GARY N. KNOPPERS

Judah and Samaria in Postmonarchic Times

Forschungen zum Alten Testament

Mohr Siebeck

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Edited by

Konrad Schmid (Zürich) · Mark S. Smith (Princeton)
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Judah and Samaria in Postmonarchic Times

Essays on Their Histories and Literatures

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

In researching and preparing this book, I was aided by many different colleagues, students, and institutions. I am very grateful for their assistance, good counsel, insights, and encouragement. Seven chapters in the present volume are entirely new, while four are revised, updated, and expanded versions of previously published papers. Thanks go to the publishers in question for allowing me to republish materials from these earlier essays. The author is pleased to acknowledge his gratitude to the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, especially Matthew Adams, Margaret Cohen, and Sarah Fairman, for their kind hospitality during my fellowship stay in Spring 2017 and in early Spring 2018. The Albright Institute of Archaeological Research is an unparalleled resource in archaeology, epigraphy, and ancient Near Eastern studies in Jerusalem. Thanks also go to the École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem, in particular its librarian, Pawel Trzopek, OP, for graciously allowing me to use the excellent St. Stephen's Library in biblical studies. Alan Krieger, the Theology Librarian at the University of Notre Dame and his administrative staff have shown an uncanny ability to acquire monographs from little known publishers and have them promptly delivered to my mailbox in the Theology Department. I am grateful both for this kindness and for the first-rate holdings of the Hesburgh Libraries.

In preparing this volume, I was assisted by graduate students in the Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity subsection of the Theology Department at the University of Notre Dame, in particular Pauline Buisch and Mark Lackowski, who copy-edited some of the essays. Special thanks are due to Raleigh Heth, also of Notre Dame, who kindly prepared the indices. Members of the *Société d'Études Samaritaines* kindly provided comments upon earlier versions of the first and fourth chapters in this volume. Participants in the Persian Period section of the international meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature offered helpful questions about an earlier version of the fifth chapter of this collection, while participants in the Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah section of the Society of Biblical Literature presented me with valuable feedback on an earlier version of the sixth essay in this collection. Members of the Biblical Colloquium graciously offered their commentary and insights on an earlier iteration of the last chapter in the volume.

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21 August 2018, South Bend, Indiana G.N.K

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Gary Knoppers passed away from complications of pancreatic cancer on December 22, 2018. Laura Knoppers would like to thank the many friends and fellow scholars who have offered warm and generous tributes to Gary's memory. She would also like to thank Mohr Siebeck for their time and attention in seeing this book through the final stages of production.

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Acknowledgements

Earlier versions of parts of some essays in this book appeared in earlier publications. I would like to thank the respective journals and publishing houses for their kind permission to reuse this older material.

Chapter Two: '"Yhwh is Not with Israel': Alliances as a *Topos* in Chronicles," in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 58 (1996): 601–26.

Chapter Three: "Aspects of Samaria's Religious Culture during the Early Hellenistic Period," in *The Historian and the Bible: Essays in Honour of Lester L. Grabbe* (ed. P.R. Davies and D.V. Edelman; LHBOTS 530; London: T. & T. Clark Continuum, 2010), 159–74.

Chapter Four: "Samaritan Conceptions of Jewish Origins and Jewish Conceptions of Samaritan Origins: Any Common Ground?" in *Die Samaritaner und die Bibel: historische und literarische Wechselwirkungen zwischen biblischen und samaritanischen Traditionen* (ed. Jörg Frey, Ursula Schattner-Rieser, and Konrad Schmid; SJ 70; StSam 7; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 81–118

Chapter Seven: "The Samaritan Schism or the Judaization of Samaria? Reassessing Josephus' Account of the Mt. Gerizim Temple," in *Making a Difference: Essays on the Bible and Judaism in Honour of Tamara Cohn Eskenazi* (ed. David J.A. Clines, Kent Richards, and Jacob L. Wright; Hebrew Bible Monographs 49; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2012), 163–78.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations for works in biblical and ancient Near Eastern studies follow those used in the Eisenbrauns stylesheet, the *SBL Handbook of Style* (2nd ed.; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), and *Old Testament Abstracts* 24 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 2001). Abbreviations for additional works in classics follow those used in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd ed.; ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). Other abbreviations included within the work follow below.

