

## On Maps of Palestine containing Ancient Sites.

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IN the ordinary course of things, if one wants to know the position of some not very well-known place, one looks it out in a map, and with the help of an index the place is quickly found, and there is no more question about it. By this simple method, the site of any place, sufficiently important to be upon the map at all, be it in the remotest corner of the world, is readily ascertained. But maps of Palestine are unfortunately unlike the maps of any other country; and the appearance upon one of them of a given place is no guarantee whatever that it ever existed on the site shown. In other words, nearly every map of Palestine contains a greater or less number of purely imaginary sites.

I will demonstrate this by the examples of Luḥith and Jazer, both mentioned in the prophecy of Moab contained in Is 15-16. It must be obvious that any description of the movements of an army or other body of men becomes much more intelligible and real, if the course taken by them can be followed on the map: so the first question which a student of Is 15-16 naturally asks himself is, Where were the places mentioned in it situated? Let us see what help the maps give us on the sites of Luḥith and Jazer.

It must be admitted at the outset that the most recent English maps of Palestine are particularly liberal in the matter of Luḥith, for they offer us *two* sites for it. In G. A. Smith's large map of Palestine, the 'Ascent of Luḥith' is placed just W. of Nebo, E. of the north end of the Dead Sea. In Armstrong's *Names and Places in the O.T. and N.T. and Apocrypha*, published by the P.E.F., Luḥith is located in the same place, with a mark indicating that the discovery of the site is a gain due to the explorations of the P.E.F., and without any indication whatever that the identification is insecure. But in the map at the beginning of the invaluable *Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by Dr. Hastings, while Luḥith (in type indicating that it is a *modern* name) is placed here, Luith (in type indicating that it is an *ancient* name,—though, of course, the two forms are in reality just the same name differently spelt) is placed 30 miles to the S., a little E. of the Lisān, or tongue of land pro-

jecting into the Dead Sea, on the site of the modern 'Sarifa.' The map of Palestine in Murray's *Classical Maps* gives the southern Luḥith in the same position, but is silent as to the Luḥith in the north. In none of these maps is there any mark of interrogation, or other note, indicating doubt as to the correctness of the sites. As, however, it is too much to believe that the same place had two sites, the intelligent reader of Isaiah's prophecy on Moab, with this *embarras de richesses*, must pursue his investigations further, so as to discover, if possible, which of his authorities gives the more probable site.

The *northern* site is adopted presumably from the P.E.F.'s 'Old and New Testament Map of Palestine' in 20 sheets, on the scale of  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. to the mile, containing the names of both modern sites and their supposed ancient equivalents. The 'Ascent of Luith' is marked in it, as on G. A. Smith's map, without any indication that it is doubtful. But what are the grounds on which the identification rests? To discover these, we must turn to the *Survey of Eastern Palestine*, published by the P.E.F., pp. 228, 253. We there learn that the modern name of the place is *Tal'at Heisah*, the 'Ascent of Heisah' (تاليسه: the map in *D.B.*, in giving the modern name as *Luḥith*, is thus incorrect), or, with the art., *el-Heisah*; and this, we are told, 'may be a corruption of the Heb. Luḥith' (!). In this equation, phonetics and probability are nowhere. The ascent of Luḥith, it is added, 'might very well be that leading up to the plateau near Nebo.' And so it might equally well be an ascent leading up to any other plateau or height in Moab. These, however, are the flimsy reasons upon which alone, so far as appears, in the P.E.F. map mentioned *Tal'at Heisah* is identified, as a *certainty*, with the ancient Luḥith! That such reasons should have satisfied the accomplished and judicious author of the *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* and of *Jerusalem*, is more than can be credited: we can, rather, only suppose that his attention was not called to the point, and that he accepted without inquiry the identification of the P.E.F.

The *southern* site for Luḥith, we learn from

Buhl, *Geographie*, p. 272, was first suggested by De Saulcy.<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, in his *Onomasticon* (276. 43), makes the important statement that in his day there was a village between Areopolis and Zoar called *Loueitha*. The site of Areopolis is known: it is the modern *Rabba*, E. of the Dead Sea, a little S. of the parallel 31° 20' (see G. A. Smith's map; in the P.E.F. map, the map in *D.B.*, and Murray's map, identified wrongly with Ar-Moab).<sup>2</sup> The site of Zoar has been disputed; but, whatever may have been the site of the Biblical Zoar, the Zoar known to Eusebius, like the Zoar known both to Josephus and to the mediæval Arabs, was, beyond question (see ZOAR in *D.B.*), at the S.E. end of the Dead Sea. 'As now the old Roman road from the E. coast of the Dead Sea to the Moabite plateau passed through the Wady Beni-Hammād, N. of Kerak [see G. A. Smith's map, with the note at the end of this article], we shall have to seek the ancient Luḥith there, perhaps in the considerable ruins of Sarfa, described by De Saulcy, on the uppermost terrace of the mountain edge. Whether, however, the name of the mountain on which they lie, *Jebel en-Nouêhin*, or *Nouêhid*, is, as he supposes, connected with Luḥith, the ancient name of the city, is very questionable. Everywhere there are clear traces of the old Roman road with its walls on the sides' (Buhl, p. 272).

