foil differing in nothing from that of Judaea; both equally hilly and champaign, both equally. fertile in corn and fruit (id. ) Called the *kingdom oſ Samaria in Ephraim* (Bible); compriſing the ten tribes, and conſequently all the country to the north of Judea and eaſt and weſt of Jordan.

Samaria, the capital city of the kingdom of Sa­maria, or of the ten tribes. It was built by Omri king of Iſrael, who began to reign in the year of the world 3079, and died 3086 (1 Kings xvi. 24.) He bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of ſilver, or for the ſum of L.684:7:6. It took the name of *Samaria* from Shemer the owner of the hill; though ſome think there were already ſome beginnings of a city, becauſe, before the reign of Omri, there is men­tion made of Samaria (1 Kings xiii. 32.) in the year of the world 3030. But others take this for a prolepſis, or an anticipation, in the diſcourſe of the man of God, who ſpeaks of Samaria under the reign of Jeroboam.

However this be, it is certain that Samaria was no conſiderable place, and did not become the capital city of the kingdom of Iſrael till after the reign of Omri. Before him, the kings of Iſrael dwelt at Shechem, or at Tirzah. Samaria was ſituated upon an agreeable and fruitful hill, and an advantageous ſituation, and was 12 miles from Dothaim, 12 from Merrom, and four from Atharoth. Joſephus ſays, it was a day’s journey from Jeruſalem. Beſides, though it was built upon an eminence, yet it muſt have water in abundance; ſince we find medals ſtruck in this city, whereon is repreſented the goddeſs Aſtarte treading a river under foot; which proves it to have been well watered. And Joſephus obſerves, that when it was taken by John Hircanus the prince of the Jews, he entirely demoliſhed it, and cauſed even the brook to flow over its ruins, to obliterate all the footſteps of it.

The kings of Samaria omitted nothing to make this city the ſtrongeſt, the fineſt, and the richeſt, that was poſſible. Ahab built there a palace of ivory (1 Kings xxii. 39.), that is, in which there were many ornaments of ivory. Amos deſcribes Samaria under Jeroboam II. as a city ſunk into all exceſſes of luxury and effemina­cy (Amos iii.15. and iv. 1, 2).

Ben-hadad king of Syria built public places or ſtreets in Samaria (1 Kings xx. 34. ) probably for traffic, where his people dwelt to promote trade, His ſon Ben-hadad beſieged this place under the reign of Ahab (1 Kings XX. 1, 2, 3, &c.) in the year of the world 3103.

The following year, Ben-hadad brought an army into the field, probably with a deſign to march againſt Samaria: but his army was again cut in pieces. Some years after this, Ben-hadad came a third time, lay down before Samaria, and reduced it to ſuch neceſſities by fa­mine, that a mother was there forced to eat her own child; but the city was relieved by a ſenſible effect of the protection of God.

Laſtly, it was beſieged by Shalmaneſer king of Aſſyria, in the ninth year of Hoſhea king of Iſrael (2 Kings xvii. 6, 7, &c. ), which was the fourth of Hezekiah king of Judah. It was taken three years after, in the year of the world 3283. The prophet Hoſea ſpeaks of the cruelties exerciſed by Shalmaneſer againſt the beſieged (Hof. X. 4, 8, 9. xiv. I.); and Micah ſays, that this

city was reduced to a heap of ſtones (Mic. i. 6). The Cuthites that were ſent by Eſar-haddon to inhabit the country of Samatia, did not think it worth their while to repair the ruins of this city; they dwelt at Shechem, which they made the capital city of their ſtate. They were ſtill upon this footing when Alexander the Great came into Phoenicia and Judea. However, the Cu­thites had rebuilt ſome of the houſes of Samaria, even from the time of the return from the captivity, ſince Ezra then ſpeaks of the inhabitants of Samaria (Ezra iv. 17. Nehem. iv. 2.); and that the Samaritans, being jealous of the favours that Alexander the Great had conferred on the Jews, revolted from him while this prince was in Egypt, and burnt Andromachus alive, whom Alexander had left governor of Syria. Alex­ander marched againſt them, took Samaria, and put in Macedonians to inhabit it; giving the country round it to the Jews; and to encourage them to cultivate it, he granted them an exemption from tribute. The king of Egypt and Syria, who ſucceeded Alexander, de­prived them of the property of this country.

But Alexander Balas king of Syria reſtored to Jonathan Maccabaeus the cities of Lydda, Ephrem, and Ramatha, which he cut off from the country of Sa­maria (1 Mac. X. 30, 38, and xi. 28, 34.) Laſtly, the Jews re-entered into the full poſſeſſion of this whole country under John Hircanus the Afmoaean, who took Samaria, and ruined it in ſuch a manner, according to Joſephus, that he made the river run through its ruins. It continued in this condition to the year of the world 3947, when Aulus Gabinius, the proconſul of Syria, rebuilt it, and gave it the name of Gabinia­na. But it was yet but very inconſiderable, till Herod the Great reſtored it to its ancient luſtre, and gave it the Greek name of Sebaſte, which in Latin is Auguſta,in honour of the emperor Auguſtus, who had given him the property of this place.

The ſacred authors of the New Teſtament ſpeak but little of Samaria; and when they do mention it, it is rather in reſpect of the country about it, than of the city itſelf. (See Luke xvii. 11. John iv. 4, 5.) It was there our Lord had the converſation with the wo­man of Samaria, that is, with a Samaritan woman of the city of Sychar. After the death of St Stephen, (Acts viii. 1, 2, 3. ), when the diſciples were diſperſed through the cities of Judea and Samaria, St Philip the deacon withdrew into the city of Samaria, where he made ſeveral converts. When the apoſtles heard that this city had received the word of God, they ſent Pe­ter and John thither, to communicate the Holy Ghoſt to ſuch as had been baptized. It was there they found Simon Magus, who offered money to the apoſtles, be­ing in hopes to buy this power of communicating the Holy Ghoſt. Samaria is never called Sebaſte in the books of the New Teſtament, though ſtrangers hardly knew it but by this name. St Jerome ſays, that it was thought Obadiah was buried at Samaria. They alſo ſhowed there the tombs of Eliſha and of St John the Baptiſt. There are found many ancient medals that were ſtruck at Sebaſte, or Samaria, and ſome biſhops of this city have ſubſcribed to the ancient coun­cils.

SAMARITANS. We have already ſpoken of the Samaritans under the article Cuth. The Samaritans