Abū ʾl Fatḥ	E. Vilmar, *Abulfathi Annales Samaritani: quos Arabice edidit cum prolegomenis*. Gotha: Perthes, 1865; English translation by P. L. Stenhouse, *The Kitāb al–tarīkh of Abū ʾl Fatḥ*. Studies in Judaica 1. Sydney: Mandelbaum, 1985.
Adler-Séligsohn	E. N. Adler and M. Séligsohn, “Une nouvelle Chronique Samaritaine,” *REJ* 44 (1902): 188–222; 45 (1902): 70–98, 223–54; 46 (1903): 123–46.
JSP	Judea and Samaria Publications. Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority.
MacDonald II	J. MacDonald, *The Samaritan Chronicle No. II*. BZAW 107. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1969.
MGI	Mt. Gerizim Inscriptions. Y. Magen, H. Misgav, and L. Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations,* I: *The Aramaic, Hebrew and Samaritan Inscriptions.* JSP 2. Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004.
Sam Joshua	T. W. J. Juynboll, *Chronicon Samaritanum: Arabice conscriptum, cui titulus est Liber Josuae*. Leiden: Luchtmans, 1848; English translation by O. T. Crane, *The Samaritan Chronicle or the Book of Joshua the Son of Nun*. New York: Alden, 1890.
SP	A. Tal and M. Florentin, *The Pentateuch: The Samaritan Version and the Masoretic Version*. Tel Aviv: Haim Rubin Tel Aviv University Press, 2010 (Hebrew).
StSam	Studia Samaritana. Berlin: de Gruyter.
TAD	*Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt,* by B. Porten and A. Yardeni; Vol. 1: *Letters* (1986); Vol. 2: *Contracts* (1989); Vol. 3: *Literature, Accounts, Lists* (1993); Vol. 4: *Ostraca and Assorted Inscriptions* (1999). Jerusalem: Hebrew University.
Tulida	M. Florentin, *The Tulida – A Samaritan Chronicle: Text, Translation, Commentary*. Jerusalem: Ben Zvi, 1999 (Hebrew).
WDSP	Wâdī ed-Dâlīyeh Samaria Papyri. D. M. Gropp, *Wadi Daliyeh II: The Samaria Papyri from Wadi Daliyeh*. DJD 28. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001; J. Dušek, *Les manuscrits araméens du Wadi Daliyeh et la Samarie vers 450–332 av. J.-C.* CHANE 30. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

Introduction

In its portrayal of Jesus' long journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51–19:27), the Gospel of Luke has Jesus straddle the border between Samaria and Galilee. While on his way, ten lepers confront Jesus and beg him for mercy as he passes through a certain village.[1] Having compassion on those suffering from skin disease, Jesus directs them: "Go show yourselves to the priests."[2] As they proceed to follow Jesus' instruction, the lepers find themselves healed from their illness. Yet, of the ten, only one returns, glorifying God in a loud voice, falling at the feet of Jesus, and thanking him. This particular person was a Samaritan. Expressing astonishment, Jesus responds: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" (Luke 17:17–18).

This story of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11–19) portrays Jesus endorsing a non-Jew, the one whom Jesus explicitly labels a foreigner (ὁ ἀλλογενὴς οὗτος; Luke 17:18), as an example of someone who shows proper gratitude to God.[3] Like the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:29–37), the story of the ten lepers trades on the tensions between Jews and Samaritans in the first century CE to interrogate long held beliefs, behaviors, and commitments. For many readers, the New Testament pericope of the ten lepers underscores the differences of the Samaritan community and casts a long backward shadow on its origins and history.

