

conclude then that No. 2 is a faulty cutting of the same name that is cut more correctly and in larger letters in No. 1. The ossuary contained the bones of a single person—a woman; but whether her name was “Martha” is subject to doubt on the grounds brought forward by Dr. Lidzbarski.

THE SITE OF GIBEAH.

By THE REV. W. F. BIRCH.

IN May, 1897, a slip (or hoax) in the *Times* over two Keraks made a steamboat run from Jordan-Jericho to the Sea of Galilee (some 200 miles with windings) in five hours. Dr. Masterman timely pointed out the blunder, and I was glad to follow him. As he has now put his hand to the Gibeah puzzle, I expect that he will run that city (or village) to earth on the west side of Wādy ed-Dumm. On certain points we differ, *e.g.*, (1) he thinks this valley (“Valley of Blood”) only gets its name from the red-brown soil over which the water flows. But if “the Field of Blood” at Jerusalem could establish its name (see Matthew, Acts) from the death of one man, surely (wherever Gibeah may have been) the slaughter of 26,000 Benjamites or 66,000 Israelites might give an adjacent valley an abiding name to this day. Why not say “*must* have given”? (2) In *Q.S.*, 1883, p. 158, I placed “Gibeah of Saul” within a mile of Kh. Adaseh, the only name I could give to that area in which occur, in 1 Sam. x, the terms, the hill (Gibeah) of God, the city, the high-place, evidently not convertible terms, but places near to one another.

The actual summit (*i.e.*, of Adaseh) is (Dr. Masterman observes) “too small for a city . . . the lower ground too *extensive* for a fortified site,” but, so far as I see, the Bible says nothing about Gibeah being large, small, or fortified. I was glad to see that Dr. Masterman had another Kh. Adaseh offered to him, showing that it is a not uncommon name. In Hastings’ *Dictionary of the Bible* (1909), under “Gibeah,” Mr. Ewing observes “It is necessary to note carefully where the word means hill, and where it is the name of a city.”

One now comes to the one really weighty objection (which clenches the question) that no Israelite pottery (within the mile area above) has been found (but surely sherds may be found wherever pots are broken), and nothing to testify to the existence of an Israelite city or village has been lighted upon. I believe this is true, and all the explorers have rightly laid very great stress on this point. As sherds are so popular in Canaan, I should cheerfully say, "No sherds, no Gibeah"; but they must be looked for.

Two years ago on closer search I found to my amazement that the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, and the Revisers in 1884 with one voice said (as to the travellers going north to Shiloh by the road from Jerusalem, Judg. xix, 14), "the sun went down upon them near to Gibeah" (a more literal translation would be, "for them by the side of Gibeah"). This seemed to me to settle the question that Gibeah (like the sun) must have been west of them, and therefore could not possibly have been at Tel el-Ful, towards the east, *i.e.*, on their right. In this verse by the use of misleading italics ("the sun went down upon them *when they were* by Gibeah"), the Authorized Version ignored the declared position of the *sun* (of course in the west) as being by the side of Gibeah; or, in other words, while the Bible said the sun was by the side of Gibeah, the Authorized Version said the *travellers* themselves were by Gibeah. Topographically this has proved a most unfortunate liberty in translation from Robinson's day to the present time. Over this outrage I must declare war against even my friends.

Happily, I found a Professor to help me. Let me first assume that the travellers had reached the Gate (see *map*, Q.S., 1911, p. 102) at sunset. Assuming this position I ask where would the sun set some four or five months previous to the dance near the vineyards (Judg. xx, 47; xxi, 21), *i.e.*, early in May? Prof. Lamb writes (July 14th, 1913): "Taking the latitude of Jerusalem at $31^{\circ} 47'$, the sun at midsummer would get about 28° N. of W. This does not allow for refraction, which would make it slightly more to the N." It would seem from this that not even at midsummer would the sun get as far as Kh. Adaseh as seen on the horizon from "The Gate."

Again, on August 9th, 1913, Dr. Masterman wrote: "I believe the question you want about the sunset and 'The overhanging Gate' is simply whether the sun sets directly behind the hill Kh. Adaseh, when one stands at 'The Gate.' It happened I passed the spot a few days ago shortly before sunset and noticed that the sun would

not be directly behind, but to the south; but I imagine this is simply a question of the *season*, and in some months, I daresay, it would be directly behind the hill . . . I went to Kh. Adaseh with no prejudice against your view—rather the reverse. I find this site an impossible one for an Old Testament town.”

As the above letters show nothing militating against the simple words of Judg. xix, 14, it only remains to search for Israelite sherds (and ruins?) south of “the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.” I admit that it is impossible for Kh. Adaseh to have been the *city* Gibeah, although it was the summit of the hill (Gibeah) of Rizpah, of Gibeath Ammah (the mother-city), and the high-place, of or near Gibeah, where Saul prophesied and slew priests.

In *Encl. Bibl.* (under “Gibeah”) it is said that the text of verse 24 “is in great disorder,” and the question is asked, “how was it that the pursuers go no further than the district of Gibeon by sunset?” In *Q.S.*, 1913, p. 41, instead of disorder: (1) the names wonderfully agree with the positions in the map; (2) it is not said when the retreat began; (3) nor would Joab, who knew when to hold back his men (2 Sam. xviii, 16), care to sacrifice even one more of his soldiers, to smite eighteen more of Abner’s citizens. The rapid pursuit is a mere fancy of Josephus.

If the supporters of Tel el-Ful wish to identify it with Gibeath Ammah, it is for them to show why Abner should retreat about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles southward, instead of hastening eastward toward the Jordan.

Perhaps visitors, in 1914, will further aid the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund by looking for sherds on the ridge of Gibeah, close to which the sun set for the travellers in the time of Phinehas. It is just possible one may there find a Roman coin dropped by Paula.
