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A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

THE SAMARITAN DOCTRINE OF THE MESSIAH.

AT the Oriental Congress of 1889, Prof. Merx read a paper on the discovery which he had recently made, while cataloguing MSS. at Gotha, of a fragment of a Samaritan hymn giving important information on this subject. As the paper was not published till 1893 it was not open to criticism. Last year (1894), however, Prof. Hilgenfeld¹ returns to the subject, reproducing Merx's article in great part, and adding remarks of his own. It is, therefore, only right to point out that two years before Merx's "discovery," not only that fragment, but the whole of the hymn of which it forms part, was published, with many other interesting selections, by M. Heidenheim.² Heidenheim's book is disappointing, and his text faulty, but in this particular passage his readings are more correct than those of Merx and Hilgenfeld. It seems strange that when a learned Professor is cataloguing MSS. the most extensive collection of the texts already printed should escape his notice. It is almost incredible that a *second* learned Professor, after an interval of nearly five years, should still ignore the literature of the subject. But Samaritan studies have unfortunately suffered a good deal from this kind of treatment. Before speaking of Prof. Hilgenfeld's article, it will be convenient to give an emended translation of the fragment in question.³ The hymn, which

¹ In his *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 37th year, 2nd part, p. 233.

² *Die Samaritanische Liturgie*, Leipzig, 1887, p. 85. In the last number of his *Zeitschrift* (published since the above was in type), Hilg. acknowledges this fact, to which his attention was called by Heidenheim.

³ For the text see Heidenheim, *op. cit.*, p. 88. I have collated it with two MSS. in the British Museum (MSS. add. 19,009 and 19,651). The readings are well established, and Heidenheim's text requires only a few alterations.

belongs to the Samaritan service for the Day of Atonement, contains a good deal of interesting eschatological teaching, and was written by Abisha ben Pinhas, who died in 778 A.H. (= A.D. 1376), not as Heid. (quoted in Hilg.'s correction) says, a century later.

"My word shall instruct thee in the memorial of the Taheb¹ and his government. When he is born² in peace, his majesty shall shine forth in the heavens and the earth, and his star in the midst of its heavens.³ When this Taheb groweth up, his righteousness⁴ shall be revealed. The Lord shall call him and teach him his laws. He shall give him a scripture and clothe him with prophecy. Then shall come to pass the saying of the son of Terah in (the passage) 'it shall be when the sun goeth down,⁵ that behold a smoking furnace,' that is, he shall abide in his house; 'and a flame of fire,' that is, he shall abide upon his holy hill. Then the tabernacle shall be discovered and his pegs be fixed: and the pillar of fire and of smoke: the altars and their incense: the table and the candlestick: the ark of the covenant and his tables, with the cherubim on this side and on that, on the right and on the left. The priest shall take the pan and offer his incense, and go into the tabernacle of the congregation to make atonement for himself and for his house, and for all the congregation of Israel, and shall offer his sacrifices. ⁶ Israel shall dwell safely, freed from his fear; ⁶ and shall keep his feasts⁷ in peace, and bring his offerings. Then gladness shall be restored, and all nations shall be subdued. He shall confound the tongue of the Arabs,⁸ and the Hebrew tongue shall be manifested. Then shall be

¹ This name will be explained below. The first line is not in Merx-Hilgenfeld.

² Reading *ועת יתילך* with M.-H.

³ *שמיותו*, M.-H. "Verwüstung." M. adds "Zu *שמך* muss *שמם* Wurzel-sein. . . . An *שמך* kann man nicht denken." But in another hymn for this service (by Abraham Qabāzi, probably a century later), Genesis xxviii. 17 appears as *שמיותה* וזה שער שמיותה "and this is the gate of desolation"? The form is perhaps due to their mistaking *שמיותה* (with *ה locale*) for a feminine.

⁴ Or "triumph," as M.-H. The word is *זכותו*.

⁵ Genesis xv. 17, *בסרנותו* is difficult. M.-H. have *בסרכותו* against the MSS.

^{6,6} These words in the Gotha fragment are in the margin. Hilgenfeld thinks them a marginal note. (!) The words *האמן מן יראתו* are a standing phrase, and difficult. From other places I gather the meaning to be as given above. M. "und ist gläubig." H. wavers between that and "er (der Ta'eb) macht fest unter dem Schutze der Furcht vor ihm [eventuell: seiner Gottesfurcht]."

⁷ M.-H. *מיוו*, which they leave untranslated. Heid. (and the MSS.) correctly *מועדיו*.

