

were greatly like the *Ionic* letters; the same says *Diodorus Siculus* of the original and names of those letters, and relates <sup>a</sup>, that the brass pot *Cadmus* offered to *Minerva Lindia*, had an inscription of *Phœnician* letters on it: the *Greeks* therefore, themselves, acknowledge, that they had their letters from the *Phœnicians*, as the above writers affirm, and so *Euphorus* <sup>c</sup>, *Zenodotus* <sup>f</sup>, and others; hence *Josephus* <sup>e</sup> observes, that they glory in it, that they received them from them; so that this is a matter out of question: and *Bianconi* <sup>h</sup> is of opinion, that the ancient *Greeks* used the very letters of the *Phœnicians*; and indeed this seems to be the meaning of *Herodotus*, in the place before referred to; and *Dictys Cretensis* is said <sup>i</sup> to have written his history of the *Trojan* wars, in the *Greek* language, but in *Phœnician* letters; and so *Linus* and *Orpheus* wrote in the letters of the *Pelasgi*, the same with the *Phœnician*, as says \* *Diodorus*; and the *Greeks* formerly wrote as the *Phœnicians* did, from

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<sup>a</sup> Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 328, 329, 340.    <sup>c</sup> Apud Clem. Alex. Stromat. l. 1. p. 305.    <sup>f</sup> In Laert. vit. Philosoph. l. 7. p. 455.    <sup>e</sup> Contr. Apion. l. 1. f. 2.    <sup>h</sup> De Antiqu. Liter. Heb. p. 59.    <sup>i</sup> Vid. Fabritii Bibliothec. Gr. l. 1. c. 5. f. 10. p. 33    \* Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 200, 201.

the right to the left, for in this form was the name of *Agamemnon* written, on his statue at *Olympia*<sup>b</sup>; and thus wrote the *Etrusci*, who had their letters from the *Greeks* †, whose ancient language was the *Aramæan* or *Syrian* ‡; which way of writing by the *Greeks*, was gradually by little and little disused, and issued in a form like that of the ploughing of oxen, called *Ἐξσποφῆδον*, in which manner the laws of *Solon* were written, as appears from *Suidas*<sup>c</sup> and *Harpocratian*<sup>d</sup>; that is alternately, from the right to the left. Now as the *Greeks* received their letters from the *Phœnicians*, and there is a similarity of the letters of the one to those of the other, as it is reasonable to suppose there should, and as *Herodotus*, upon his own sight, affirms there was, as before observed, nay, were the same; so there is a great likeness between the *Greek* and the present *Samaritan* letters; as the *Samaritans* wrote from the right hand towards the left, if the position of the *Samaritan* letters be inverted for that pur-

<sup>b</sup> Pausan. Eliac. 1. five l. 5. p. 338. † Vid. Dickinson. Delphi Phœnic. c. 10. & Reinesium de lingua, Punicæ, c. 12. f. 30. ‡ Reines. Ib. c. 2. f. 16. <sup>c</sup> In voce νομοσ. <sup>d</sup> In Οξσφῆδον.

purpose, as Mr. *Bedford* remarks <sup>k</sup>, the letters will appear to be the same ; or, however, very much alike : the use to be made of this will soon and easily be perceived ; for, as *Bochart* <sup>l</sup> reasons, this being the case, it follows that the *Samaritan* characters are the very same which were used in *Phœnicia* in the times of *Cadmus* ; and it is acknowledged by many learned men, that the letters or characters of the ancient *Canaanites*, that is, the *Phœnicians*, were either the same with, or very like to the *Samaritan* characters <sup>m</sup>, or that the old *Phœnician* letters, and the *Samaritan* are very similar, and nearly the same, so that they may be reckoned the same <sup>n</sup>; and whereas the *Phœnicians* received their letters from the *Affyrians*, or *Chaldeans*, it follows that the *Samaritan* letters being so like the *Phœnician*, must be the same, or near the same, with the old *Affyrian* and *Chaldean* characters ; and that the people who are properly called *Samaritans*, had both their language and their letters from the *Chaldeans* or *Syrians*, will  
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<sup>k</sup> Chronology, p. 479.

