

J'ai l'honneur, au nom du Congrès de porter à votre connaissance cette haute appréciation du Jury et de vous délivrer pour le PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND la présente Lettre de Distinction comme la récompense de l'ordre le plus élevé décernée à l'occasion de l'Exposition.

Veillez agréer, M. le Président, l'assurance de ma haute considération.

Le Vice-Amiral,

Président du Congrès,

Et de la Société de Géographie, Paris,

DE LA RONCIÈRE-LE-NOURY.

À Monsieur le Président du PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

EARLY CHRISTIAN TOPOGRAPHY IN PALESTINE.

THE study of the topography of Palestine in periods subsequent to Biblical times is not merely a matter of antiquarian curiosity, it is intimately connected with the more important study of the topography of the Bible. We possess valuable works, like the *Onomasticon* of Eusebius and Jerome, the ancient Itineraries, and the mediæval travels, Christian and Jewish, containing hints and observations, the importance of which depends on the trustworthy character of the work in which any of them appear. To estimate fairly how far we may rely on these supplementary authorities we must consider the later topography as a whole, and thence deduce the amount of confidence to be placed in any particular statement bearing on Biblical questions.

I have in former reports touched upon mediæval and Crusading sites, such as the *Tower of Eder*, the two *Ascalons*, &c., but a few remarks on the earlier topography of Byzantine Palestine and of the *Onomasticon* may perhaps be of value.

Of the thirty-three episcopal towns of the *Palestina Prima* of the fifth-century division of the Holy Land (a district almost exactly answering to the Roman Judæa and Samaria taken together), six only remained unknown in the time of Reland, who has carefully arranged the whole number in alphabetical order. These six are—*Apathus*, between Jericho and Sebaste; *Diocletianopolis*, south of Jerusalem; *Minois*, near Gaza; and *Sozuza Toxus*. *Minois* alone is immediately recognisable as being the present ruin of El Minieh, on the north bank of Wady Refah, the supposed River of Egypt.

I.

Diocletianopolis was a town of some little importance as an episcopal see, and the bishops appear as early as the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D. Reland, however, gives no indication of its position, and the identification depends on a passage in an Italian work called "*Siria Sacra*," of which I discovered a copy in the library of the Carmel Convent, dating 1695 A.D. Here we find that *Diocletianopolis* was on the

road from Jerusalem to Hebron, and "come nota il Baudran" was originally called Bethsaca. Athanasius, mentioned in the papers of the Synod of Jerusalem, was one of its bishops under the Patriarch Peter.

Now we find from Reland that the southern town of Bezek, probably the *Βεζεκ* of Ant. v. 1, was on the same road from Hebron to Jerusalem, and two miles from Bethzur. It was of this town that Adonibezek was lord (Judges i. 4), whose thumbs and great toes were cut off by the men of Judah after a great battle against the Perizzites and Canaanites in Bezek. Reland, with his usual critical acumen, proposes the identity of this site with the Bezeth of the book of Maccabees; a measurement on the map leads to the same conclusion, for the large ruin of Beit Z'ata, which I have proposed to identify with Bezeth, lies about two miles north of Beit Sur, the ancient Bethzur. It is interesting to observe the existence of those niched vaults which Dr. Tobler, in confirmation of my suggestion on the subject when writing about Beit Jibrin, informs us were originally 'Roman' columbaria; they are not common in Palestine, and occur only in parts where other indications of Roman work exist. Here, therefore, as at Beisan, Lydda, Amwas, and in other places, the Hebrew or Aramaic name has outlived the more pretentious title conferred by the conquerors, and the Diocletianopolis of the early Christians, the Bezeth of the Maccabees, and the Bezek of the Old Testament, may, it would seem, be identified, with tolerable certainty, with the important ruins surrounding the modern village of Kúfin.

II.

Of *Sozusa* I have spoken in former reports. It seems clear that the site of the town lay between Cæsarea Maritima and Sebaste. It is variously written Soscuris and Sorucis, whence the transition to Serúr, which I proposed last year, is easy. Deir Serúr, the town discovered by us between Sebaste and Cæsarea, shows signs of having been a large and important place in early Christian times.

III.