My recent monograph takes issue with the prevailing scholarly view of Samarian religion as a late schismatic development, contending that the dominant model of binary opposition occludes, rather than illumines, much of the complicated history of relations between the two groups.[4] To the contrary, I argue that Samarian religion was a particular outgrowth of Yahwistic religion in northern Israel, not simply a late development but related to ongoing developments in Judah, sometimes in cooperation, sometimes in parallel, sometimes in competition. The monograph examines the history of Samaria in the Neo-As-

[1] This story, like the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29–37), only appears in Luke.

[2] Jesus does not identify the particular priests before whom they were to appear. Presumably, the Jewish lepers would travel to Jewish priests to be examined, while the Samaritan leper would travel to Samaritan priests to be examined (Lev 13:45–46, 49; 14:1–20; Num 5:1–3).

[3] The term ἀλλογενὴς refers to an outsider, literally to someone of another race.

[4] G. N. Knoppers, *Jews and Samaritans: The Origins and History of Their Early Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

syrian, Neo-Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic periods, and the portraits of Judahite-northern Israelite relations in Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Acknowledging that both Jews and Samaritans view the Pentateuch as canonical scripture, the work explores the ways in which Jews and Samaritans could understand key passages pertaining to Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal and to the centralization of Yahwistic worship differently.

The current collection of essays builds upon and extends this comparative exploration of Judean-Samarian relations. Some essays deal with material remains (e.g., the archaeological excavations in Jerusalem and in Mt. Gerizim) and epigraphic discoveries (e.g., the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions), while others focus on Judean literary texts (e.g., Ezra, Chronicles, Josephus, Pseudo-Philo) and Samaritan literary texts (e.g., the Samaritan tenth commandment, the *Chronicon Samaritanum*). What all of these essays share in common is a concern to shed new light on the multi-faceted character of Judean and Samarian history in Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman times. The work explores both commonalities and differences, rivalries and relationships, as these communities were engaging one another in greater depth and complexity than scholars have previously thought.

The essays extend the scope of my investigations chronologically – including three chapters on Josephus, as well as chapters on Pseudo-Philo, the Samaritan tenth commandment, and one of the Samaritan medieval chronicles. The work also includes essays on the portrayals of northern-southern interactions in Ezra and Chronicles and discusses the available material remains from Samaria and Judah, dating to the Persian and Hellenistic periods. The history of the sanctuaries in Jerusalem and Mt. Gerizim – their development, economic importance, and administrative functions – are the topic of two separate studies, while the dedicatory inscriptions from the area of the Mt. Gerizim temple comprise a separate study in their own right. The essays are organized according to a thematic, rather than a chronological outline. The eleven chapters examine interactions between the two communities under three related categories: Oppositions and Alliances, Temple Matters, and Altered Altars. The studies map relationships and rivalries, but also show differences within commonality and commonalities within difference.

I. Oppositions and Alliances

The four chapters in the first section challenge assumptions about antagonisms, or explore how ancient writers constructed or disavowed alliances and relationships. Each involves the construction and negotiation of identity, shaping the past through the assertion of alliance or opposition. The first chapter, "Archenemies? Samarians and Judeans in the Early Persian Period," revisits the complicated testimony of Ezra to show that Judeans and Samaritans were not, as is

often thought, continually at odds during the early Second Commonwealth. Such a persistent conviction in contemporary scholarship can be traced all the way back to antiquity. In the *Antiquitates Judaicae* of Josephus, the Samarians (or Samaritans) oppose every major Judean initiative undertaken during the early postmonarchic age. In Josephus' rewriting of his major source (1 Esdras/*Esdras* α), the Samari(t)ans never function as allies or supporters of the repatriated expatriates.

Close analysis of Ezra-Nehemiah does not support Josephus' claims. The writers of Ezra 1–6 selectively engage the early postmonarchic era, highlighting what they deem to be critical moments in the life of the Judean community centered in Jerusalem. Even then, they do not depict Samaria as consistently obstructing the course of Judean reconstruction efforts. Indeed, the first segment under view, the first migration and return of the temple artifacts under Sheshbazzar, occurring during the reign of Cyrus the Great (Ezra 1:1–11; 5:13–16), does not include any accusation of outside interference, whether by Samarians or by others.

