

of which the Arabs are so fond. Butter is but little made, and *samn*, a kind of ghee, is seldom used except by the Bedawin. The best time for dairy produce is in the spring, when the early herbage appears, but when this is dried up a bad time begins for the unlucky cattle. The goats fare best, for they are turned out in all weathers, and can often find food on the hills. When the season is very bad, they are given oil-cake made from sesam. Sheep, and even goats, have a hard struggle to subsist through the winter months, and many an animal dies a miserable death for want of proper nourishment and care. Oxen and cows are fed throughout the winter on *tibn*, or crushed straw. Living the hard life that he does himself, the Fellah can hardly be expected to take much care of his cattle. If one animal after another dies from want of care, it is the will of Allah, and he must submit. He bears it philosophically, and tries by cheating and deception to recover the loss.

A townsman once entrusted a Fellah in Siloah with a number of goats in which they were "to go halves," that is to say, that for the trouble and cost of maintaining the whole, half the goats and half their offspring were to become the property of the Fellah. This sort of partnership is often entered into in the case of a horse. After a time the townsman sent to inquire how the little flock was getting on, and received the joyful news—*walladen*—"they have kids." The townsman now hoped for a good supply of milk, but soon came the unwelcome intelligence—they are giving no milk—and a little later on came word that they were dead. Whether it was all true, or whether the Fellah had over-reached him, the townsman could never ascertain. In the spring and early summer, when there is good stubble-feeding for the cattle, the cowherd drives them to the fields every morning, and brings them back at night.

If, as it often happens in the colder districts, no grass is to be found, the larger cattle owners depart with their cattle to warmer lands near the Jordan Valley and winter there, living in the open by day, and taking shelter at night in the natural caves with which the country abounds.

And here I must close these notes on the rural economy of the Fellahin. To enter into fuller details would swell them from a paper into a volume.

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### THE NAMELESS CITY.

The position of the city where Saul met Samuel (1 Sam. ix) is without doubt the most perplexing question in Biblical topography. We seem to be hopelessly involved in the following dilemma: Saul, in walking from a city apparently *north* of Jerusalem to his destination also *north* of Jerusalem, passes Rachel's sepulchre, four miles *south* of it. How is this apparent contradiction to be satisfactorily explained?

It is proposed to show (I) that the nameless city was certainly Ramah, where Samuel usually lived and was buried; (II) that it was close to

Rachel's sepulchre, and therefore (so far as I can see) on the Beit Jâla hill ; and (III) that it was identical with Ramathaim-Zophim.

The chapter on the Bakoosh cottage in "Finn's Byeways" led me three years ago confidently to place the city two or three miles further south, near Solomon's pools. Further consideration demanded by Captain Conder's objections (1879, 171 ; 1880, 104), and especially by Lieutenant Mantell's careful report (1882, 165), apparently forces me to place it *at or near* Beit Jâla. It would, however, be well if the few seeming points of difference between that report and Mr. Finn's remarks could be fully explained.

The following points seem to me to admit of no dispute :—

1. Kubbet Rahil is practically the correct site of Rachel's sepulchre (1880, 241).
2. Saul's destination was either Gibeah, or possibly Jerusalem (1 Chron. viii, 32) or Zelah (2 Sam. xxi, 14) ; at any rate, it was north of the latitude of Rachel's sepulchre.
3. Saul *naturally, i.e., without going out of his way*, passed on his return near that sepulchre.

Common sense seems to insist on this last condition, and so we may reject off-hand all proposed sites that do not satisfy it. Accordingly, Dr. Robinson, after proposing Sôba, practically withdraws it on account of the circuitous route which Saul would have to take. More recently Mr. Henderson (1882, 63), supported by Captain Conder (157), would identify Kirjath-'Erma not only with Kirjath-Jearim but also with "the nameless city." Two fatal objections why Khirjath-'Erma could not be the former place remain as yet unanswered (61 ; against its being the latter, stands the irresistible condition 3. The Survey Map proves a very effective weapon against error, and gives the happy despatch to many wrong identifications, and not least to Kirjath-'Erma. For measurement shows the following results :—

From Kirjath-'Erma to Gibeah is about	11 miles.
"    "    "    Rachel's sepulchre	8 "
"    Rachel's sepulchre to Gibeah	8 "

It is absurd to suppose that Saul would travel along two sides of a triangle instead of the third, and that in going from Kirjath-'Erma to Gibeah (64) he would *go round* by Rachel's sepulchre, *south* of the latitude of Kirjath-'Erma.