Without in the least relying upon the doubtful identity of the name, the site thus suggested would seem, from the description, to be not unsuitable as a *conjectural* site for Luḥith. De Saulcy describes his route minutely. He comes up from the Dead Sea to Adjerrah (or el-Djerrah); proceeding thence in a N.E. direction, he reaches a spot where there is a well, Bir el-Hafayeh, on his right, and, about 3 kils. in front, the *Jebel en-Nouêhin* (or *Nouêhid*), at the top of which the elevated Moabite plateau begins. Ascending the lower plateaus of this mountain, and turning to the S., he soon passes on his right the ruins of Hafayeh (called also by the Bedawin *el-Djerrah*), where he passes the night. Next morning he climbs up the rest of *Jebel en-Nouêhin*, and reaches

<sup>1</sup> See De Saulcy, *Voyage autour de la Mer Morte* (1853), ii. 42 f.

<sup>2</sup> Nu 21<sup>16</sup>, 22<sup>36</sup>. (if, as is probable, עיר מואב, the 'City of Moab,' is the same as עיר מואב, Dt 2<sup>8</sup>, show that Ar must have been on or near the upper course of the Arnon, on the E. border of Moab (so Dillmann, Gray, G. A. Smith, *E.B.* s.v. AR, etc.). Areopolis (*Rabba*) was in the centre of Moab.

the Moabite plateau; here, on his left, begin the extensive ruins of Sarefah, through which his route passes for some distance, having parallel to it, on the right, hardly 150 metres off, the Wady ebni-Hamid. After emerging from the ruins of Sarefah, he proceeds in an E. and N.E. direction towards Foukoua and Shihan, the Wady ebni-Hamid diverging towards the S., and soon being as much as 2 kils. on his right. The entire route from Adjerrah to Shihar shows extensive remains of an ancient paved road, with walls on each side; there are also many ruins, besides those mentioned, showing that the region was once well populated.<sup>3</sup>

When, however, we take the detailed and, apparently, carefully constructed map<sup>4</sup> of Alois Musil, accompanying his elaborate work, *Arabia Petraea*<sup>5</sup> (1907), and endeavour to trace on it the route thus circumstantially described, we find it, strange to say, impossible to do so. Shihan is there (about 12 kils. north of Rabba); there is a Faḳu'a (obviously = Foukoua), about 5 kils. W. of Shihan; and 6½ kils. S.W. of Faḳu'a there is Hafayer el-Jerra, which must correspond to the 'Hafayeh,' also called 'el-Djerrah,' of De Saulcy; but here the correspondence ceases. There is no 'Jebel en-Nouêhin' or 'Nouêhid' at all. Sarefa, which De Saulcy places very near Hafayeh, on the N.E., is in Musil's map a little S. of E. of it, and apparently on a different height altogether; and, most remarkable of all, W. Beni-Hammād (which must be De Saulcy's W. ebni-Hamid), instead of being only 150 metres to the S. of Sarefah, is 6 kils. (nearly four miles) to the S., and separated from Sarefa by another considerable wady (Seil el-Minka'a) as well! The wady which De Saulcy ascended to Sarefa seems to correspond to one on Musil's map, called on p. 89 Wady Jar'ûb, leading up from the Dead Sea to Hafayer el-Jerra: certainly the W. Beni-Hammād does not lead up in that direction at all, but, four miles to the S., almost straight up in the direction of Rabba. And if Sarfa is at all in the position in which it is placed by Musil—10 kils. (= 6 miles) N.W. of Rabba,

<sup>3</sup> De Saulcy, i. 307-312, 314, 317-323, 325, with the map (Planche IX), which should be carefully compared. The description is very minute, the times when each spot was reached being carefully noted, and the relevant distances and directions regularly stated. The route is described in the text above only in the barest outline.

<sup>4</sup> See THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, xviii. 323; cf. 549.

<sup>5</sup> See G. A. Smith, *Expositor*, July and August 1908.

with more than one intervening wady—it is difficult to understand how it could be at all on the natural route between Rabba and Zoar, at the S.E. end of the Dead Sea.