The essay proceeds by asking the same questions of the other particular moments portrayed in Ezra: the migration and rebuilding of the altar under the Judean governor Zerubbabel and the Judean high priest Jeshua (Ezra 2:1–3:13) during the reign of Darius I; the community's rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple also during the reign of Darius I (Ezra 4:1–5; 5:1–6:22); the Judean attempt to rebuild Jerusalem and repair its walls (Ezra 4:7–23) during the reign of Artaxerxes I; and the migration of Ezra from Babylon and his campaign against exogamy (Ezra 7:1–10:44) during the reign of Artaxerxes (presumably Artaxerxes I, but possibly Artaxerxes II).[5] The chapter argues that each of the sub-periods portrayed in Ezra 1–10 bears its own distinctive character, development, and themes. Samaria plays a disruptive role in the mid-fifth century Judean attempt to rebuild Jerusalem and repair its walls (Ezra 7:7–23). Yet, the campaign against mixed marriages under Ezra's leadership represents a different case (Ezra 7:1–10:44). The detailed enumeration of foreign peoples (Ezra 9:1–2), which partially draws on the standard pentateuchal repertoire of indigenous nations, is as striking in what it contains – Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Edomites – as it is in what it lacks, the one outsider group (Samarians) some scholars think dominate the entire Ezra narrative.[6] Such complexity in one prominent section of Ezra cautions us against making simplistic conclusions about the whole.

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[5] In the sequence of Ezra 4–6, which discusses the struggle to rebuild the temple in the time of Darius I, the narrative of 4:7–23, relating to the reign of Artaxerxes I, has been inserted achronologically to buttress the theme of outside opposition to Judean rebuilding efforts in Jerusalem.

[6] In Ezra 9:1, I read with 1 Esd (*Esdras α*) 8:66 'Edomites,' rather than 'Amorites' (MT and *Esdras β*).

The second chapter, "'Should You Help the Wicked and Love those who Hate Yhwh?' Alliances, Foreign Subjugation, and Empire in Chronicles," shows a contrasting impulse in the Chronicler's disavowal of alliances both with the Israelite kingdom and with various foreign regimes, arguing that this opposition is part of a larger pattern in which the literary work rejects all pacts the independent kingdom of Judah forges with other states. The bold rewriting of Kings is remarkable, revealing a consistent effort to restructure the past to demonstrate both the illicit nature of such associations and, paradoxically, their futility. But why would the authors, living in the late Achaemenid/early Hellenistic period, a time in which Judeans had been living under foreign hegemony for centuries, be so concerned with pacts the Davidic regime forged with northern Israel and with other states?

There is another complication. In the worldview of the authors, humans are not the only participants in history. Yhwh also acts in human affairs. Thus, what happens if a relationship with a foreign state is something that the deity imposes upon Judah as a punitive action, rather than something Judah seeks out as an instrument of its own diplomatic policy? How the work casts the condition of foreign subjection merits attention. In depicting the loss of political autonomy and the advent of foreign imperial hegemony, the literary work does not present a simplistic and one-dimensional approach to dealing with international affairs. In this respect, the discussion of foreign subjugation complicates and nuances the discussion of foreign alliances. The essay concludes by attempting to situate these nuanced foreign policy positions within the context of the shifting political currents of the fourth century BCE. An exploration of the paradigmatic treatment of international covenants and foreign subjugation provides, therefore, a fresh perspective on the complexities of how Judean writers in the early Second Temple period attempted to negotiate minority status within a world dominated by others.

The third chapter in the first section, "Archaizing Tendencies in Samaria's Religious Culture during Hellenistic Times," looks at the personal names of those making dedications in the Mt. Gerizim temple inscriptions. The publication of approximately four hundred fragmentary inscriptions discovered in the vicinity of the Mt. Gerizim sacred precinct has enriched our understanding of what the temple meant to its patrons. The chapter analyzes the implications of these mostly votive inscriptions written in monumental Aramaic, cursive Aramaic, and paleo-Hebrew script for our understanding of Yahwistic Samarian religious culture in the late 3rd to early 2nd century BCE. Particularly striking are not only the appearance of many common Yahwistic proper names and common Hebrew names, but also the appearance of many archaizing personal names. By archaizing names, I mean the redeployment of familial, regional, and priestly anthroponyms associated with well-known figures in pentateuchal literature, such as Ephraim, Joseph, Judah, Levi, Miriam, and Simeon.

