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The seal is Israelitish, as is shown by the double line between the two names, and the divine name, Yahu. But Ishmael was a foreign name in Judah, and belonged rather to the Aramaic-speaking tribes of northern Arabia, while the use of *bar* instead of *ben* "son" in the second name is also Aramaic. The termination of the second name shows that it cannot be identical with the "Beriah" of the O. T. A  $\eta$  (*u*) is probably lost at the beginning of the second line, so that the inscription was intended to read: "Belonging to Ishmae[l] [and] Bar-yahu." The forms of the characters are those of the sixth century B.C. For the name of Ishmael at this period, see Jer. xl, 8.

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P.S.—Since the above was printed I have seen some casts of the seal which show that a piece of it has been broken off at the head of the letter which I have read *bêth*. The letter in question, accordingly, will be *pé*, and not *bêth*; and in this reading I have the support of Dr. Chaplin. The second name, therefore, is Par-yahu, instead of Bar-yahu—a name, by the way, which is almost inconceivable if the first element in it is to be regarded as *bar* "son." The casts show no sign either of *lamed* at the beginning of the first line, or of space for a *waw* at the beginning of the second line; there are traces, however, of the final *lamed* in the first line. We should thus have "Ishmael, Paryahu."

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## THE (SO-CALLED) TOMBS OF THE KINGS AT JERUSALEM.

By Dr. CONRAD SCHICK.

The rock-cut tombs, called "Kabûr es Saladeen"<sup>1</sup> and "Tombs of the Kings," are situated north of the present city 2,500 feet distant from the northern gate, or "Bab el 'Amûd"—being the largest and most elaborate of the many rock-cut tombs in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. They are also comparatively well preserved, and are described more or less fully in all modern guide-books, as well as by many travellers and pilgrims in ancient times, especially in the last three centuries.<sup>2</sup> Many added to their description a plan made by Pococke, Catherwood,

<sup>1</sup> The "Name Lists" of the Survey of Western Palestine have Kabûr es Salatân.—[ED.]

<sup>2</sup> Maundrell, in 1697, gives a clear description, although he made some mistakes, and says nothing of the closing rolling stone; but he describes in full the doors of the chambers.

Niebuhr, and others, which were repeatedly simply copied by succeeding writers. Robinson copied Pococke's plan. In 1865 a new and more complete plan was made by the Ordnance Survey (Sir C. W. Wilson), which I have used in forming the accompanying one, adding only what has come to light since, but on a smaller scale, so that there can be no important mistakes, even if I have not measured by myself the things in detail.

All the plans hitherto published (so far as I know) include only the group of tombs, leaving out the surroundings and things directly connected with them; this lack I wished in the present paper, with its drawings, to supply.

In modern times there were excavations made on two different occasions. In the year 1863 M. de Saulcy cleared the earth from all the chambers, and examined minutely the rock everywhere, and in so doing found another chamber closed up; it was opened, and a stone sarcophagus covered with earth found there. In this sarcophagus were still the remains of bones. It was believed to have been that of a queen, and was taken to Paris, where it stands in the Louvre. There was at the time much talk about it, some even said it was the grave of King David. It happened that I had just at that time to build a house for the Jewish Mission of an English society on the western height, 20 minutes outside the city wall, on a place called afterwards "The Sanatorium." One day when I intended, as on other days, to go home at noon, when I came to the gate of the city I found it locked, it being Friday; so I had to wait about an hour, and occupied the time in riding my donkey about the neighbourhood, and coming in the rear of the Tombs of the Kings I observed a good number of workpeople just taking their hour of rest, so I went nearer and asked one what they were doing. The overseer answered that they were clearing the tombs and had found a new chamber with a stone coffin, which he offered to show to me. So I followed him, leaving my animal in care of another. I found that they had really, on the north wall of the first or chief chamber, opened a hitherto unknown chamber. I went in, and saw the coffin still sticking in the earth, but with the lid put aside. By the light of a candle I examined the coffin and its cover more closely, and observed some mouldings cut on it, but saw no writings, as it was covered with dirt. So I resolved to come again the next day, when all would be cleared and cleaned, and then see whatever there might be on the outside of the sarcophagus; but when I came the next day I was not allowed to go in. When the work was ended M. de Saulcy left the country, taking with him the coffin. When there was again free access to the tombs I found a number of Jews—men and women, old and young—busy carrying baskets of earth, &c., taken out by M. de Saulcy, again into the chambers where it had been before. On my asking for the reason of their doing this, they told me the Messiah will now come, as Jeremiah viii, 1, is fulfilled, and that it was their duty to bring the dust of former bodies into their tombs again. But by this they acted contrary to the 2nd verse of the same chapter.