Bethar, another site mentioned in the Itineraries, is of great importance as serving to fix the position of Antipatris. It is called *Bethar* both in the Antonine and in the Jerusalem or Bordeau Pilgrim's Itinerary; its distance from Cæsarea is variously given as sixteen and eighteen Roman miles, and that from Antipatris was ten Roman miles. It appears to me to agree well with the present village of Tireh on the road from Ras el 'Ain to Cæsarea, which is nearly nineteen Roman miles from the last noted, and about nine from Ras el 'Ain, making twenty-eight in all. This completes the list of distances round Antipatris, which stand as below, affording pretty satisfactory evidence of identity of Ras el 'Ain with Antipatris:—

Lydda to Antipatris	12	Roman miles ;	to Ras el Ain	11½	Roman miles.
Tireh	10	”	”	9	”
Cæsarea	28	”	”	28	”
Galgula (Galgileh)	6	”	”	6	”
Jaffa (150 stadia)	19	” (?)	”	13	”

The distance, 150 stadia, given by Josephus, agrees with no proposed site for Antipatris, but if we read $\rho_i = 110$ for $\rho_v = 150$, a change easily made, we get 13½ Roman miles, which is quite near enough.

IV.

The Onomasticon. In his valuable introductory chapter Reland sums up carefully the merits and defects of this great work as far as his information allowed him to criticise it. The merits he enumerates are five, the defects five, as below:—

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| Merits. | 1. Certainty of correct reading where Greek and Latin agree. |
| | 2. The annotations and corrections of Jerome. |
| | 3. The additional information given by Jerome. |
| | 4. Mutual corrections in errors of orthography, names, &c. |
| | 5. Passages omitted by Jerome recoverable in the Greek text. |
| Defects. | 1. The principal places whence measurements are made are not defined as to relative position. |
| | 2. The four quarters of the compass alone are noticed, minor divisions being disregarded. |
| | 3. Relative positions of ten important places are not given. |
| | 4. The descriptions are sometimes vague. |
| | 5. Irrelevant matter is inserted. |

To this list I would propose to add another merit and another defect:—

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| Merit. | 6. The minute acquaintance shown by Jerome with the out-of-the-way parts as well as with the more frequented in Palestine. |
| Defect. | 6. The impossible identifications of Scriptural sites occasionally occurring dependent on a similarity of name alone. |

The real value of the *Onomasticon* and other topographical notices by Eusebius and Jerome, seems to me to consist in the accurate knowledge of the country shown by the authors. That the distances should when the text is uncorrupted, be correct, is not a matter of astonishment when we remember that the principal Roman roads, to which alone they refer, were marked with milestones, which remain in numbers to the present day.

As regards the identification of ancient sites, the only advantage possessed by these authors was in the more perfect preservation of the nomenclature in their time as compared with the nineteenth century, but it seems plain that they were far more hasty than modern students of Mr. Grove's school would be in fixing upon a site of similar name without reference to other requisites.

I may add a few examples which seem to bear out these views, and

to show that the value of the Onomasticon lies in its facts and not in its deductions:—

(1st.) As regards knowledge of the country. *Anab*, a town of Judah, is identified by Eusebius with Betoannaba, four miles east of Lydda. Jerome, however, adds a note that many supposed it to be Beth-annabam, eight miles in the same direction. Now in a direction south-east of Lydda we find at the present day, at the distance of five Roman miles, the village of Annabeh on a road which leads five miles farther to Beit Nuba. In these I think we can hardly fail to recognise the Betoannaba and Bethannabam of Jerome.

Under this very head we have, on the other hand, a remarkable instance of misidentification; neither of the sites is within the territory of Judah, and the town of Anab lay in the region of the Negeb or Daroma, where we fixed it as west of Debir (Dhâheriyeh), some thirty miles from the place where it is fixed by the Onomasticon.

Other instances occur as follows:—Three Gilgals are noticed in the Bible, and occur in the modern nomenclature; with all of these Jerome was acquainted, and he describes them all accurately. Salem, near to Enon, is placed south of Beisan, but Jerome fails not to notice another Salem eighteen miles from the same centre, but situate in the great plain of Esdraelon. The distance agrees exactly with the village of Salim, near Ta'anik. Jerome even notices that the native place of Nahum the Elkoshite was pointed out to him in Galilee, near Jordan—no doubt the present Elkasyun, near the Huleh lake, giving us an idea of the extent of the more out-of-the-way parts of Palestine visited by this great author in his wanderings.