Interestingly, many of the appellatives replicate priestly names present in the Torah, such as Abisha/Abishua, Amram, Eleazar, and Phineḥas. When considered along with the onomastic evidence in the Wâdī ed-Dâlīyeh Samaria Papyri, the inscriptions bear witness both to continuity and to development within the Yahwistic communities of Samaria. The inscriptions also show a concern to protect the sanctity of the name of the God of Israel, a concern shared by the Judeans of the time. The material remains indicate a strong religious overlap between Mt. Zion and Mt. Gerizim in the Hellenistic period. But more than that, the inscriptions, along with early Judean evidence, reveal that the Yahwistic communities in Samaria and Judah, whatever their differences, were aligning themselves with the legacy of classical Israel in similar ways.

The fourth chapter analyzes one of the medieval Samaritan chronicles, the *Chronicon Samaritanum* (the so-called Samaritan book of Joshua), to revisit how the Samaritan writers of this work conceived of their original separation from Jews. In many popular treatments of Samaritan lore, the story of the priest Eli's defection looms large. The decision of Eli and his kin to establish a sanctuary at Shiloh to compete with the established sanctuary at Mt. Gerizim forever alters relations between mainstream and dissident Israelites. Thus, the opposition to established orthopraxis appears early in landed Israelite history, rather than much later in postmonarchic times.[7]

Although there is some truth to the common reconstruction, the theory also has serious drawbacks in that it does injustice to the context and content of the Samaritan sources. As "Samaritan Conceptions of Jewish Origins and Jewish Conceptions of Samaritan Origins: Any Common Ground?" makes clear, the *Chronicon Samaritanum* is not primarily concerned to explain Eli's actions, but rather to provide a broad reimagining of the Israelite past with particular attention given to the era of Joshua and the chieftains, which it portrays most positively. The faction headed by the errant Eli is, for instance, not the group accused of apostasy. That dubious distinction goes to a third group of errant Israelites.

In dealing with Israel's emergence in the land, the writers of the *Chronicon Samaritanum* show familiarity with a version of the historical books of the Hebrew Bible, but the story they tell is hardly the biblical story with a few new twists and turns. Rather than simply comprising a midrashic retelling of the Former Prophets, the *Chronicon Samaritanum* may be better categorized as a counter-narrative to the basic storyline found in the Former Prophets.[8] A continuous era of communal solidarity and divine satisfaction, extending from the

[7] By extension, the rift between Eli and his priestly brethren is viewed as the critical turning point in ultimately dividing southern Israelite (Jewish) history from northern Israelite (Samaritan) history.

[8] The *Chronicon Samaritanum* contains many midrashic elements, but the presence of such midrashic exegesis does not explain the plot and shape of the whole.

time of the entry into the land under Joshua through the end of the last of the chieftains (Shamsham/Samson) characterizes early Israel's experience in the land. Unlike the biblical book of Judges, the Samaritan counter-narrative about the chieftains portrays most of this period (until the end) quite positively.[9] The early history of landed Israel is a story of orthopraxis, corporate unity, and divine blessing, rather than a story of incomplete conquest, societal upheaval, and persistent heteropraxis. The force of the counter-narrative bears on the interpretation of biblical law, specifically that of Deuteronomy. The story of Israel under Joshua and the chieftains fulfills the dictates of laws mandating the unification of Yahwistic worship, once Israel experiences rest in the land (Deut 11:31–12:31). This casts the arrival of the tabernacle at Mt. Gerizim, the public sacrifices, and the corporate feasting in a new light.