⁸ *העברים* of the MSS. and Heid. is obviously right. M.-H. *העברים*, which

raised up the order of the wise, men of understanding, and there shall be¹ nothing hid any more, either above or below. But the kingdom shall continue until the latter day. Then the enemy shall go up upon his tower, and take up his parable. He shall see this glory, and speak, saying: 'How goodly are thy tents, oh! Taheb, how great his dwellings! Water shall flow from his buckets, and his strength be magnified. His king shall be higher than Gog, and his kingdom be exalted.' For he shall be king over eleven nations, which² are mentioned in his Law. The nations and the uncircumcised³ shall say each to his people: 'All that we (trusted) in is false, and this is he whose teaching is the truth: arise now,⁴ let us go to him, that we may enter under the shadow of his beams.' They shall come and believe in him, and in Moses and his law. The Jews also shall say: 'Let us come to his teaching. Cursed be Ezra⁵ and his words which he wrote in his wickedness. Mount Garizim⁶ is holy: there is not its like among the mountains. There the Taheb shall rejoice and answer in his heart of wisdom: 'Blessed be Israel with his seed! There is none like him among the peoples.' Oh! that mine eye⁷ had seen this Taheb and his majesty! Peace⁸ from me be upon him! May he attain unto his prophecy! May he enter into his camp! May he come unto his victory! May he overshadow his habitation! Peace be upon him! until his entering into his house! Peace be upon him! and upon his fathers, the pure, from⁹ whom he shall arise and receive his gifts. The

M. understands of the Jews. H. refers to Nehemiah xiii. 24, *seq.* The meaning is that Arabic, the *foreign* language now used by the Samaritans, shall give place to Hebrew, the national tongue.

¹ M.-H., "and nothing else shall hide him," ? the Taheb.

² H., "this is his memorial in his law," reading זכרון. But זכרון=זיה does not exist in this dialect: we should have זכרונו: the letters are written as one word in the MSS. The of the passive form is frequently omitted, even in roots not beginning with a dental—אזכרו, though Aphel in appearance, is really for אזכרו.

³ M. תעלים, and translates "those who go up thither (to Garizim)." H. takes M.'s conjecture העמים. Heid. has הערלים, the reading of the MSS.

⁴ קומו בני M.-H. "Arise, his sons"; בני cannot at least be a plural of בן. It seems to be a sort of complement of the imperative. A variant is בנן.

⁵ Because they hold that Ezra falsified the Law, so as to detract from the sanctity of Mount Gerizim.

⁶ הרגריזים is always one word (M.-H. write it as two). See the fragment of Eupolemus (in Freudenthal, *Hellenistische Studien*, i. and ii., p. 224, cap. 419, § 5), where Ἀργαριζήμ is used as a proper name.

⁷ M.-H. read סיני, and point עמרת, translating, "es besitzt etwas, das dem Sinai entspricht. Das ist der Taheb," etc. עמרה is a common Samaritan form of the Aramaic חמא.

⁸ In Heid.'s text על here, and in the following lines, should be struck out.

⁹ M.-H. כהם, and translate "der da stehen wird wie sie."

peace of God be upon Moses, son of Amram, and his prayers: who revealed to us in his book this mystery and the secrets of it. He who says 'is there¹ any prophet like to Moses?' shall see what is his (the Taheb's) greatness."

It may be thought that the above are mere corrections of detail, and that over-much time has been spent on them; but in a field in which so few have laboured, we must pick out every stone of stumbling if we would expect a healthy crop of results. We cannot get at a right appreciation of Samaritan theology with such *a priori* readings and translation as the Professors have given. I only regret that, as the texts are not yet in print, I cannot always support my view by reference to parallel passages—a method which is exceptionally necessary in the elucidation of these writers.

After his translation, Prof. Hilgenfeld proceeds to discuss the identity of the Taheb according to Samaritan teaching and the meaning of the term. We may as well follow his arrangement. First of all, however, we must again insist on the necessity of putting aside all preconceived notions, and viewing the matter in a dry light. There is no reason to suppose, until the facts show it, that the Samaritans shared Jewish, and still less Christian, ideas of a Messiah. The question rather is, who and what was the Taheb, and does he bear any resemblance to a Messiah?

