

EXCAVATIONS OF THE GERMAN PALESTINE EXPLORATION SOCIETY AT TELL EL-MUTESELLIM IN 1903.

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*Tell el-Mutesellim*, generally identified with Megiddo, lies on the direct road from *Haifa* to *Jenin*, about  $20\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the former place, whence it can easily be reached in summer by carriage, and  $10\frac{3}{4}$  miles from *Jenin*. The hill is a prominent landmark, and from its summit one of the finest views of the great plain of Esdraelon is obtained. At the foot of its eastern slope runs the great road from Northern Syria to Egypt, which, after passing through the ruins at *Lejjân*, some 1,400 yards to the south, crosses the hills by a low pass to the plain of Sharon. In summer, camel caravans from Hamath and the Euphrates Valley may be seen still following the ancient road to the markets of Egypt. To the right of the road from the *Tell* to *Lejjân* runs a rocky ridge in which two natural recesses mark the sites of a Roman theatre and a large reservoir, both in ruins. Towards the south the ridge is covered with Arab and Roman ruins, and bears the name *Dahr ed-Dâr*, and here it is separated from the extensive ruins at *Lejjân* by a perennial stream which rises at *Ain es-Sitt* in the *Wâdy Lejjân*. Ruins and tombs are almost continuous from the *Tell* to the hills south of *Lejjân*, and the whole forms one of the most extensive fields for excavation in Palestine.

Dr. Schumacher, who was in charge of the excavations, worked continuously from April 1st to May 29th, 1903. The ground covered by the ruins, including the ridge and *Lejjân*, was surveyed on a scale of  $\frac{1}{8000}$ ; a contoured plan on a scale of  $\frac{1}{1000}$  was made of the *Tell*, and special plans on the  $\frac{1}{100}$  scale of the ruins discovered. The summit of the *Tell* measures about 758 feet from north to south, and 1,033 feet from east to west. The east side is the highest, and here, in the hope that it might prove to be the site of an acropolis, the first trial trenches were opened. They disclosed the existence of a wall of large stones, tentatively ascribed to the fifth century B.C., surrounding the highest part of the mound. Beneath this was older masonry, which it is believed formed part of a gateway of the ninth or tenth century B.C.; and at a lower level the débris of an earlier period, as yet undetermined. At the edge

of the *Tell* was found a well-coursed wall of sun-dried brick, which appears to have been the oldest enclosing wall of the city. The bricks are of yellow clay, and they contain small particles of diorite and chopped straw.

Not far from the gateway a small "holy place," surrounded by a 3-foot wall, and divided into chambers, was uncovered. In it were three *masséboth*, four jars containing infant skeletons, such as have been found at Gezer and Taanach, a rude limestone god, apparently of Egyptian origin, a few "Horus eyes," and other figures. A little further south several jars containing infant remains were found leaning against an old wall. They were surrounded with fine ashes and covered with stones. Other infant burials were discovered at the foot of the brick wall. In every case the mouth of the jar containing the infant was covered by a bowl, and in some instances small jars were buried with the child. The mode of burial is similar to that at Gezer, but the form of the jars seems to be different. More to the south, a well-preserved burial vault with walls of hewn stone and a covering of heavy stone slabs was brought to light. In it were 10 skeletons, mostly of full-grown men, buried with the heads to the east, and in six cases face downwards. A grave opened on the south side of the *Tell* produced undoubted Egyptian remains, including an Egyptian head of red burned clay, and a finely-worked vessel with three legs, of dolerite. At the south end of the *Tell* were also found a finely-painted Egyptian incense vessel, and two standing stones, each bearing a rudely-chiselled early Hebrew, or Phœnician letter. At *Lejjân* several clay bricks with the stamp of the sixth Legion, Ferrata, were obtained.

On September 20th the excavations were resumed under the direction of Dr. Benzinger, with the support of a grant of £1,300 made by the German Emperor. On December 1st the work was closed for the winter. A trench, 65 feet 7 inches wide and about 13 feet deep, was commenced at the north end of the *Tell* and carried southwards. Amongst the finds were walls of sun-dried brick standing on foundations of from four to five courses of medium-sized unhewn stones, a seven-spouted Jewish lamp, painted pottery sherds, &c. A pre-Exilic tomb with a very rich assortment of pottery was also opened.

Excavations were recommenced on March 4th, 1904, with from 180 to 190 labourers. Very interesting and even important discoveries were made, but no report of them has yet appeared.