<sup>l</sup> Ep. Vossio col. 859.

<sup>m</sup> Universal History, vol. 2. p. 347. <sup>n</sup> Bochart. Canaan l. 1. c. 20. col. 451. Dr. Kennicott. Dissert. 2. p. 151. 156.

appear probable from the original of them, next to be considered.

IT is amazing to me, that some learned men should make the ten tribes of *Israel* that revolted under *Jeroboam*, the original of the *Samaritans*. *Samaria* indeed was built in the times of *Omri*, a successor of his, and not before, and by him, between whom and *Jeroboam*, reigned *Nadab*, *Baasha*, *Elah* and *Zimri*, and this city also became the metropolis of the ten tribes, and was inhabited only by *Israelites*, tho' never from hence were called *Samaritans*, but *Israel* or *Ephraim*; nor had they any more connexion with the people after called *Samaritans* than with the *Scythians* and *Tartars*; for it was not till after the *Israelites* were carried captive into *Assyria*, that those, after called *Samaritans*, were sent as a colony from thence to re-people *Samaria*, which was entirely stripped of its inhabitants by the king of *Assyria*; nor does it appear that those who were left in the land of *Israel* had any society with this new colony, or mixed with 'em, either in civil or religious things, but returned, at least, many of them, to the pure worship of God, and joined with the  
tribe

tribe of *Judab*, and put themselves under the government of the kings of it, and went with that tribe captive into *Babylon*. Nor is it clear that either those of the ten tribes, or those of the two tribes, had any thing to do with these *Samaritans*, for three hundred years after their first settlement in *Samaria*, nor they with them; even until they were joined by some renegado *Jews* in the times of *Manasseh* the priest, for whom a temple was built in *Gerrizzim* by *Sanballat*; the only instance is of the priest sent from *Assyria* to teach them the worship of the God of the land, which they very coolly and hypocritically received, still continuing in the idolatry they brought with them, and in which they continued to the times of *Ezra*, *2 Kings*, xvii. 27, 28, 29, 33, 44. on which account the *Israelites* that were left in the land were obliged to keep at a distance from them, even when they first came among them, for had they joined them, it may reasonably be thought, there would have been a priest, who, though of *Jero-boam's* religion, could have instructed them as well as the priest sent from among the captives in *Assyria*, who also must have been

been of the same sort: now, either there were no priests left in the land, or, if there were, they had not joined the *Samaritans*, and though they had officiated in *Jeroboam's* idolatry, did not chuse to join them in theirs; and certain it is, that in the times of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, the *Jews* would have nothing to do with the *Samaritans*, especially in religious things, *Ezra* iv. 1, 2, 3. *Nehemiah* ii. 20. and though under the influence of *Sanballat* their governor, they received the renegado *Jews* with his son-in-law *Manasseh* at the head of them, it does not appear that they cordially embraced them, since in any time of trouble the *Jews* were in, [they did not care to own they had any connexion with them; so in the times of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, by whom the *Jews* were greatly distressed, they wrote unto him, and desired they might not be considered as of the same religion with the *Jews*, and be involved with them in the same distress; since, though their ancestors had been forced into a compliance with some parts of their worship, yet they assured him they were different from them, both in their manners or customs, and in their original;

original; and, whereas they had built an altar on mount *Gerizzim*, not dedicated to any deity, they desired it might, for the future be called the temple of the *Grecian Jupiter*<sup>n</sup>; though, at other times, when the circumstances of the *Jews* were more favourable, then they claimed kindred with them, and derived their descent from *Joseph*, and his sons *Manasseh*, and *Ephraim*<sup>o</sup>, as they did from *Jacob* in the times of *Christ*; and yet then the *Jews* had no dealings with them, *John* iv. 9, 12, and they are manifestly distinguished by our Lord himself from the *Jews*, and from the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*, *Matt.* x. 5, 6. *John* iv. 22. What is said in favour of the *Samaritans* by Jewish writers, as by *Maimonides*\*, and by *Obadiab Bartenora*†, must be understood as expressing the opinion their ancestors had of them, after they embraced the *Jewish* religion; in which they thought they were hearty and sincere, and so gave credit to them, until the wise men of *Israel*, as they say, made a strict enquiry about 'em, and