The meaning of the term הרתהב (less correctly השהב) was first thoroughly discussed in his usual happy manner by Gesenius, whom Hilgenfeld does not even mention. In his *Carmina Samaritana*,² Gesenius gives a list of derivations proposed,³ and finally states his own opinion that

¹ *I.e.*, every one who utters this the Samaritan confession of faith—every true believer. Or, perhaps, as M.-H., "the prophet is like Moses." A variant is הן נב', "behold a prophet like Moses." That it is a general description of the orthodox may be judged from the fact that the phrase is a quotation from the Durrân (Heid., *op. cit.*, p. 144, No. XL.), where the earliest MS. (Vaticanus) has הן נב'.

² p. 75, note on *Carm.*, iii. 22.

³ Cellarius takes it from הן "hasten," and הן "give"; Lobstein from

תהב is a participle of תוב (שוב), commonly meaning *penitent* (i.e. *returning*), but here used transitively, *conversor*,¹ *he who restores*. He considers this not *justo audacius*, comparing the use of שוב for השיב in Hebrew. Vilmar² holds the same opinion. Merx, on the contrary, will not accept this, and declares for the meaning *rediens*, in which he is followed by Hilgenfeld, supposing that the Taheb will be either Moses or Joshua *redivivus*.³ I would not presume to judge between Gesenius and Merx on a point of grammar, but if one must choose, *malo cum Gesenio errare*, since the meaning *conversor* is in accordance with what is said of the Taheb, while *rediens* is not. Moreover, if as a mere conjecture the meaning *conversor* seems *justo audacius*, it must be remembered that Samaritan usage is not to be conformed to Hebrew or Aramaic laws, and instances of the transitive use of תוב might certainly be found. In support of his view Hilgenfeld argues that in Deuteronomy xviii. 15 and 18, which was used as a prophecy of the Taheb, the promise of "a prophet like unto thee" is no hindrance to our regarding the Taheb as Moses *redivivus* in the same sense as St. John Baptist is Elias which was for to come. But the idea of a Taheb who is Moses and yet not Moses would be quite beyond the powers of the Samaritan mind. As to Joshua, it may safely be said that there are none but *a priori* reasons for bringing him into the question at all. In the

هشاب, "bright star"; Bruns from صاحب, "master"; Bohlen, seeking, as usual, an Aryan source, from Persian شاه اب, "bright king"; Bertholdt misread his dictionary, and proposed an Arabic word هتهب meaning هتهب; de Sacy, with more honesty, gave it up.

¹ It is true that this particular passage (*Carm. Sam.*, iii. 22) is not to be so translated, but that does not affect the general argument.

² Abulf, *Ann. Sam.*, p. xl. sq., quoted by M.-H.

³ Juynboll (*Chron. Sam.*, p. 127) also holds that the Taheb will be Moses, but he has mistaken the passage (cap. vi.) on which he chiefly relies. الرجعة there has its common meaning of "resurrection," and يرتبه refers to Moses' intercession on the day of judgment.

late Samaritan book of Joshua he is a great king, but in their theology he holds a most subordinate position. Moses is unlikely, but it is certainly not Joshua.

Even in the hymn translated above there are passages which tell against Moses: "the Lord will teach him his laws and give him a scripture." It would be derogatory to Moses that he should need to be taught God's law. Again, "they shall come and believe in him (the Taheb), and in Moses and his laws." From these two passages any unbiassed reader would surely gather that Moses and the Taheb are distinct persons. The same may be inferred also from Marqah, a writer of the 4th century A.D., who in a treatise¹ on the death of Moses, though concerned with the praise of the greatest and last of the prophets, makes no allusion to his return as Taheb. Yet this could hardly have been omitted if the view had been current at the time. He even makes Moses say, "after this day I shall never more have dealings among you"; and later on, "and no man knoweth his grave unto this day. What is this day? The day of recompense." That is to say, the day of the general resurrection, when the judgment will take place; but this, as will be shown below, is to be after the death of the Taheb. Thus the identification of the Taheb with Moses or Joshua, to explain the meaning *rediens*, breaks down. As to the opposite view, we have larger evidence now than existed in Gesenius' time, and it abundantly proves that the traditional explanation given by the modern Samaritans is *conversor*. The priest Shalmah b. Tobiah is reported by Bargès,² who conversed with him, to have said, "Hathab (*i.e.* hat-taheb) le Restaurateur: car nous savons qu'il paraîtra pour faire revivre le temps de grâce, rétablir le tabernacle sur le mont Garizim et restaurer le royaume d'Israel"—a succinct state-

¹ *Des Samaritaners Marqah Erzählung über den Tod Moses.* Von E. Munk, Berlin, 1890.