I do not pretend to be able to explain the discrepancies between De Saulcy and Musil; I shall be satisfied if I have written enough to lead the next commentator on Is 15 to pause before he identifies Şarfa with Luḥith. Buhl, writing in 1896 (the date of his *Geographie*), was justified, on the strength of De Saulcy's statements, in accepting Şarfa as a *possible* site for Luḥith (notice his 'perhaps'); but whether it can still be maintained, in face of the positions and measurements given by Musil, is the question which will now have to be considered. Musil himself (p. 75) remarks that Râs el-Fâs, or el-Râs (*ibid.* p. 72),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.E. of the S.E. corner of the Dead Sea, might, so far as the situation goes, be Luḥith. If the *Onomasticon* is to be trusted, Luḥith will have been on an ascent<sup>1</sup> somewhere on the road between Rabba

<sup>1</sup> The context in Is. seems to show that we want an ascent that would be climbed by those *leaving* Moab. Conversely, Ḥoronaim (Is 15<sup>5</sup>) would be at the bottom of some declivity (see Jer 48<sup>3</sup>) leading down on the S. or S.W. from the

and the Zoar known to Eusebius. With our present knowledge, it must be obvious, nothing more definite can be said. As the name does not appear to have been preserved, we must, even to fix conjecturally its position, more closely ascertain first what would be the natural route between those two places, and then what are the principal ascents on that route.<sup>2</sup> The northern site, considered above, must, of course, be unconditionally abandoned.<sup>3</sup>

high Moabite plateau. Cf. Mesha's inscription, l. 32, where Chemosh says to Mesha, 'Go down, fight against Ḥoronên.'

<sup>2</sup> Whether the Luḥith mentioned in a Nabataean inscription from Mèdebah is the Luḥith of Is 15 is uncertain. See Cooke, *North-Semitic Inscriptions*, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> If Musil's measurements are correct, both Rabba and W. Beni-Hamid (Ḥammād) are, in the P.E.F. map and G. A. Smith's map, too far to the N., and the latter on these maps, leading up to Mejdelaïn, really corresponds to Musil's Seil Miḥka'a (leading up to Mejdelaïn); and in the map in *D.B.* Rabba is slightly, and Şarfa is a good deal, too far to the south. In Musil's map, Rabba is very slightly *south* of the south end of the bay formed by the north projection (ending at Point Costigan) of the promontory el-Lisân; and Şarfa is very slightly S. of the latitude of Point Costigan. The map in *E.B.* (*s.v.* MOAB) rightly omits Luḥith altogether.

(To be continued.)

## In the Study.

### Gospel.

IN his *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (2nd ed. 1884), Skeat derives the English word 'gospel' from the Anglo-Saxon *gôd*, 'God,' and *spell*, 'a story,' 'history,' 'narrative.' Thus the literal sense, he says, is the 'narrative of God,' that is, the life of Christ. Then, he says, 'It is constantly derived from A.S. *gôd*, 'good,' and *spell*, 'story,' as though *gôd spell* were a translation of Gk. εὐαγγέλιον.' But Skeat himself proceeds to show that in the *Ormulum* (Introd. 157), written when Anglo-Saxon was not yet forgotten, the word is used in the sense of the Gk. εὐαγγέλιον, 'good news.' The words are 'Godspell onn: Enngliss nemmnedd iss god word and god tithennde,' i.e. 'Gospel is named in English good word and good tiding.' Marsh had already pointed this out, and had quoted another example from the *Ormulum* (Introd. 175) and one from Layamon

(iii. 182). The example from Layamon is, *And beode ther godes godd-spel*, i.e. 'and preach there God's gospel,' a phrase, says Marsh, not likely to be employed if 'gospel' had been understood to mean of itself 'God's story,' or the life of Christ. On the other hand, Marsh points out that in Continental Old Saxon 'gospel' undoubtedly meant the life of Christ, and only the life of Christ (see *Student's English Language*, 2nd ed. 1863, p. 26).

Murray has settled the question.<sup>1</sup> The word, he says, doubtless originally was *gôd spell*, that is, 'good tidings,' being a rendering of the Lat. *bona adnuntiatio*, which was current, as an explanation of Lat. *evangelium*, Gk. εὐαγγέλιον. But when the word passed into the languages of the Teutonic peoples evangelized from England, it was adopted as the translation of *evangelium*, which at the time meant chiefly one of the first four books of the New Testament, or a portion of the liturgy.

<sup>1</sup> In his new edition (1910) Skeat agrees.