephus’ text, Gerizim, Shechem, and the Cuthean nation were conquered by John Hyrcanus I after the death of Antiochus VII Sidetes in 129/128 B.C.E. Now, such a date however is difficult to be accepted. On the basis of the numismatic evidence from Marisa, Tel Beer Sheba, Mount Gerizim, Shechem, and Samaria, the destruction of the Samaritan temple and the city on Mount Gerizim is to be dated to 112/111 B.C.E.⁴² Likewise, Shechem along with Marisa, Tel Beer Sheba, and Samaria were conquered in 112/111 B.C.E.⁴³ Thus, Josephus’ account has proven his claim correct – Shechem was conquered at the same time as Gerizim and the Cuthean nation—albeit at a different time than he maintained.⁴⁴

Josephus’ reference to this destruction is so brief and allusive (*Ant.* 13.255-256 and *War.* 1.63).⁴⁵ In this connection, Coggins argues that

42 Cf. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, 202. Concerning the contradiction between Josephus’ dating (129/128 B.C.E) and archeological finds’ dating (112/111 B.C.E), Y. Magen argues “...The contradiction between Josephus’ dating of the campaign of conquest to the years following 128 B.C.E and archeological finds at Mount Gerizim, Shechem and Marisa (which prove that it was conducted during the years 119-111 B.C.E.) indicates that Mount Gerizim and Shechem were conquered during the time of Antiochus IX Cyzicenus (114-95 B.C.E). Antiochus IX came to the aid of the city of Samaria (*Ant.*13.275-283) and fought against John Hyrcanus who captured Mount Gerizim and Shechem in the same campaign. What remains clear is that John Hyrcanus did not immediately attack Mount Gerizim after the death of Antiochus VII. Josephus may have confused Antiochus VII Sidetes with Antiochus IX Cyzicenus...” Y. Magen. “Mount Gerizim and the Samaritans.” In *Early Christianity in Context: Monuments and Documents*, eds. F. Manns and E. Alliata (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collectio Maior: Jerusalem, 1993), p. 143.

43 Cf. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 202.

44 Cf. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 208.

45 This account appears in *Ant.* 13.255-6 and *War.* 1.62-63. It occurs in the context of a summary of Hyrcanus’ campaign and is not elaborated upon in any way. It is simply

this brevity on Josephus' part may also be that this was not a subject upon which Josephus would have wished to expatiate, with the destruction of the Jerusalem temple so recent a memory and with constant ambiguity of the Samaritans' own position.⁴⁶

Josephus does not specify what motivated John Hyrcanus to conquer and destroy the Mount Gerizim temple. In this case, it must be acknowledged that at that time occasionally political strife augmented the religious dispute. A number of assumptions emerge in relation to John Hyrcanus' reason to destroy the Samaritan temple. Pummer considers that the destruction of the Mount Gerizim temple and the other attacks as the continuation of the conquests that were begun by Jonathan and Simon Maccabees.⁴⁷ Magen suggests that John Hyrcanus' conquests were part of the Maccabean policy which Alexander Janneus had intensified to attack and destroy the Hellenistic culture and eliminate the sacred sites which competed with the Temple in Jerusalem.⁴⁸ Purvis sees that John Hyrcanus' actions was motivated by political expediency, but it is also possible that the destruction of the Mount Gerizim temple was carried out for religious reasons.⁴⁹ Instead, Mor relates this destruction to the religious reasons inasmuch as the Samaritans were rejected by the Jews solely for religious reason.⁵⁰ It can also be supposed that the presence of the Samaritan temple had created political problem for the Hasmonaeans. That is to say, on the assumption that there was rivalry between the two temples, the presence of the Samaritan temple has attracted some northern Jews living far from Jerusalem so that it would be in opposition to the Hasmonaeen goal, that is, to centralize all elements in *Eretz-Israel* to Jerusalem. In any case, the difficulty to determine whether this destruction was motivated by political or religious considera-

noted that the temple had been built with Alexander' permission, briefly sketching the circumstances and observing that it had survived for two hundred years.

46 Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 266.

47 Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, p. 209.