² *Les Samaritains de Naplouse*, p. 91.

ment of the doctrine, but not a word of Moses. The same account is given by the writer of the letter to Ludolph in 1689, and by the present priest, Jacob b. Aaron, in a letter to Kautzsch¹ in 1884. The Arabic part of his letter is quite clear, though the Samaritan-Hebrew is confused. Jacob also gave me the same explanation, when I visited Nâblus last year, referring to this very hymn of Abisha in illustration.

Before describing the doctrine more fully, it will be well to give the substance of part of another hymn for the day of Atonement bearing on the subject. It is by Abraham b. Joseph haqqabazi, a writer who was held in high esteem about a century later than Abisha, and is interesting as giving the reasons of the faith that is in them.

"I will even make mention," he begins, "to you who here are gathered, of a word that shall rejoice your heart and comfort your soul, the memorial of the Taheb and the days of favour (or grace), which shall be revealed in the second kingdom; whereof we have witness in the true Law that was received by the light of prophecy (Moses)." The first witness is, as before, Genesis xv. 17, compared with Deuteronomy xxxii. 22. "The burning lamp," which shall "set on fire the foundations of the mountains," foreshows the cleansing of Mount Garizim from its defilement. Observe, he says, the distinction between "consume" (which refers to the wicked) and "set on fire." The second witness is Genesis xv. 18: "to thy seed have I given this land." In the former kingdom (that of Joshua) they did not possess the land "from the river of Egypt unto the great river," but they shall possess it in the second kingdom. The third is Genesis xv. 19 *seq.*, to destroy the nations there mentioned. The fourth is Genesis xlix, 1: "Gather yourselves together that I may tell you" . . . all the

¹ *Ein Brief des Hohenpriesters der Samaritaner Ja'kub ibn Harun.* E. Kautzsch, 1885 (Berlin?).

evils of the days of displeasure (Fanuta), as Moses said (Deuteronomy xxxi. 29); "and evil will befall you in the latter days." The word "gather" foreshows the days of favour, as in Deuteronomy xxx. 4: "from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee." The fifth is the sign of Moses' hand (Exod. iv. 6). "Leprous as snow" typifies the Fanuta and the righteous who shall live in that time. With this is to be compared Leviticus xxvi. 42-44. "And behold it was turned as his other flesh" (Exod. iv. 7) foreshows the return of favour. The sixth is Numbers xxiv. 18: "and Israel shall do valiantly" indicates the restoration of the kingdom and Israel's rule over Esau. The seventh is Deuteronomy xxx. 1-6: "when the Fanuta has prevailed . . . the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity . . . and multiply thee above thy fathers . . . and circumcise thy heart." The eighth is Deuteronomy xxxiii. 2 *seq.* Seir is Esau: Mount Paran is the children of Hagar (the Mahommedans) who are to be subdued. The passage also shows that in the days of favour "every one shall receive of thy words" (ver. 3) and say, "Moses commanded us a law" (ver. 4: the beginning of a sort of creed much used in their liturgies), whereas at the first giving of the law they said, We have no strength to perform all these commandments.

These two passages are perhaps the most explicit on the subject in the Liturgies, although isolated references are many. Now in trying to draw out the doctrine implied in them, we are at once met by two allied articles of faith, which can only be very briefly described here: the רחוקה or time of favour; the פנותה or time of displeasure.

The time of favour has been well described by Vilmar.¹ It prevailed until the end of the priesthood of Uzzi, contemporary of Eli, during which time, according to the

¹ *Ann. Abulf.*, p. xxxviii., *seqq.*

Samaritan book of Joshua and the chronicle of Abulfath, Israel (*i.e.* the Samaritans) enjoyed great power and kept the law. Joshua is described as a great king conquering all the enemies of God and his nation by more or less miraculous means.

Then came the Fanuta¹ or time of displeasure, under which the nation still labours. Its beginning was marked by the disappearance of the tabernacle and of all outward signs of Divine favour, 260 years after their entry into Canaan.

The connexion of these two doctrines with that of the Taheb is obvious. It is the restoration of this original prosperity and of Divine favour which will be effected by the Taheb, the restorer. He is, perhaps primarily, (for are not the things of this world of first importance?) a temporal king, who shall restore the kingdom to Israel: and this is the meaning of our second extract in speaking of a first kingdom (that of Joshua), and of a second kingdom (that of the Taheb). But he is also a prophet who shall restore the religion of Moses, so that the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Mount Garizim: and this is the meaning of our former extract in describing the rehabilitation of the tabernacle and its services. The kingdom will be restored, but this is intimately connected with a return to righteousness, and since righteousness implies a previous repentance and pardon, the consideration of the matter fitly forms part of the Atonement service. "Quicumque vult salvus esse," whoever would help to hasten the advent of the Taheb, before all things it is necessary that he repent, for the kingdom is at hand. That seems to be the argument.