"The nameless city" cannot have been to the north of the latitude of Rachel's sepulchre, and therefore it was not at either Bethel or Gilgal or Mizpah or Kirjath-Jearim, which has never (so far as I know) been placed at all to the south of Rachel's sepulchre. All such proposed sites stand condemned by condition 3.

1. The following points seem to indicate that the city was Ramah, while *e* settles the question decisively.

- a. Josephus calls it Ramah. Formerly I thought his statement an "unlucky conjecture." Now I believe the story strictly requires it.

- b. Though Ramah is not named in ch. ix, x, it is met with in viii, 4, where the story begins.
- c. It is objected (1882, 63) that Samuel is not once spoken of as "dwelling" in the city. This omission, however, has no force, since Ahijah the Shilonite is not said to dwell at Shiloh (1 Kings xiv, 2, 4.)
- d. It is urged again (63) that the words (ix, 12, 13), "He came *to-day* to the city; for the people have a great sacrifice on the high place. . . . The people are not accustomed to eat till he comes, for he blesses the sacrifice," suggest that Samuel was only "therefore the occasion of the sacrificial feast."

The Speaker's Commentary, however, points out that "to-day" may only mean "now, just now." Samuel may quite recently have come into the city from the fields outside, or from out of his house. Further, it is hardly credible that Samuel had arrived at the city for the first time on that day, since it is stated (ix, 15), "The Lord had told Samuel a day before Saul came, saying, To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin." Surely, after this, to go to another city would be exactly what Samuel would *not* do.

- e. The conclusive point, however, is that Samuel's house was in the city (ix, 18), and so it is specially noted of Ramah in vii, 17, "There was his house." One who took no bribes, and lived in such retirement that he was not even by sight known to Saul, would certainly not have both an object and the means for keeping up, besides his home at Ramah, a second house and cook in another city quite distinct from the four holy places named above.
- f. Lastly, Ramah was a most suitable place (1882, 64) for a great sacrifice, for "there Samuel judged Israel, and there he built an altar unto the Lord" (vii, 17). I conclude, therefore, that the city certainly was Ramah, the dwelling-place of Samuel.

II. Its position was south of the latitude of Rachel's sepulchre. This seems at first sight to open a wide field. Jebel Fureidis has been suggested by Gesenius; Rameh, north of Hebron, by Lieutenant Van de Velde on account of the name. There are, however, too many hills and Ramahs in Southern Palestine for elevation and name to be of much use.

Perhaps the words in ix, 4, 5, may imply that the land of Zuph, and therefore the city, was *in* or *near* the land of the Benjamites. Again, on the third day towards evening, when their bread was spent, Saul and his servant came near the city, and the former proposed to return home. Probably there was time to reach it before dark. Happily there is no need to press these points, as the sacred narrative itself fixes the position of the city close to Rachel's sepulchre. It is stated in x, 2, "When thou art departed from me to-day, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre." Mr. Henderson has for three years made the admission (though it really tells against his site at Kirjath-*Erma*) that these words indicate (1879) "~~that~~ *just on leaving Samuel, immediately* therefore, Saul

would be at that spot ;” and again, that (1882, 64) “the prophet anointed the king, *not far* from Rachel’s sepulchre.”

This witness is true. It is a mistake, however, to give Samuel several miles’ walk in the early morning, for the anointing took place not only not far from Rachel’s sepulchre, but also *close to the city* ; as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, “. . . stand thou still. . . . Then Samuel took a vial of oil,” &c. (1 Sam. ix, 27 ; x, 1). Therefore the city itself was not far from Rachel’s sepulchre.

The place thus named Ramah, and situated near Rachel’s sepulchre, was further in “the land of Zuph.” It is a remarkable coincidence that Elkanah or one of his ancestors named Zuph was an Ephrathite, and so was connected with Bethlehem or Ephrath (1 Sam. i, 1) ; while the Kohathite Levites, to which family Zuph and Samuel belonged, had a very strong reason for being partial to the neighbourhood of Bethlehem. From this Zuph, part of the adjoining country may easily have got the name of “the land of Zuph.”