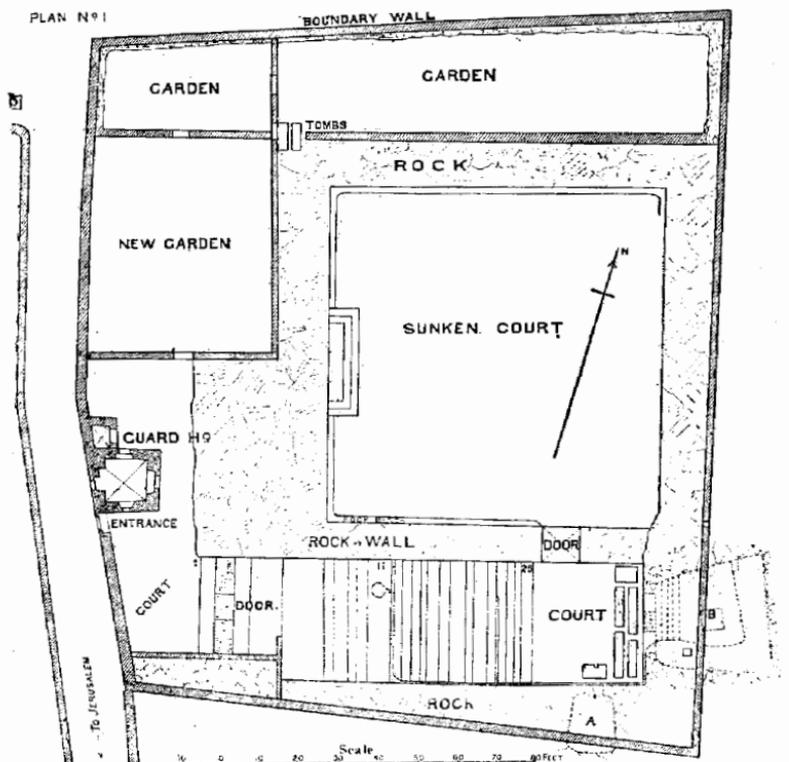
A few years later, I think it was in 1878, the field in which these tombs are was bought (with the tombs themselves) by a French Jewish lady, it was said, for 30,000 francs. Then the boundary wall was erected, and when closed up round about, the tombs, the chambers, the courts, cisterns, &c., were properly cleared, and the earth put up on the surface of the rock and made into a kind of garden, as Plan No. 1 shows. The door in the boundary wall is on the western side, but not in its middle, more to the south, on the public road leading to Herod's Gate of the city. Coming in by the boundary wall door there is on the left-hand (north) a newly-built room or lodge for the watchman, with an additional little place as stable, &c. Further north in the new garden was found another kind of rock-tomb similar to those Sir C. W. Wilson had excavated in 1865 further north, nearer the bottom of the Valley "El Jos."<sup>1</sup> This kind of tomb seems to me to be of Christian origin.

Going from the watchman's house towards the south-east one comes to a kind of trench, or decline, between rock walls. When the earth lying there was removed, a flight of steps appeared cut in the rock, but very irregular, varying greatly in height and breadth, for the height is from 8 to 10 inches, and the breadth from 16 inches to 4 and 5 feet, the broadest even 11 feet. They are 25 in number, of which the five upper ones are 20 feet long; the others (lower ones) 31 feet long (*see* Plan No. 1 and Elevation Sections Nos. 3 and 4). In the middle of the steps 2 and 3 was formerly a kind of door, the holes for the sockets are still visible in the rock, and step 3 is left rather rough, except the space for the passage or door. The eleventh step is nearly 6 feet broad, and on its surface is cut a bowl-shaped hollow for gathering the rain-water coming down from the higher steps and a kind of court at their top, or western end. A short gutter cut in the step brings the overflow of the water to the next step below, which has along its whole length a groove or gutter with a decline towards the south, where, on the rock wall, is cut a gutter running eastward to the cistern B on the east side. So it is again (but without a basin) on the twenty-second step, bringing the water to the smaller cistern marked A in the south wall (*see* Plans Nos. 1 and 2, and the Elevation and Sections Nos. 3 and 4).