The time of the coming of the Taheb is uncertain. "Oh that mine eye might have seen him," the desire of the

¹ The name gave some trouble to Gesenius (*Carm. Sam.*, p. 95, note on § 7), who did not succeed in elucidating it. Etymologically it can only come from פנה in the sense of a "turning away" of God's favour. See a rather pathetic contrast between the two states in Heidenheim, *op. cit.*, p. 152, line 3 *seqq.*

nation, says Abisha. "May the child who is born attain to (the time of) the Taheb," says Marqah.¹ And again in one of the most recent compositions, only found in a Bodleian MS., it is clear still that of that day and that hour knoweth no man, for the writer (Pinhas b. Isaac, still living) says, "May ye return to favour, and the Taheb arise among you"; and farther on, "May the Taheb arise speedily, and may mine eye see his days." Speculation on the matter was natural, but apparently not countenanced by the doctors.

As in pre-Christian apocrypha, from which the Samaritans may have borrowed something, he is in no sense divine. According to Petermann,² the Taheb shall live 110 years. At his death, for he is to die, like the Messiah the son of Joseph among the Jews, "he shall come to his burial, and be gathered to his people, and be buried in a secret place (?) with Joseph, the fruitful bough, his father and progenitor, or with Joshua, son of Nun, as the ancients said. The tabernacle shall not be hid, nor his light be quenched," etc.³ In fact, the lifetime of the Taheb, and the period immediately succeeding, are to be a sort of millennium: "until the Lord turn away (His favour), and His wrath and anger be kindled upon all peoples in their generation, because of the evil deeds which they do in their frowardness. Then shall He smite the earth as in the time of the flood and its day. The light of the sun shall grow pale at the beginning of every month, and the moon and the stars shall not give their light. Every high place shall be overturned, and the valleys and hills, with quaking at the day of vengeance, its glory and its majesty." One cannot but be struck with the likeness of this passage to the descrip-

¹ Quoted by Vilmar, *op. cit.*, p. xliii., but wrongly translated.

² *Reisen*, i. 284, quoted by M.-H., observing that the Taheb is thus inferior to Moses, who lived 120 years.

³ This and the two following passages are from the continuation of Abisha's hymn. *Heid.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 91, 92, 94.

tion in St. Matthew xxiv. 29, 37, 39—in fact the whole chapter. The difference is that for the Samaritans, the tribulation of those days, after the coming and death of the Taheb, is not succeeded by any second advent. There follows the great and terrible day of the Lord, יום נקם יום גדול, with the resurrection and judgment of all creatures. “The people shall be divided in two parts; the division of the holy and righteous shall go into the garden of Eden, and the division of the sinners be broiled before the fire.” Moses is the only mediator, “by whose prayers the fire is quenched.” The world will then apparently come to an end: and this seems indicated by the full name, יום נקם ושלם. Much here is no doubt vague and indefinite in detail, but the main outlines are clear enough. It is but natural that the belief should lack precision on minor points. Perhaps parts of it belonged to the esoteric teaching, נכסִי, as is hinted by Abisha in speaking of the state of the blessed, and in one of the letters¹ with regard to the Taheb, “but the secret things belong unto the Lord our God,” etc. (Deut. xxix. 29).

It would be inappropriate to omit mention of the passage in St. John's Gospel (cap. iv. 7-42) and of the history of the Taheb-doctrine. Moreover the conversation recorded by St. John forms a very remarkable “undesigned coincidence” with the views implied in the Samaritan liturgies. Even in the short passage given above from Abisha we find the Jews regarded as the typical enemies of the Samaritans (as in St. John iv. 9); the opposition between Jerusalem and Mount Gerizim, on which she founds her argument (iv. 20); when the Taheb comes there shall be nothing hid any more (as in iv. 23),² meaning primarily

¹ Quoted by Kirchheim, *Carme Shomron*, p. 18. This is the opinion also of Juynboll (*Lib. Jos.*, p. 129).