<sup>n</sup> Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. f. 5.      <sup>o</sup> Ibid. l. 11. c. 8. f. 6.      \* Comment. in Misn. Beracot, c. 8. 8.      † Comment. in. Ib. c. 7. 1.

and found that they worshipped the image of a dove; after which they reckoned them as other idolatrous heathens, and would have nothing to do with them, as is asserted by them in those very passages where the character is given of them, as strict observers of the written law \*

A LATE writer<sup>p</sup> suggests, that *Jeroboam* not only coined a new religion by the help of his priests, but a new language and letters, to keep the people close unto him, which language he supposes to be the *Samaritan*; but this is said without any proof, or shadow of probability; and with equal probability is what *Genebrard*<sup>q</sup>, from a *Jewish* writer, asserts, and which perhaps may better suit the hypothesis of a change of letters, than where it is commonly placed; that “ the *Jews* in *Rehobo-*  
 “ *am*’s time, that they might not join with  
 “ the schismatic *Israelites*, in any use of fa-  
 “ cred things, contrived the form of letters  
 “ which are now used, i. e. the square  
 “ letters, changing their former figures,  
 “ and

\* Vide Guisum in Ib. Ling. Heb. Natal. p. 72. 3203. e Mose Gerundense.

<sup>p</sup> Kalf. Dissert. Philolog. de Chronolog. ad A. M.



“ and left those which have been since  
 “ called the *Samaritan* letters ;” but, the  
*Samaritans* had their original language  
 and letters elsewere ; and from whence  
 they had them, may be concluded from  
 the account given of them in *2 Kings* xvii.  
 24, 30, 31. where the places from whence  
 they came are expressly named, and the ido-  
 latry they brought with them fully de-  
 scribed, and in which they continued ; and  
 by confidering which, it will appear, that  
 they were originally *Chaldeans* or *Phæni-*  
*cians*, and had the same religion, language,  
 and letters they had ; some of them were  
 brought from *Babylon*, the metropolis of  
 the *Chaldean* empire, and perhaps the  
 greater part, since they are first mentioned ;  
 and who, no doubt, brought with them  
 their language and letters, the *Chaldean*, as  
 they did their idolatry ; for they made *succoth*  
*benoth*, or *the tabernacles of the daughters*,  
 or *booths of Venus*, as *Selden* † thinks it may  
 be rendered ; and which may have respect to  
 the apartments in the temple of *Mylitta*,  
 or *Venus* in *Babylon*, the like to which  
 those

† De Diis, Syr. Syntagm. 2. c. 7. p. 713.

those people made in *Samaria*, in which women, once in their lives, prostituted themselves to whomsoever asked them, in honour of *Venus* ; of which filthy practice, *Herodotus* <sup>†</sup> makes mention ; and from the *Babylonians* the *Phœnicians* had the same custom, their women prostituted themselves before their idols, and dedicated their gain to them, being strongly persuaded they would be propitious to them, and they should enjoy prosperity, as *Athanasius* <sup>‡</sup> affirms ; and *Valerius Maximus* <sup>¶</sup> relates, that they had a temple called the temple of *Sicca Venus*, which is near in sound to *Succoth Benoth*, where their matrons before marriage prostituted their bodies for gain ; and there was a *Phœnician* colony, three days journey from *Carthage*, called *Sicca Veneria* <sup>‡</sup> ; to which may be added, that it was a custom with the *Cyprians*, another colony of the *Phœnicians*, for virgins before marriage to prostitute themselves, and give their gain to *Venus* <sup>¶</sup> ; by all which, it is plain from whom these *Samaritans* received their impiety and impurity : others of these  
people