II. Temple Matters

The three essays in this section deal with the postmonarchic sanctuaries at Mt. Gerizim and Jerusalem: their differences and similarities. The first two essays concentrate mostly on the material remains, while the third revisits Josephus's influential explanation of the founding of the Mt. Gerizim temple. One of the most exciting developments in southern Levantine archaeology in recent decades is the discovery of what most agree is a substantial temple complex at Mt. Gerizim, dating to the fifth century BCE, and a major expansion at the site, dating to Hellenistic times (late third to early second century BCE). Although some materials from the excavations (e.g., numismatics, faunal remains) have yet to be published, many others are now available. As the discussions about the material and epigraphic remains have progressed, fundamental questions of various kinds have emerged about the building construction and its purpose.

The chapter, "The Temple at Mt. Gerizim in the Persian Period: Precedents, Problems, and Paradoxes," addresses many of these issues. Was the architecture of the Mt. Gerizim shrine somehow derivative of the architecture (whether real or imagined) of the shrine on Mt. Zion? Another question involves the definition and purpose of the building in one or both phases of its design. May the shrine be best labelled as a monumental roofed edifice in either of its major stages of construction? Or should the sacred precinct be catalogued, as some scholars insist, as an open air altar in a walled plaza? Moreover, should similar things be said about the Jerusalem sanctuary in the Persian period, if not also in the Hellenistic period? In this theory, the main altar for animal sacrifice was subject to occasional, rather than daily use, by priests on behalf of clients in one

[9] The battle Israel faces is not so much the threat posed by external enemies as it is the inner battle to maintain corporate discipline, internal cohesion, and focus.

or more of the periods under view. The essay deals with these questions by examining five sets of literary, epigraphic, and archeological evidence: attested temple designs in the southern and northern Levant, the Mt. Gerizim building and faunal remains dating to the Persian and Hellenistic eras, the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions dating to the Hellenistic period, and the sacred precincts in the Roman period that some believe form parallels to the Mt. Gerizim building remains: the *Ḥaram Rāmet el-Ḫalīl* in Mamre and the *Ḥaram el-Ḫalīl* in Hebron.

One of the major questions about early Second Temple history concerns the sanctuary's role in the social and economic life of Judeans. Unlike the monarchic temple, the postmonarchic temple did not have a native Davidic regime to patronize it and support its daily operations. Did this mean that the Jerusalem temple was in a weaker position in the Persian period than it had been in the late Iron age? Or, conversely, did this mean, as many contend, that the temple was in a stronger position, because it putatively took on some of the economic, administrative, and social functions that the Davidic regime exercised in preexilic times? The chapter, "Were the Jerusalem and Mt. Gerizim Temples the Economic Epicenters of Their Provinces? Assessing the Textual, Archaeological, and Epigraphic Evidence," takes aim at these questions by surveying the available economic evidence pertaining to the regions of Judah and Samaria from the late Iron age through the Persian period.

Consideration of the Mt. Gerizim temple is relevant, because as a point of comparison, the archaeological and epigraphic evidence from the neighboring province of Samaria pertaining to the administrative center of Samaria and the sanctuary at Mt. Gerizim, may serve as a better analogy to comprehending the fundamental historical situation in Persian-period Yehud than are the analogies often made with the large palace-temple complexes in Babylon. By contrast, Samaria and Yehud were small sub-provinces located in a peripheral region within an immense international empire. Moreover, in each case, it may be argued that the Yahwistic temples (Jerusalem and Mt. Gerizim), were situated in locations that were at some distance from their provincial administrative centres (Ramat Raḥel and Samaria).

My work suggests that there is a fundamental disjunction between the economic and administrative prominence given to the Jerusalem temple in many scholarly reconstructions of Persian period history, based on certain readings of the prophets, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles, and studies of ancient Babylonian temple structures, on the one hand, and recent analysis of the available material remains in the southern Levant, on the other hand. The relevant material remains are the excavation results at Jerusalem, Mizpah (Tell en-Naṣbeh), and Ramat Raḥel, and the Yehud stamp impressions. Indeed, the comparison with Samaria and Mt. Gerizim should correct some misguided assumptions in those studies, which attribute so much economic prominence to the Jerusalem temple.