48 Magen, *Mount Gerizim and the Samaritans*, p. 143.

49 Purvis, *Samaritan Pentateuch*, p. 115.

50 Mor, *The Persian, Hellenistic and Hasmonaeen Period*, p. 18.

tion may be due to the intimate connection between political and religious aspects at that time.

In short, the destruction of Samaritan temple certainly convinced the Samaritans that there was no way for them to join to the Jews. From that time on, they began to legitimize their separate identity as a group outside Jerusalem and the Jews. So what can be said with certainty is that Hyrcanus campaign which led to the destruction of the Samaritan temple and devastation on the Samaritan population, had made the final estrangement between two groups irreversible. Thus, the complete and irreparable breach between Samaritans and Jews took place neither in Persian nor Greek periods, but in the Hasmonean period as the result of the destruction of Shechem and the ravaging of the Mount Gerizim temple by John Hyrcanus.⁵¹

THE CONTINUING CONFLICTS IN THE ROMAN PERIOD

In describing the Samaritans in this periode, Josephus did not have to rely on sources before his lifetime, but he could draw on accounts of firsthand witnesses and on his own experience. In addition, his accounts in the Roman period apparently no longer highlights the Samaritans as a group which has a political significance. As Coggins argues, they were likely viewed as a religious group within the broader spectrum of Judaism.⁵²

In *Antiquities* and *War*, at least there are three main episodes which speak of the Samaritan and their movement during the various Roman rulers, that is, Coponius, Pontius Pilate, and Cumanus. All episodes pertain to two centers of worship. The episode of Coponius (*Ant.*18.29-30) and Cumanus (*War.* 2.232-246 // *Ant.* 20. 118-136)⁵³ properly speak

51 Cf. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch*, p. 118.

52 Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 267

53 Note that there is discrepancy between this account in the *War* and the *Antiquities*. According to Coggins, the account in *Antiquities* emphasizes the Jewish hostility to Roman rule, while in the *War* gives rather greater prominence to Jewish-Samaritan antagonism. Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 269

of the conflict between Samaritans and Jews in relation to the Jerusalem temple. By contrast, the episode of Pontius Pilate speaks of the conflict between Samaritans and Romans in relation to the Mount Gerizim (*Ant.* 18:85-89).

In the tenure of Coponius as governor of Judea, in fact there was no so-called serious conflict between Samaritans and Jews. Josephus simply tells that the Samaritans are presented as those who intentionally made sacrilege in the Jewish holy place. It is stated that during the governorship of Coponius (6-9 C.E.), on one occasion when the Jews were celebrating the Festival of Unleavened Bread, some Samaritans, having come secretly into Jerusalem, gained access to and scattered human bones in, the Jerusalem temple.⁵⁴ It is not clear of what Josephus' motive by telling this story. However, by virtue of the brief conclusion of this story, most likely, this incident serves him as a sort of *apologia* for Jews prohibiting Samaritan to enter into the Jerusalem temple.⁵⁵

The other account is a conflict between Samaritans and Jews which occurred in the governorship of Cumanus (48-52 C.E). It must be kept in mind that at that time, the situation in Palestine had in many ways deteriorated sharply. There were the interests and rivalries of four different parties in the conflict : The Samaritans, the Galilean Jews, the Jerusalem Jews, and the Romans. For this reason, the particular episode involving the Samaritans must be placed in the context of a series of disturbances under the rule of Cumanus.⁵⁶

54 This narrative could be compared with the Samaritan story of the trick played by two Samaritans – Efraim and Manasseh – and a Jew who was taking a sacrifice to Jerusalem. The story is recorded in the *Annals* of Abu'l Fath (in chapter 34, English translation). However, the setting of this story is in the time of the Emperor Hadrian (117-138 C.E). Cf. Abu 'L-Fath, *The Kitâb al-Tarîkh* (translated into English with Notes by Paul Stenhouse) (Sydney, 1985), pp. 155-156.

55 It is made clear by the statement in the final phrase of *Ant.* 18:30 "...on which account the Jews afterward *excluded* them out of the temple, which they had not used to do at such festivals..."

56 Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 268.