<sup>†</sup> Clio, five l. 1. c. 199. <sup>‡</sup> Contr. Gentes, p. 21. <sup>¶</sup> Dict. & Fact. Memorab. l. 2. c. 6. f. 15. <sup>‡</sup> Ptolem. Geograph. l. 4. c. 3. vid. Reines. de Ling. Punic. c. 8. f. 28. & Rivin. de Majumis, c. 7. f. 26. <sup>¶</sup> Justin. e Trogo l. 18. c. 5.

people were brought from *Cuthab*, or *Cutha*, a city in *Erec*, a province of *Babylon*, where it is said *Abraham* lived; the *Samaritans* are commonly called *Cuthim*, or *Cuthites* in Jewish writings<sup>1</sup>; and so these were of the same country with the former, and had the same language and letters in all probability; the idol they made for themselves was *Nergal*, which is part of the name of two of the princes of *Babylon*, it being usual with great personages in the east, to take their idols into their names, See *Jer.* xxxix. 3. this name according to *Hillerus*, signifies the fountain of light, and denotes the sun the *Babylonians* worshipped: the next that were brought to *Samaria* by the king of *Affyria* were brought from *Ava* the same with *Iva*, *Is.* xxxvii. 17. and perhaps the same with the *Avim*, *Deut.* ii. 23. a people that formerly dwelt in *Phœnicia*, or on the borders of it, from whence might be a colony of them in the country of *Affyria* or *Babylon*; in the *Septuagint* version of v. 31. they are called *Hivites*, which were one of the seven nations of  
*Canaan*,

<sup>1</sup> Hyde Hist. Relig. Vet. Perf. c. 2. p. 39, 40.   <sup>2</sup> T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 91. 1. Vid. Pirke Eliezer, c. 26. fol. 26. 2. and c. 38. fol. 44. 2.

*Canaan*, or of old *Phœnicia*, the remains of which had settled in those parts; these had for their idols, *Nibbaz* and *Tartak*, which according to *Hillerus*<sup>b</sup>, signify the one the *remote one seeth*, that is, the sun which beholds all things; and the other a *chain*, denoting either the fixed stars chained to their places, or the *Satellites* of the planets fixed to their orbs, worshipped by the *Chaldeans* and *Assyrians*: the next came from *Hamath*, a city in *Syria*, on the northern borders of the land of *Canaan*, *Numb.* xxxiv. 8. their idol is called *Ashima*, which, as *Hillerus*<sup>c</sup> says, was with the *Arabs*, the name of a lion, the symbol of the sun; which might be worshipped by these men, under this name, as the sun was the chief object of the worship of the *Assyrians* and *Phœnicians*, as *Macrobius*<sup>d</sup> observes: the last of this colony of the *Samaritans*, were men that came from *Se-pharvaim*, which was either the *Sipharab* of *Ptolemy*<sup>e</sup>, in *Mesopotamia*, or that which was near *Babylon*. *Abydenus*<sup>f</sup> makes mention

<sup>b</sup> Onomastic. sacr. p. 605.      <sup>c</sup> Ib. p. 609.  
<sup>d</sup> Saturnal. l. 4. c. 21, 42.      <sup>e</sup> Geograph. l. 5. c. 18.  
<sup>f</sup> Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 41. p. 457.

tion of, or rather, as *Vitringa* thinks<sup>z</sup>, a city in *Syro-Phœnicia*, or a province in which *Abydenus*<sup>h</sup> places *Heliopolis*, namely *Cæle-Syria*; and it is certain the idolatry these men were guilty of, is the same with that of the old *Canaanites* or *Phœnicians*, who burnt their children in the fire to *Molech*, *Lev.* xviii. 21. as these did to *Anammelech* and *Adrammelech*, the same with *Molech*, as the word *Melech* with which they end, shews, which signifies king, as *Molech* does: that the *Phœnicians* sacrificed their children to *Saturn* or *Molech*, is observed by *Pliny*<sup>i</sup>, *Eusebius*<sup>k</sup>, and *Athanasius*<sup>l</sup>; hence those words of *Ennius*, “ poeni sunt soliti, suos sacrificare puellos,” as did the *Carthaginians*, a colony of the *Phœnicians*, which is affirmed by *Porphyry*<sup>m</sup>, *Justin*<sup>n</sup>, *Curtius*<sup>o</sup>, *Pescennius Festus*<sup>p</sup>, *Diodorus Siculus*<sup>q</sup>, and others; from all which it clearly appears, that the *Samaritans* sprung from the *Assyrians* or *Chaldeans*, and the *Phœnicians*; and sometimes they would call themselves *Sidonians*,