(2nd.) The instances of incorrect identification are very numerous. Thus, Betam, or Bethemin, which lay four miles from the Terebinth of Mamre, is evidently the modern Beit 'Ainun at about that distance from Ramet el 'Amleh, where the terebinth was in the fourth century supposed to have stood. Yet Eusebius would identify it with Ain, a city of Simeon lying in the Beersheba desert. Bareca and the Valley of Blessings are now identified with the ruin of Breikût and Wady Arrub. (I may observe in passing that W. el Arrub is probably the Arruboth of 1 Kings x. 10, in which case the Socoh mentioned with it would be Shiukh, a town close to Wady el Arrub on the south.) Jerome makes Kefr Barucha to be identical with the modern Beni Naim. He further mentions a Bareca as near Ashdod, probably the modern Burka, close to Esdud.

V.

A few more obscure sites mentioned by the Onomasticon may be very easily identified. Thus, Kaphar Zachariah, near which existed the House of the Terebinth, and where the tomb of Zachariah was found, is no doubt the modern *Kefr Zakaria*, near which is a Christian ruin called Deir el Butm—Convent of the Terebinth. Maspha, a Mizpeh lying north of Eleutheropolis, is no doubt *Khirbet el Mesherefeh* in the

same direction, the name having the same meaning as the Hebrew *Mispeh*. Bera, eight miles north of Eleutheropolis, is evidently the modern *Khirbet el Bireh* at about that distance. If, as M. Ganneau thinks, the Timnath of the Onomasticon is to be sought near the road from Eleutheropolis to Jerusalem, a *Khirbet Tibneh* will be found to exist in that direction, besides the two well-known ruins of the same name which probably represent Timnah of Samson and Timnath of Joshua. To nearly all these sites, correctly described by Eusebius and Jerome, incorrect identifications or suggestions are added by those authors.

The Survey of Palestine will, I hope, show clearly that the topographical lists of Joshua are neither fragmentary nor unsystematic; that, as I have before pointed out, the towns are grouped under their royal cities, and occur in regular order. Such classification was first hinted by Mr. Grove; the new identifications by M. Ganneau observe the rule, and so agree well with those of the Survey. It seems to me, therefore, that identifications, whether ancient or modern, which disregard such conditions, and trust, as did Jerome or Eusebius, to similarity of sound alone, are but of little value, and serve rather to confuse what we have already made certain.

A place called *Chasbi* is mentioned by the Onomasticon as a deserted spot near Adullam. It seems identical with the Achzib or Chezib of Josh. xv. 44, which again appears Micah 'i. 14, in connection with Maresha and Adullam. It seems also likely to be the same as Cason (*Κασων*, LXX. Alex.), translated in authorised version "in the harvest time," which if a town was near Adullam. This forms a good check both on the identification of Adullam by M. Ganneau and on my own identification of Achzib or Chezib with Khirbet *Kussa*, "the ruin of the tale" taking the place of the Hebrew "town of liars," and the site being at a distance of about five miles from 'Aid el Miéh. This is an instance of the true value of notices in the Onomasticon.

Abel Meholah is a case in which the identification of the Onomasticon seems correct. It existed eight miles south of Beisan, and has therefore been placed on Murray's new map at a ruin called Shukk. It seems, however, to have escaped notice that the name still exists under the form 'Ain Helwe, in the plain east of Shukk and west of Sa'kút, the "meadow of circles" being the broad downs of the south end of the Beisan valley, but the name now transformed into "Sweet Spring."

Geba of Horsemen, a town on Carmel, is often mentioned in the Itineraries. Eusebius places it at Gabe, sixteen miles from Cæsarea. The place is of importance as defining the limit of Lower Galilee. It is evidently the modern Jeb'a, on the west slopes of Carmel, not far from 'Athlit, but this village is not to be found on Murray's new map of Palestine.

VI.

A few mediæval sites from other sources may be mentioned in the same connection. *Bethelia* was a town with a famous heathen temple

situate close to Gaza. It is no doubt the modern Beit Lehia, which lies among the olive groves north of the city, and retains its religious character by the mosque and minaret which no doubt replace the ancient temple. *Caphar Gamala* was the place to which Gamaliel, according to a venerable tradition, conveyed the bones of St. Stephen after martyrdom, and where they were afterwards miraculously discovered. It was twenty miles from Jerusalem, and may therefore be identified with Beit Jemál, near Yermúk, an identification which I do not find noticed in the Bible Dictionary.