The publication of the Mt. Gerizim material remains offers new opportunities to revisit what ancient writers said about the Mt. Gerizim temple – its context, origins, and purposes. The chapter, "The Samaritan Schism or the Judaization of Samaria? Reassessing Josephus' Account of the Mt. Gerizim Temple," revisits the manner by which the Flavian historian portrays the origins of the Samaritan sanctuary, linking its origins to a marked deterioration in Judean-Samarian relations in the late fourth century BCE. Because many have cited the curious narrative Josephus relates (*Ant.* 11.302–346) about the building of a new temple on Mt. Gerizim to argue for a schism between Samarians and Judeans at this time, the story deserves critical scrutiny.[10]

Rather than employing Josephus' writing as a tool to understand when the Samarian temple was first built, I am employing his work as a means to understand how one important early interpreter dealt with the complexity of Judean-Samarian relations during the era in which he thought the new shrine was constructed. In so doing, my study contests the standard theory that Josephus' account portrays a major cleavage between the Yahwistic communities of Samaria and Judah during the period under view. Instead, my work argues that the Josephus narrative may be profitably read as explaining how the two communities actually grew closer in the wake of the new shrine's arrival. In Josephus' account, areas of Samaria, particularly Shechem and Mt. Gerizim, become more Judean during this period. Among the anecdotes about rivalry and division, one also finds concessions about religious contacts between the two groups, a temple resembling the Jerusalem temple, voluntary Judean migrations to Samaria, intermarriage between Judeans and Samarians, competitive emulation, sacerdotal blood relations, and cultural transformation. Rather than effectively rupturing relations between Samaria and Judah, the rise of the new shrine paradoxically leads to a strengthening of bilateral ties between Judeans and their Samarian neighbors.

III. Altered Altars

The chapters in this section examine the rewriting of pentateuchal law and biblical literature by a variety of Judean and Samarian authors. Each deals with the major altar laws in the Pentateuch and how these critical legal precepts were selectively cited, extensively reworked, and freely rearranged according to the needs and dictates of early Jewish and Samaritan interpreters. Altars built and designated for animal sacrifice carried tremendous importance in the ancient world. As Milgrom and Lerner state: "The altar … is the earthly terminus of a

[10] The tale paradoxically presupposes that Jews and Samaritans shared one united cult (in Jerusalem) prior to the erection of the new temple on Mt. Gerizim.

Divine funnel for man's communion with God."[11] As such, the altar for animal sacrifices was a critical component of how ancients implemented divine service.

The first chapter on Josephus in this section, "Altared States: Rewriting the Constitution in Josephus' *Antiquitates Judaicae*," engages how the Flavian historian deals with the disparate pieces of pentateuchal legislation mandating major Israelite sacrificial installations for animal sacrifice. For Josephus, Israel's main sacrificial altar is a constituent part of Israel's unique identity. His pentateuchal exegesis develops the thesis that Israel's ancestral constitution speaks distinctively of one holy city, one particular sanctuary, and one particular altar (*Ant*. 4.201). For Josephus, these tenets comport, in turn, with the propositions that "God is one and the race of the Hebrews is one" (*Ant*. 4.201).

Given that Josephus overtly acknowledges three altars for animal sacrifice in his rewriting of pentateuchal statutes – the tabernacle bronze altar (Exod 27:1–8), the altar at "the place" of God's own choosing (Deut 11:31–12:31), and the Shechem area altar (Deut 27:2–13), how does he reconcile these disparate demands with his thesis about there being only one altar?[12] That the altars are constructed with different materials (bronze, whole stones untouched by iron) would seem to pose a particular challenge for interpretation. If so, why does he transfer compositional traits of the Mt. Gerizim/Mt. Ebal altar to the altar mentioned in the centralization legislation and accommodate the timing of constructing the Mt. Gerizim/Mt. Ebal altar to that of implementing centralization? The extensive reworking of pentateuchal law raises yet another question. Given that he locates the one (central) altar to be "revealed through prophecy" (cf. 2 Sam 7:1–16//1 Chr 17:1–15) in Jerusalem, how does he explain the demands for the other altars? Readers may be surprised at the answers.