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<sup>z</sup> Comment. in *Isaiam*, c. 36, 19.    <sup>h</sup> Apud *Euseb.* ut supra c. 12.    <sup>i</sup> *Nat. Hist.* l. 36. c. 5.    <sup>k</sup> *De Laud. Constantin.* p. 646.    <sup>l</sup> *Contr. Gent.* p. 21.    <sup>m</sup> *De Abstinencia*, l. 2. c. 27.    <sup>n</sup> *E. Trogo.* l. 18. c. 6, and l. 19. c. 1.    <sup>o</sup> *Hist.* l. 4. c. 3.    <sup>p</sup> Apud *Lactant. Institut.* l. 1. c. 21.    <sup>q</sup> *Bibliothec.* l. 20. p. 756. 789.

nians<sup>r</sup>, from *Sidon*, a chief city in *Phœnicia*; so that they may well be thought to bring with them to *Samaria*, the language and letters of the *Assyrians* and *Phœnicians*: and certain it is, that the *Samaritans* used the *Syrian* tongue and letters, *Ezra* iv. 7. the same with the *Chaldee*, *Dan.* i. 4, and 2. 4. more than two hundred years after they came to *Samaria*; for their epistle to the king of *Persia* was written, in that language and letters; and according to *Josephus*<sup>\*</sup>, the *Syrians*, *Phœnicians*, *Ammonites*, and *Moabites*, joined the *Samaritans* in it; and with great propriety did they use them in writing to a king of *Persia*, since the *Persians* and *Syrians*, for the most part, used the same letters and characters, as *Epiphanius*<sup>s</sup> asserts. *Jerom*<sup>t</sup> is clear in it, that the old *Canaanitish* or old *Phœnician* language is the same with the *Syrian*; and that the *Samaritan* language approaches nearer to the *Chaldee* or *Syriac*, than to the *Hebrew*, is affirmed by *Bochart*<sup>u</sup>; and whoever has but dipped into  
into

<sup>r</sup> Joseph. Antiqu. l. 11. c. 8. f. 6; & l. 12. c. 5. f. 5.

<sup>\*</sup> Antiqu. l. 11. c. 2. f. 1.      <sup>s</sup> Contr. Hæres. l. 2. hæres. 66.      <sup>t</sup> Comment. in Is. xix. fol. 29. l.      <sup>u</sup> Epist. Vossio, col. 260.

into the *Samaritan* version of the *Pentateuch*, will easily perceive it is in the *Chaldee* dialect, here and there an *Hebrew* word; and it is not to be wondered at, that they should get into their language, when some of the *Jews* had mixed themselves with them; and *Walton* <sup>w</sup> owns the same, that the dialect of the *Samaritan* version is of the same kindred with the *Chaldee* language, though it has some few words proper and peculiar to itself; and so *F. Simon* <sup>x</sup> says, that the *Samaritan* version is written in the *Syro-Chaldean* language, not impure, which shews the antiquity of it. There are three dialects of the *Syriac* language, as *Abulpharagius* <sup>y</sup>, an *Arabic* writer relates; the *Aramæan*, the most elegant of all, which the inhabitants of *Roba*, *Harran*, and outer *Syria* used; that of *Palestine*, which was spoken by the inhabitants of *Damascus*, mount *Libanus*, and interior *Syria*; and the *Chaldee Nabathean* dialect, the most unpolished of all, used by those who dwelt on the mountains of the *Affyrians*, and in the villages of *Erac* or *Babylonia*; which latter very probably, was spoken by the *Samaritans*.

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tans.