These two cisterns are cut in the rock, or into the side walls of the rocky stair-trench, and are of a peculiar kind seldom found on this side of the Jordan, but often in the trans-Jordanic land. I have seen such only in the neighbourhood of Hebron, and in the underground of ancient Jerusalem, also the cave beneath the rock in the large mosque or "Dome of the Rock" seems to have been originally such a cistern. The usual ancient cisterns are cut in *horizontal* rock; first the mouth to some depth, and then widening in all directions; but these are made by cutting a hole or opening (often door- or window-like) in a *vertical* wall of rock, and deepening and widening to the right and left and especially towards

<sup>1</sup> *See* Ordnance Survey, "Jerusalem," 1865, Plate XXVI, No. 7, or Excavation No. XII in the "Notes," p. 76.

the mountain or side opposite the entrance. When such a cistern is deep, and the opening goes down in a slanting direction, rock steps are left, so that a person can go down to the level of the water at any height, and get it by means of a vessel held in the hand, no bucket with a rope being required, as is necessary with other cisterns. These cisterns have generally no opening in the roof; yet the larger one here has such, but more for the purpose of letting the water run in from the upper surface, than for taking it out. As may be seen by the plan and sections, A has one opening in the rock wall, but B two. In B, or the eastern one, a



GROUND PLAN OF THE (SO-CALLED) TOMBS OF THE KINGS.

square pier was put at some later time as a support for the roof. In front of these two cisterns are a number of rock blocks, quarried to procure well-shaped stones—but not detached from the rock. They were used as steps by people going up to the cistern openings to fetch water.

Between these blocks and the last step of the broad stair is a kind of level court, from it one can go northwards and three steps down through an opening or doorway in the 9 feet thick rock wall into the large open court. This doorway is 10 feet wide, and averages 19 feet high. It is

arch-shaped at the top, and has no door. Having passed through it we are now in a large court with rock walls 28 feet high round about. The court is nearly a square, 85 feet from east to west, and 87 feet from south to north. The bottom is to some degree level, and rock, having no other flooring. Along the sides, except the eastern, runs a rock bench or seat, and near the north-west corner, in the flooring, is a bowl-shaped excavation to take up the surface water (*see* Plan 2).

In the middle of the western rock wall is a large square opening 28 feet long and 15½ feet high. To some degree the sides of it, but especially its top part, have in relief very fine sculptured decorations in a somewhat altered Doric style, with grapes, &c., described already in many books, and as Sir C. W. Wilson says<sup>1</sup>:—"Some of the decorations have disappeared under the chisel and hammer of some enterprising traveller." In this opening once stood two pillars (as may be seen on the architrave), dividing the opening into three entrances, the middle one somewhat wider than the side ones, which latter had from the jamb to the pillar a parapet of about 4 feet high, most probably in some leaf work or lattice-shaped form, so that the middle opening was the real entrance to the vestibule, which is 38½ feet long and, without the jambs, 14 feet wide and 18 feet high. The ceiling is also rock and level, having only round about a small moulding. The floor is nearly 3 feet higher than the floor of the large court; four angular steps lead up to it. In front of them stood most probably four pillars, two opposite the jambs, and two opposite the two vestibule pillars, as it is shown by dottings in Plan 2. These outer pillars, including chapiters and basements, must have been about 26 feet high, so that their architrave was as high as the highest part of the frieze, and other mouldings. On the top of these mouldings on the one side, and on the architrave of the pillars on the other side, the covering stones were laid, with a fine moulding towards three sides, and on it were put the basements for the three pyramids which Josephus mentions<sup>2</sup> to have been on the mausoleum of the family of the King of Adiabene, and all scholars agree that these "Tombs of the Kings" are those of Helena and her family, erected about the beginning of the Christian era. The age of these tombs is also indicated in the architecture and the character of the mouldings; the high inner doors are also found in other tombs of the Herodian period. That these "Tombs of the Kings" cannot be those of the earliest Israelite Kings is quite clear, and has not been discussed here.

In the vestibule on its southern wall is the entrance to the tomb itself, which could be shut up by a round stone in shape of a millstone rolled forwards in a groove before the opening. This arrangement is described in books, and by Sir C. W. Wilson in the Ordnance Survey "Notes," p. 66. "The longitudinal grooves" (cut in the bottom of the single tomb chambers), "a feature not seen elsewhere," was, according

<sup>1</sup> Ordnance Survey, Jerusalem, "Notes," p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Josephus, "Antiq.," xx, 4, 3.

to my humble opinion, to take the water coming down from the moist rock in heavy winter rains, and very likely the bowl-shaped basin (or cistern) in the bottom of the vestibule had the same use, the rock on the top here being thinner, the dropping was therefore more in quantity ; but it may have had at the same time the use of better concealing the entrance of the tombs, as from it the steps, the opening, the rolling-stone, and the short knee-passage could be covered by slabs, as may be seen on Elevation-Section No. 5. The grooves into which these slabs were put are still visible. When all was shut properly no stranger could imagine that there was an opening to tombs, or perceive where to look for such.