In the *Antiquities*, Josephus narrates 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. This conflict originated when pilgrims from Galilee were passing through Samaritan territory on the way to Jerusalem for a festival. In this conflict, Cumanus took the part of the Samaritans (having been bribed to do so, according to Josephus) and had many of the Jews killed.

At this point, Feldman makes clear that the fact that the attacks occurred while the Galilaeans were on their way through Samaritan territory to the Jerusalem 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 Jerusalem temple 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. Meanwhile, 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.⁵⁷

At first sight, this episode reflects the anti-Samaritan bias of Josephus. Nevertheless, as Coggins argues, his antipathy toward the Samaritans is actually subsumed in the larger concern of the injustice which had marred some aspect of Roman rule in Palestine. This story essentially concerned more with Jewish grievances under Roman rule rather than the disputes with the Samaritans.⁵⁸

Josephus also recounts conflicts between Samaritans and the Romans. In these accounts, Mount Gerizim figures several times. It could be seen in the story during the tenure of Pontius Pilate (26-36 C.E.) as perfect (*Ant.* 18:85-89). According to Josephus, a certain "lying Samaritan" led a demonstration on the Mount Gerizim, claiming access

57 Feldman, *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, p. 124.

58 Cf. Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, pp. 268-269.

to sacred vessels left there by Moses. Pilate attempted to prevent the large crowd and the ensuing confusion led to the death or arrest to a number of Samaritans. Pilate apparently feared a political conspiracy which probably was under the guise of a messianic movement.⁵⁹

Another story regarding the Samaritans and the Romans is Vespasian's attack upon the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim (*War*. 3.307-315). In this story, Josephus tells that having no warlike intention, the Samaritan assembled on Mount Gerizim. But it might be regarded by the Romans as a potential threat. Encircled and without an adequate water supply in the heat of summer, some of the Samaritans died of thirst and some deserted to the Roman, but the great majority (Josephus speaks of 11.600) were massacred by the Romans.⁶⁰

What is interesting in this story is that there is no slighting references to the Samaritans' alien origin and religious inadequacy, which were characteristic of the first mentions of them in the *Antiquities*. No attempt is made to regard the Samaritans as basically different from Jews. At this point, Coggins argues that insofar as the *War* is taken as a source that stands alone, without reference to the *Antiquities*, the picture of the Samaritans is properly from Josephus' point of view.⁶¹ Furthermore, the various allusions in the *War* all make it clear that they continued to worship on their own holy mountain even though the temple had been destroyed. While in *Antiquities*, the worship to Mount Gerizim had been pictured in terms of a falling away from true worship (at Jerusalem), in

59 Against the suggestion that this was a messianic movement, see Brucehall, "From John Hyrcanus to Baba Rabbah," *The Samaritans*, ed. A.D. Crown (Tübingen, 1989), p. 39.

60 John Strugnell in "Quelques inscriptions samaritaines" *Revue Biblique* 74 (1967) 562, reports that a Samaritan inscription witnesses such a incident little more similar. It said in its translation "Behold, in the time of the rainy season Trajan, cursed be his name, came into the land of Palestine from Vespasian, king of Rome, with his great army; and he blockaded us a full month of Mount Gerizim until the end of the rain and there was no water to drink and he killed among us with the sword about 10.000 soldiers."

61 Coggins, *The Samaritans in Josephus*, p. 269.

War, it is simply a practice of the Samaritans which does not involve any form of condemnation.

CONCLUSION

From discussion above, there are two points we can draw. *Firstly*, Josephus identifies the Samaritans as a group which has two characters, that is, (1) that they have strong relation to Mount Gerizim which they believe as the proper place in which the temple of God should be established, (2) that they are mixed or impure people — in the sense that they are half-foreigner and half-Jews — because they are descendants of Cutheans but at the same time, they are the renegades and apostates of Jewish community in Jerusalem. *Secondly*, Josephus views that the conflict between Samaritans and Jews were primarily marked by the rivalry between the Mount Gerizim and Jerusalem temple as the proper place of worship claimed by each of them. Hence, Josephus clearly emphasizes more religious rather than political dimension in his accounts of the Samaritans.

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