

Jacob, not by Abraham, while the "sepulchre which Abraham bought" was purchased from the "sons of Heth," and not from "the sons of Emmor, *the father* of Sychem!"

In the text, the two places, purchasers and sellers are mixed up, but yet there is, I venture to think, no room for any transference from Hebron to Shechem.

H. B. S. W.

MIZPEH.

"A city set on a hill cannot be hid."

To reject Neby Samwil as the site of Mizpeh, because it is not close to the great north road, and to place this city, so famous in sacred history, on any other hill in the Holy Land, seems to me to be straining out the gnat and swallowing the camel.

The topographical notices of Mizpeh, instead of being vague, as might at first sight appear, prove on careful examination to be so distinct that I would defy even the discoverer of the philosopher's stone to point out any spot, except the hill of Neby Samwil, that satisfies the five following conditions required by the Bible and I Maccabees:—

1. Mizpeh was in Benjamin, and on a hill, as is implied in its name, which means "the watch-tower."
2. It was "over against," *i.e.*, in sight of Jerusalem.
Further, it was in such a position:—
3. That it made a desirable fortress for Judah against Israel, when Asa dismantled Ramah.
4. That Ishmael on leaving Mizpeh, "to go over to the Ammonites," *naturally* passed near "the great waters that are in Gibeon."
5. That from Mizpeh Ishmael could without difficulty meet the eighty pilgrims on their way from near Shiloh to Jerusalem.

After fortifying Neby Samwil on these five points, I invited an attack (*Quarterly Statement*, 1881, p. 91), and hoped that any assailant would direct his line of fire right on my position; but the demonstration made against Neby Samwil (p. 258) ends only in smoke. For while Captain Conder both urges that Jer. xli, 5-7 has been the main objection, and adds that the notices of Mizpeh are "so vague that it seems impossible to decide between the two high places of Nob and Gibeon, to one of which the name Mizpeh appears to have been applied," he makes no attempt whatever to show *how* Neby Samwil fails to satisfy any one of the necessary conditions, or *how* any other place fulfils them.

It is not desirable to allow the spoilers thus to disquiet the country, and therefore we are obliged to descend from "the watch-tower," and by

cutting them off in whatever places they may be found, to show how each has swallowed the camel in whole or part.

(a.) In Sinai and Palestine it is said that Scopus immediately north of Jerusalem "meets every requirement of the notices of Mizpeh;" but while quoting Jer. xli, 6, Dr. Stanley overlooks the context, which enforcing condition 4, makes it impossible for Mizpeh to have been at Scopus.

For Ishmael (Jer. xli, 10) departed to go over to the Ammonites, and could not thus in going *eastwards* from Scopus pass near the great waters of Gibeon, which are more than two miles *west* of the longitude of the former place. Josephus it is true in this passage substitutes Hebron for Gibeon; but being more imaginative than observant, he also elsewhere interchanges these places, stating in his "Antiquities" that Asahel was slain in the battle at Hebron. The same condition is equally fatal to the suggestion about the high place of Nob (at whatever point that place can have been on the road to Jerusalem from Geba), and indeed to any position on the Mount of Olives.

Some unable to swallow the whole camel, cut it into two by supposing that the Mizpeh of Samuel and that of Jeremiah were two distinct places. This Alexander-like stratagem may be shown, however, to be equally ineffectual.

(b.) Umm Saffa has been proposed (1876, p. 171) as a "very suitable position for the Mizpeh of Jeremiah, being on the road from Samaria to Jerusalem." It seems, however, to be five miles distant from that road, near Ain el Haramiyeh; to be quite out of sight of it; and being many miles north of Bethel, to be in the kingdom of *Israel*, and therefore in a position quite impossible for the Mizpeh fortified by Asa, King of *Judah* (Jer. xli, 9).

(c.) Again it has been proposed to place the Mizpeh of Samuel at Sôba or (D) at Karbet Shûfa, making it in both cases distinct from the Mizpeh of later times, but unfortunately for these suggestions, the Maspha (*i.e.*, Mizpeh) of I Macc., iii, 46.: "The place where they prayed aforetime in Israel," was obviously the Mizpeh of 1 Sam. vii, and was also "over against" Jerusalem. Since this last characteristic has not been claimed for either Sôba or Khurbet Shûfa, I conclude it has no existence in either case.

Thus these five conditions seem to me to make "a heap for ever" of all rival places, and Neby Samwil alone remains to be identified with Mizpeh.

Simply stated, the problem in this: To find a hill top, south of the latitude of Ramah, north of that of Jerusalem, and not east of the longitude of the waters of Gibeon, which is visible from Jerusalem, and also suitable for a fortress, and commands a good view of the north road.

Here we may say, "solvitur ambulando," any one at Jerusalem may settle the question for himself in a five minutes' walk. If only one place satisfies all these conditions, as Neby Samwil does, that place *must* be Mizpeh. Let us therefore "rest and be thankful," and have no misgivings because the ancient name is now wanting. Perhaps in forty years some

educated Gibeonite will say that Neby Samwîl was also called Shûja, or even Mizpah.

For had not Dr. Robinson, while forced, not by luck, but by discrimination, to assign as the probable site of Ai the place with ruins south of Deir Diwan, also to make this sad admission: "The name, however, has utterly perished. We inquired diligently after it throughout the whole region, but without finding the slightest trace?" And now forty years after we have the name Kh. Haiyan applied to this very spot, which after Mr. Trelawney Saunders' explanation about *the valley (ge)*, seems to me without question to represent the long lost Ai. Supply will finally overtake demand as to names in Palestine; so that too much importance must not be attached to the absence or even presence of any ancient name, especially after it has been often advertised for, as is the case with Ai.

W. F. B.

EBENEZER.

AFTER Mizpeh comes Ebenezer, which seems to me to fix itself beyond question (as already noticed, 1881, 100) at Kh. Samwîl, one mile south of Neby Samwîl. As however this site is viewed with suspicion, and the early Christian site at Deir Abân, supported by M. Clermont-Ganneau, is adopted in preference by Captain Conder, it is desirable to demolish the claims of this rival site by sifting the notices about Ebenezer.

Deir Abân is two miles east-south-east of Ain Shems (Bethshemesh), and twelve miles west-south-west of Mizpeh.

M. Ganneau thinks that the name refers to the great stone (*eben*) in the field of Joshua (1 Sam., vi, 18.) If so the name must have moved at least two miles to the east, as the princes of the Philistines only went "unto the border of Bethshemesh." He also is of opinion that the Ark was restored at the very same place at which it was captured, and that therefore Deir Abân represents Ebenezer, which he takes to have been the limit of the pursuit of the Philistines (1 Sam., vii, 12).

But (1) The battle near Ebenezer was, however, apparently an attempt of Israel to free themselves from the Philistines (1 Sam. iv, 1, 9), and would therefore be more probably fought in the heart of the country, like the battle of Michmash, than at the foot of the hills near Bethshemesh.

(2) Ebenezer was between Mizpeh and Shen (1 Sam. vii, 12). This is a common Biblical way of describing a position:—"Between Bethel and Ai" (Gen. xiii, 3) was a distance of two or three miles; "between Ramah and Bethel" (Judg. iv, 5) five miles; between "Zorah and Eshtael" (Judg. xiii, 25; xvi, 31) two miles, if the latter be at Eshna. In these cases "between" is certainly of use in fixing the position of the particular