The existence of a Ramah near Bethlehem, which has thus been proved, completes the adaptation of Jer. xxxi, 15, to the slaughter of the Innocents (Matt. ii, 18) “in Bethlehem and in all the *coasts* thereof.” Then literally “In *Rama* was there a voice heard. . . . Rachel weeping for her children.”

We have now to search for a site not far from Rachel’s sepulchre which satisfies the local indications of 1 Sam. ix, x.

- (1.) There was an ascent to the city from the direction of Saul’s approach, down which apparently the maidens were going to draw water. On this side there must be a water supply.
- (2.) There was descent in the direction of the way towards Rachel’s sepulchre (ix, 27).
- (3.) There was higher ground adjoining—the site of the high place.
- (4.) There ought to be ancient Jewish tombs on the hill.
- (5.) Possibly we ought to find near it something answering to the great well in Sechu. Besides, we have the expression, “Naioth in Ramah.”

Is there any suitable place possessing these characteristics ? Bethlehem itself, which Captain Conder has now discarded for Kirjath-’Erma, was once (1879, 171) suggested by him. It is, however, inadmissible, since from Bethlehem Samuel (1 Sam. xvi, 13) returned to Ramah. The only hill that seems to me available is that of Beit Jâla, and this I believe to be the right spot.

To suit (1) there is a cistern on the northern side called Bir Auna, and a spring and trough named Hand Kibryan on the south-west of the hill. From one of these sides Saul might have approached the city on this hill, and in both cases there is an ascent.

To suit (2) there is a descent from the hill in the direction of Rachel’s sepulchre.

To suit (3) there is higher ground behind the present village of Beit Jâla.

To suit (4) it may be stated that Captain Conder has suggested Beit Jâla as a possible site for Gallim.

It is probable, then, that old tombs have been already discovered there, or sufficient remains to prove that it is an ancient site.

I no longer stand in need of the argument I wished to draw from the identification of the places named by Samuel, with various spots within view, when he anointed Saul. I may state, however, that from the Beit Jâla hill Rachel's sepulchre is well in view; Jerusalem may also be seen, and probably the Mount of Olives, as well as the hill south of Jerusalem (1879, 130).

The sepulchres on the Bakoosh hill described by Lieutenant Mantell seem to me to point to the former existence of habitations close by, which must, I fear, always remain a *nameless* city.

III. Having proved that "the nameless city" was really Ramah, Samuel's ordinary residence, and that it was situated on the Beit Jâla hill, we now come to the difficult question how such a position can be reconciled with 1 Sam. i, 1, "There was a man of Ramathaim-Zophim, of Mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah . . . the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite."

The following explanations suggest themselves:—

1. Elkanah may have formerly lived in Ramathaim-Zophim, in Mount Ephraim, but removed to the Ramah near Bethlehem before Samuel was born.
2. He may have been living in Ramathaim-Zophim, in Mount Ephraim when Samuel was born, and afterwards he or Samuel may have removed to the other Ramah.
3. He may have been an inhabitant of Ramathaim-Zophim, but have lived originally in Mount Ephraim.
4. Mount Ephraim may have reached to Bethlehem.
5. Mount Ephron was the original reading, and, not being understood, was altered to the well known Mount Ephraim.
6. Mount Ephrath (as the name of the district near Bethlehem or Ephrata—like Mount Bethel near Bethel) was the original reading, and, being an unusual expression, was somehow changed into Mount Ephraim.

Of these, I reject 1–4 as quite inadmissible, though it is remarkable that, though Samuel was buried at Ramah, it is not added "in the sepulchre of his father," as is the case with most of the Judges; 5 and 6 alone seem to me credible, and I prefer 6, since all the change needed is to read  $\aleph$  for  $\beth$ .

Dr. Robinson says that "Ramathaim-Zophim probably signifies nothing more than Ramah of the Zuphites or descendants of Zuph" in other words, Ramah in the land of Zuph.

A report by Lieutenant Mantell on the Beit Jâla hill (like those on the Bakoosh hill and Khurbet Adasah) would doubtless be most interesting and valuable.

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