One of the less appreciated facts about writers living in ancient world is the keen interest these classical and ancient Near Eastern authors took in antiquity. As one scholar observes: "Typically, ancient civilizations turned their back on the future, but they saw the past spread in front of them as the sole reality, always in view as an ideal to emulate."[13] Continuing in the form of memories, traditions, institutions, sites, monuments, customs, literature, art, and inscriptions, the past was a living part of contemporary reality. Many ancients would thus likely agree with the assessment expressed by a modern writer: "The past is never dead. It's not even past."[14] For Josephus, the sites the Israelites visited, the order in which they proceeded, the challenges they encountered, the institu-

[11] J. Milgrom and B. M. Lerner, "Altar," *EncJud* 2 (2007): 12.

[12] As we shall see, Josephus also borrows from – but does not explicitly cite – the earthen and stone altar laws in the Covenant Code (Exod 20:24–26).

[13] P-. A. Beaulieu, "Mesopotamian Antiquarianism from Sumer to Babylon," in *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives* (ed. A. Schnapp et al.; Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013), 121–22.

[14] William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun* (New York: Random House, 1951), Act 1, scene 3.

tions they founded, and the rites they practiced were significant. Yet, the literature depicting such experiences, precisely because it stemmed from centuries past, could present problems for interpretation.[15] Obscure details, contradictions, outdated practices, and puzzling gaps had to be explained and, if need be, reworked. Moreover, since both Jews and Samaritans identified with the name Israel and both groups claimed the heritage of early Israel as pivotal to their own self-identities, the manner in which literati, such as Josephus, retell the stories about Israel's establishment in the land bears careful scrutiny.

The main focus of the second chapter devoted to Josephus in this section, "Altared History: Israel's Four Altars in Josephus' Reworking of the Joshua Story," is on Josephus' rewrite of Joshua's construction of an altar on Mt. Ebal near Shechem (MT Josh 8:30–35; LXX 9:2a–f). Nevertheless, the Mt. Ebal altar is only one in a sequence of four altars that Josephus posits in the land, located at Gilgal, Shiloh, Mt. Ebal, and in the Transjordan. Both in details and in major claims, the Flavian historian often departs from the precedent of his *Vorlage*. How Josephus construes the Mt. Ebal altar and the Shechem area more broadly and what this may say about Josephus' stance toward the Samaritans may be best understood in the context of what he declares about early Israel's other altars.

Josephus does not deny the pan-Israelite sacrificial rites in the Shechem area; nevertheless, he minimizes their significance in conformity with his selective overwriting of pentateuchal altar laws. The same holds true more generally of Josephus' handling of the Shechem area in the conclusion of the Joshua story (Josh 24:1–27). Josephus downplays the significance of the pan-Israelite convocation held at the site and ignores its sanctuary. In Josephus' typology, only one of the four cultic sites – the tent of meeting at Shiloh – has long-term sacrificial significance in the communal life of Israel. Although some have viewed Josephus as largely indifferent to Samarian issues, an analysis of how thoroughly he reworks the Joshua story shows Josephus to be more aware of foundational issues distinguishing Samarians from Judeans than he is sometimes thought to be.

Like Josephus, Pseudo-Philo presents Israel's establishment in the Cisjordan as a formative period in the history of God's people. During this time, Israel's normative cultic institutions begin to take shape in the land. Because this was a narrative with which both Jews and Samaritans identified, the details of that story were important to both groups. This is true, even though only the Jews came to incorporate the book of Joshua into their canon.[16] "The Altered Altar: Sacred Geography in Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*" argues that the reconfiguration of the Mt. Gerizim/Mt. Ebal biblical texts is a significant compo-

[15] See G.N. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9* (AB 12; New York: Doubleday/New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 245–65, with further references.

[16] There is no clear evidence to suggest that Josephus knew the work of Pseudo-Philo or vice-versa. The comparisons and contrasts that my analysis draws between their writings are simply designed to illumine their distinctive traits.

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