² The recently published Syriac Gospels from Mount Sinai have “he will give all things”; perhaps a confusion between יתן and יתני. It is tempting to conjecture יתניב with an allusion to the etymology of the name תהב.

things connected with worship and the true religion. It was the telling all things that ever she did which most impressed the woman, as we see from the repetition, verses 29 and 39, and it was for this reason that He must be a prophet; but (she would argue) if a prophet, then He must be the Taheb, for Moses was the last prophet; all who came since were false; consequently this one, being true, must be that prophet whom "the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee" (Deut. xviii. 15). As soon as the consequence of her admission (iv. 19) becomes clear to her, she at once tests him on the fundamental point of difference between Jews and Samaritans, the holiness of Mount Gerizim (iv. 20). Even the unusual phrase "the Saviour of the world" (iv. 42) though not found perhaps in the liturgies, is quite in keeping with Abisha's account. Further, the living water and the spiritual thirst, the promise of everlasting life, the spiritual nature of God, the need of worshipping in spirit and in truth,—all these are characteristic of the liturgies of all periods. There is no proof and little probability that any of the liturgies were contemporary with St. John.¹ What is certain is, that while doctrine has been developed in detail, the main character of the theology has been preserved with a tenacious conservatism.

If we may assume then that by Messiah the woman meant the Taheb, whatever be held as to the date of St. John's Gospel, we are justified in believing that the doctrine was already in existence in the first century A.D. It was however no new thing. She states it uncompromisingly. "I know": it is a matter of common belief. Probably the belief had become definite among the Samaritans at about the same time and for the same reasons as among the Jews, as a protest against the flood of misfortune which over-

¹ On the dates see my article in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for October, 1894.

whelmed both nations in the Maccabæan period. As usual in the beginnings of things, we have no documents to help to an understanding of the doctrine in this early stage, but there are indications that it obtained only a gradual acceptance. For Samaritans an article of faith must necessarily be founded on the Law of Moses, since they reject the rest of the Jewish canon. Now it cannot be said that the Pentateuch foretells the Taheb with any clearness, even on their method of exegesis. Meanings had therefore to be read into the text to serve as grounds of faith. But the Samaritan Targum contains, so far as I am aware, no reference to the Taheb. Though bearing a strong resemblance to Onqelos, it does not follow him in the passages which he makes to refer to Messiah. These are Genesis xlix. 10: Mas. שִׁילָה, Onq. מְשִׁיחָא, Sam. T. שְׁלָה—Numbers xxiv. 17: Mas. שְׁבַט, Onq. מְשִׁיחָא, Sam. T. שְׁבַט (v. l. מְקַל). There seems to be sufficient reason for thinking that Sam. T. existed orally, if not in writing, at least as early as the time of Marqah, in the middle of the 4th century, A.D. The explanation of its silence must be that its oral transmission dated from a time before the rise of the Taheb-belief, which did not gain sufficient strength by the 4th century to oust traditional views. For instance, שְׁלָה (for שִׁילָה) in Genesis xlix. 10 is explained of Solomon, and if this was the early view, it was likely, considering the conservatism of the people, to persist in spite of the new doctrine. In Marqah, though the indications are scanty, the doctrine seems to be taken for granted. There is then a break in the literature till the 11th century. Abu-Said's Arabic version of the Pentateuch, which belongs to that time, has in Genesis xlix. 10 the perhaps earlier traditional explanation مَسِيحَان (v. l. مَسِيحَان) for שְׁלָה.¹ The liturgical notices are still very scanty, if there are any. It is not till the 14th century that we find any full statement. The same causes which led to the rise of

¹ Kuenen's edition did not reach Numbers.

the doctrine seem then to have brought about its full development. No doubt it had grown in the interval, but the circumstantial account given by Abisha had its reason. Abulfath (14th century), a contemporary of Abisha, definitely states that he was instigated by the High Priest Pinhas to write his chronicle, in order, by narrating the former glories of his nation, to support them under the troubles which lay hard upon them; and the same was probably Abisha's object in insisting on his eschatological teaching and giving it shape. He took the current notions and defined them; but since he was a man of some power and originality, he may also have contributed of his own, founding of course what was new on the Pentateuch. Abraham Qabâzi and Abd Allah b. Shelomo may have made some advance in the following century, but here the history of the doctrine ceases. The poverty of subsequent writers is lamentably evident. They do but give an uncertain sound, a faint echo of Abisha and earlier authors.

A discussion of the sources of the doctrine and its connexion with Jewish and Christian apocrypha is better deferred until the texts are printed in full.¹

A. COWLEY.

¹ A complete edition of the liturgies, with a translation, has been undertaken by the Clarendon Press.