

SAMARITANS LOOKING FOR MESSIAH.

The woman of Samaria, talking with Jesus at Jacob's well, said, "I know that Messiah cometh (which is called Christ") (John 4:25, Revised Version.) Her people accepted the five books of Moses and from them drew their hope of a coming Messiah.

A most wonderful corroboration of the woman's words is found in the belief of the Samaritans to-day. They belong to the race of the woman with whom Christ talked. They live at the ancient Shechem, (now *Nablus*,) not far from Jacob's well. They have a copy of the Pentateuch, which is of great antiquity. They celebrate all the Mosaic festivals, and are the only ones of all the Jewish race who offer sacrifices at the Passover.

The *Jewish Intelligence* gives some interesting facts. The community now numbers about a hundred and fifty souls. By wearing of pink turbans they are distinguished from other people of the land. Their high priest is Jacob ibn Harun. Prof. Strack, of the German Palestine Association, had an interview with the high priest and questioned him concerning the belief of his people. The high priest replied in a letter, saying that their word *Taheb* (Ta'ib in Hebrew, signifying the Promised Prophet who will convert the people) refers to the prophet promised by the Lord, "I will raise them up a prophet," etc. (Deut. 18:15,18.) They interpret this as meaning "one who will teach the nations the good way, and lead them to walk in it only, so that the whole world will repent of its sin and become converted and purified from all evil." It is indeed a remarkable fact that the Samaritans, who accept only the Pentateuch, should have so strong a belief in the coming Messiah, and adopt the interpretation of Deut. 18:15,18, which the New Testament gives (Acts 3:22; 7:37; John 4:25.) They think that they are now living in the age of "apostacy," which will only end with the appearance of Taheb, the Messiah, who will re-establish worship on Gerizim in its pristine purity.

Great political convulsions will precede. "Then, the wisest of all the nations will be charged by the kings of the earth to find out the true faith. Among them will appear also Taheb, as the representative of the Samaritans, and quite unconscious of his Messiahship. But the whole council will be so impressed by his superior wisdom that they will follow him to Gerizim, where they will find the law of Moses, the vessels of the temple, and the hidden manna." Then the whole earth will submit to the law of Moses and to Taheb. At the foot of "this mountain" (Gerizim) of which the woman spoke to Jesus, her people still worship in a humble synagogue, in their prostrations throwing themselves on their faces towards the eastern summit of Mount Gerizim. They are still looking for Messiah.

– *S.S. World.*