In a former report from Beit 'Atáb I proposed with some diffidence that the little tomb house of *Sheikh Samit*, standing prominently above the valley of Soreg, near Ser'a, might have some connection with a tradition of the tomb of Samson. I now find, in the course of my studies of mediæval writers, that as late as 1334 A.D. the tomb of Samson was shown to Isaac Chelo, in this same village, which renders the connection with *Sheikh Samit* highly probable.*

In the same Jewish Itinerary we find mention of *Roma* or *Rumah*, where was the cave of Caisran whence the Messiah was expected to appear. I have shown in a former report that this cave is to be found at the modern ruined village of Rumeih. The tradition originates in an extraordinary Targum on Exod. xii. 42, which runs as follows: "For Moses goeth forth from the desert and King Messiah from Roma." Isaac Chelo, as well as other Jewish travellers of the same date, show throughout a familiarity with the Targums and Talmud which is very valuable in some of the Galilæan sites, as I hope later to be able to show in the case of Capernaum.

VII.

The advent of the Crusaders acted as a disturbing element in the topography of Palestine. Their knowledge of the country was very imperfect, their imitation of Arab names is barbarous, and the mistakes made in sites not generally famous are numerous. The passion for localising sacred memories had reached its height in the ninth century. Thus in 700 A.D. Arculphus visited only seven or eight holy places in Jerusalem, but Bernard the wise, in 867 A.D., notices about twenty, and a few more were added in the twelfth century. A well-known instance of Crusading error exists in the identification of the modern Arsuf, a coast town north of Jaffa, with Antipatris, Asher, and even Ashdod. In the same way William of Tyre places Porphyriion, which stood, according to the ancient Itineraries, between Sidon and Beirút, at Haifa, and accordingly we find that the Bishop of Haifa, or Porphyriion, was under the metropolitan of Cæsarea. This error has a certain value because it serves to show that the town of Sycaminos is not to be placed at Haifa, but as having a bishop separate and distinct

* I see that M. Ganneau (*Quarterly Statement*, October, 1875, p. 211) mentions a tradition, evidently of Christian origin, in which *Sheikh Samit* appears as the brother of *Shamshún el Jebbar*.

from the Bishop of Porphyriion, must be considered a separate site, and placed probably (from its distance in the Antonini Itinerary) at Tell el Semak, where are remains of a considerable early Christian town, as pointed out by the late Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake and by myself in former reports.

The Crusaders, as Reland remarks, even confounded the Sea of Galilee with the Mediterranean, and placed the site of some places mentioned in the New Testament as near Tiberias on the shore of the Mediterranean. Thus they supposed a connection between the name of the town Caiapha or Caiaphas (the modern Haifa), which Benjamin of Tudela makes to have been founded by Caiaphas the high priest, and Cephas, the Greek name of Simon Peter. Hence, at Haifa the Crusading clergy showed the rock where Simon Peter fished, possibly the present Tell el Semak, or "mound of the fish." A second rock was shown at Jaffa, probably near the Church of St. Peter, with the same tradition. To this curious confusion of ideas may also perhaps be traced the existence of a Crusading Capernaum between Caipha and Cæsarea.

In a former report (*Quarterly Statement*, April, 1875, p. 90) I supposed this site, called Kefr Tauchumin by Jerome and the Talmud, and Kefr Thaucum or Capernaum by later writers, to be the present Tantura; the distances given by Benjamin of Tudela, however, serve to place the Crusading Capernaum at the modern village of *Kefr Lam*, where are remains of a mediæval fortress. This will appear from the Itinerary as below:—

Caiphas to Capernaum, 4 parasangs = 14 English miles.	} Benjamin Tudela.
„ Cæsarea 10 „ 35 „	

The true distances are:—

Haifa to Kefr Lam, 14 English miles.
„ Cæsarea, 36 „

These brief notes will, I hope, be enough to show that a great amount of incidental information as to scriptural topography is to be obtained by study of the obscurer sites mentioned in Talmudic and early Christian writers. Where, however, the more famous, such as Capernaum, Gilgal, &c., are concerned, ecclesiastical tradition of the middle ages tends rather to confuse than to assist the student. C. B. C.

ROCK-CUT TOMBS.

THE question of rock-cut sepulchres being one of special interest in Palestine as connected with the great question of the Holy Sepulchre, I may perhaps be allowed a few words to supplement Dr. Tobler's notice in the last *Quarterly Statement*.