As all the tombs are on the south, it was thought an opening might also be found opposite on the northern wall, but all search was in vain. It seems that the intention to make such in course of time existed, but was never carried out. Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jews dispersed, the city became first pagan and then Christian, and so other wants and manners arose, and the former plans became neglected.

When the last modern arrangement and clearing of the place was made, and especially when the deposit of earth was removed from the large court, a good number of architectural stones and remains of sculptures were found, which I have examined and measured, and the chief of them sketched, of which I give copies on Sheets Nos. 7 and 8.

First, several stones were found which it was clear had belonged to the upper part of a pyramid, similar to that on "Absalom's pillar," or the monument, so-called, in the Kidron Valley, as shown in Fig. 1, plan and section, on Sheet 7. As there is a deepening in the centre of the top piece, this gives the proof that there was still some other top or end piece, of what figure or form we do not know. The pyramid was also much higher and stood certainly on a square base, and the whole on the top or cover of the architrave of the pillars and the rock-top. There were three pyramids, of which the middle one, corresponding to the larger entrance below, may have been somewhat larger than the others, or side ones.<sup>1</sup>

Fig. 2, Sheet 7, is a corner piece of the architrave, but, unfortunately, I was not able at the time to make proper drawings of the leaf work, measuring simply the mouldings. I left this also partly because they were greatly damaged.

Fig. 3 is the base of a pillar, its shaft with  $17\frac{1}{2}$  inches diameter at its lower end. It probably stood in the opening of the vestibule.

Fig. 4 is a similar base of a pillar, but without a square or abacus-shaped part at its foot. The diameter of the pillar belonging to this measured 21 inches. I think it is one of the four which stood in front of the vestibule entrance and the steps.

<sup>1</sup> These remains are mentioned in the "Jerusalem Volume of the Survey of Western Palestine," p. 405. Dr. Schick has been asked to endeavour to obtain photographs of the fragments of the pyramids, the bases of columns, capitals, and any other architectural remains that exist on the spot.—[ED.]

On Sheet 8 is given one of the capitals, as restored from the remains. According to the diameter and the width of the abacus it belonged to one of the pillars of the vestibule opening.

The capitals of the larger pillars I think may have had nearly the same shape, only thicker, not looking so tall. Of other and only small pieces, I could make nothing, but think with the aid of this one described we learn enough that an architect may with some degree of certainty reconstruct the pyramids and the whole of the decorated entrance to these celebrated royal tombs.

## A GREEK INSCRIPTION FROM NEAR NAZARETH.

By Rev. H. PORTER, of the Syrian Protestant College, Beirut.

*April 12th, 1897.*

I SEND a copy of a Greek inscription on a stone from the vicinity of Nazareth, which I have made from a squeeze which is not very good, as the person who took it and sent it to me is not experienced in such matters. I have made a pretty careful study of the squeeze, and am quite sure of most of the characters, but where there is doubt I have left the copy indistinct, tracing the lines of the original as they appear in the squeeze. The stone is evidently somewhat worn by time. I do not send the squeeze as I understand that the person who sent it to me (a native Syrian) wishes it returned, but should Dr. Murray find my copy undecipherable, I might get permission to forward it.

The inscription may have been published, but I cannot find it in any of the works on Greek inscriptions I have at hand.

ΗΝΜΟΥΠΑΤΗΡΚΟΙΝΤΟΣΗΝΜΗΤΗΡΦΙΛΟΥΣ  
 ΤΟΔΟΥΝΟΜΕΣΤΙΝΑΠΕΙΩΝΠΑΤΡΙΣΔΕΜΟΥ  
 ΚΑΙΠΑΣΙΚΟΙΝΗΓΑΔΑΡΑΧΡΗΣΤΟΜΟΥΣΙΑ  
 ΣΟΦΗΣΔΑΦΙΠΠΟΥΕΣΤΙΝΗΜΗΤΗΡΦΙΛΟΥΣ  
 ΑΠΑΙΔΑΤΟΙΚΟΝΕΓΛΙΠΩΝΕΠΙΤΡΙΣΙΝ  
 ΟΙΚΩΚΕΛΕΥΘΟΙΣΤΥΜΒΟΝΕΙΣΟΜΟΥΣΙΗΝ  
 ΠΑΤΗΡΑΠΑΣΑΝΕΚΧΕΑΣΜΕΝΛΘΥΠΣΕΝ  
 ΖΗΣΑΝΤΕΤΗΔΙΣΕΝΔΕΚΜΟΝΘΡΕΝΗΣΕΝ

Length of inscription, m. 0·75 ; width, m. 0·30.

Height of letters about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cm.

Irregularity in length of lines nearly as in the original, some end-letters perhaps effaced.