<sup>w</sup> Præfat. ad Introduct. Ling. Oriental. f. 25.      <sup>x</sup> Disqu. Critic. c. 11. p. 88.      <sup>y</sup> Hist. Dynast. p. 16, 17.

*tans*. What were the antient *Syrian* or *Affyrian* letters can only be concluded from the old *Phœnician*, which appears to be the same with the modern *Samaritan*; for since the *Phœnicians* received their letters from the *Syrians*, or *Affyrians*, they must be nearly the same. The usual *Syriac* characters, in which are written the versions of the Old and New Testament, are comparatively of a late date and use, being introduced by the christians of *Antioch*; who, in imitation of *Daniel* and *Ezra*, had used the *Hebrew* character, but changed it for those now in use, because they would have nothing in common with the *Nazarenes* or *Ebionites* <sup>†</sup>: the more unusual, and more ancient character is the *Estrangelo*, used only now for capitals, and frontispieces and titles of books, which is rough and unpolished, and bears a resemblance to the old *Phœnician* or *Samaritan*; and Mr. *Castell* <sup>‡</sup> is express for it, that the *Estrangelo* is the *Chaldee* character; for that the *Affyrians* and *Chaldeans* ever used the square character of the *Hebrews* cannot be proved,

<sup>†</sup> Boderian. Præfat. ad Lex Syro-Chald. Walton Præfat. ut supra, f. 35. <sup>‡</sup> Lexic. Heptoglett. col. 178. vid. Pfefferi Critica sacra, f. 2. problem. Quest. 1.



proved, since we have no writings of theirs extant; for what *Chaldee* books we have, were written by *Jews*, either in, or after the *Babylonish* captivity; as by *Daniel*, and *Ezra*, who wrote *Chaldee* in the square character, because it was what their sacred books were written in, they had been used to, and the people also, for whose use they wrote; and in after times, the *Chaldee* paraphrases were written by *Jews*; and so both *Talmuds*, though less pure; and it seems this character was used by the *Syrian* christians, in imitation of the *Jews*, before their change of characters already mentioned; but after the *Chaldee* monarchy ceased, no books were written by any of that people in their own language. *Berosus* the *Chaldean*, and others, wrote in *Greek*. *Theophilus* of *Antioch*<sup>a</sup> indeed says, that *Berosus* shewed the *Greeks* *Chaldee* letters; but whether by them he means their learning, laws, and history, or the characters of their letters, is not certain; if the letters, it does not appear what they were: hence *Hottinger*<sup>b</sup> con-

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<sup>a</sup> Ad Autolye. l. 3. p. 139. <sup>b</sup> Smegma oriental. par. 1. p. 35. Gram. Chald. Syr. p. 4.

cluded that the ancient character of the *Assyrians* and *Chaldeans* is unseen, and unknown, and that nothing certain is had concerning it; some, he says, think it is the *Samaritan*, which is right, others, the *Ethiopic*; but he himself was in suspense, and hoped, that in some time would be published by *Golius*, some *Chaldee* writings, in the ancient tongue and character; but whether any ever were published, I never heard. The *Jews* say<sup>c</sup>, that after the hand-writing of the angel upon the wall, and the publication of the *Hebrew* characters by *Ezra*, the *Chaldeans* left their own characters, and used them; but this seems to be said without any good foundation.

Now, since both the *Samaritan* language and letters differ from the *Hebrew*, being the old *Phœnician* and *Assyrian*; it was necessary that, when the *Pentateuch* of *Moses* was brought among them, it should be copied, and put into *Samaritan* letters, that they might read it; as it was, and that from a copy in the square character, as the

<sup>c</sup> Buxtorf, de Lit. Heb. Addit.

the variations shew, before observed ; and it was necessary also, that there should be a version of it in their own language, that they might the better understand it, and which also has been done ; and upon the whole, I think it plainly appears, that they always retained their own language and letters, which were the *Affyrian* and old *Phœnician*, to the times of *Manasseh* their high priest, and ages after, as the *Hebrews* retained their language and letters also, the square ones ; so that there seems to be no foundation for any such change of letters being made by *Exra*, as has been contended for.