

Beth-shemesh on the north. The border cannot, however, be drawn to the top of the mountain on which *Kesla* stands, but would run over the western slope or "shoulder," just as described in the Bible.

In connection with the line thus proposed, it is noticeable that no cities of Judah are enumerated in the Hebrew Bible north of this line. In the Septuagint, indeed, no less than six towns are enumerated which are identified with places lying in the territory which would have belonged to Benjamin according to the new boundary. These are *Calon* (*Kolonia*), *Sores* (*Saris*), *Carem* (*'Ain Kârim*), *Galem* (*B. Jâla*), *Bether* (*Bittîr*), and *Manocho* (*Mâlhab*). The interpolation of these names may, however, possibly belong to a later period, when the old boundaries were forgotten, and when it was noticed that this group of important places west of Jerusalem was unnoticed in the Old Testament.

Another important gain is, that *Lifta* being no longer supposed to represent *Nephtoah*, we are at liberty to identify it with *Eleph* (עֶלֶף) of Benjamin, mentioned in the lists next to Jerusalem (*Josh. xviii.*), and therefore very probably in about the actual position of *Lifta*.

If we could recover *Perez*—*Uzzah*, *Chidon*, or *Nachon* (*2 Sam. vi.*, *1 Chron. xiii. 6*), and *Mount Ephron*, the question might be further elucidated; but of these names I have not been able to find any trace.

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ZOAR.

My attention has been called by Mr. Besant to the interesting report of Rev. Selah Merrill on the "Cities of the Plain" (*4th American Statement*). He supposes *Tell Ektanu* to be the site of *Zoar*, and marks it on his sketch map as two miles east of *Tell er Rama*, while, according to the map in the *3rd Statement*, *Tell esh Shâghur* is very nearly a mile and a half from the same spot.

I cannot quite reconcile the two maps, since the latter gives also an intermediate *Tell*, while Mr. Merrill says there are exactly five *Tells* in the plain of *Shittim*, without counting *Nimrin*—viz., *Tell Kefrein*, *Tell er Rama*, *Tell el Hammam*, *Tell Ektanu*, and *Suweimeh*. As he places the first and third of these about a mile to the north of the wady passing by *Tell er Rama* and *Tell Ektanu* (it also passes by *Tell esh Shâghur*), and marks *Suweimeh* some miles to the south-west of them, one would like some explanation as to the fate of *Tell esh Shâghur*.

It is strange that Professor Paine should recover the very name of *Zoar* in *Tell esh Shâghur* without commenting on it, and Mr. Merrill afterwards describe the *Tells* in the "plain" and yet pass by the Arabic title without notice. *Tell esh Shâghur* is evidently the "Segor" visited by *Thietmar*, A. D. 1217 (*Bibl. Dict.*, *Zoar*). This hill cannot, I now think, be that described by *Canon Tristram*, for Mr. Merrill writes: "Between *Tell Ektanu* and *Tell el Hammam*, and close to the foot of the mountains, there are some of the largest and finest dolmens that I have ever

seen. The slabs of unhewn stone which cover them are, in some cases, of immense size. I counted upwards of fifteen of these, and where they were nearly perfect, the roof or cover slanted on two sides, so far as this could be with the materials used; and it appeared to me quite evident that the dolmens were the original of the sarcophagi, with which the country now abounds."

In speaking of Tell Ektanu, he states that "on it are some of the oldest ruins that I have yet seen in the country;" and that "the name, indeed, has no meaning in Arabic. . . . It appears to be the Hebrew word 'Kātān,' which means *little*, or *the little one*."

"Luwāyeh" may without hesitation be taken to represent Lubith, since M. Ganneau recovered the name "Zohelath" in the Arabic form, "Zehwele."

On further consideration I am disposed to think that Mr. Finn did not ascend Wady Hesbān, but one just north of it; yet until the district has been accurately mapped, certainty is difficult. Both wadies, however, may abound in honeysuckle.

A true identification ought to bear being thoroughly sifted; so also should the objections raised in any instance. Seven points in formidable array are marshalled (*Quarterly Statement*, 1878, p. 28) in favour of the mediæval opinion that Jeroboam's golden calves were set up near Shechem, and against the usual view that one was at the northern Dan and the other at Bethel, in Benjamin. Not one, however, of the seven will stand scrutiny.

Similarly, in his valuable report, the American explorer raises an unsound objection to identifying Hazezon-Tamar (Gen. xiv. 7) with Engedi. He observes that if *the cities of the plain* are put at the northern end of the Dead Sea, Chedorlaomer's campaign is no longer a geographical puzzle, yet he adds, "But the wonder still remains how he could pass by Abraham's door, and fight battles, and not attract his attention. I strongly suspect that the name Hazezon-Tamar has migrated from the eastern to the western shore, and that Chedorlaomer had nothing to do with the western shore but returned by a route on the east"—or "if Hazezon-Tamar means *palm forests* the messengers who came to Jehoshaphat may have said simply, "The great multitude . . . are at the palm-groves which are at Engedi" (2 Chron. xx. 2). The Bible narrative requires neither supposition, since it incidentally states all we want. Abram must have heard of the coming invasion, and therefore was "confederate" with Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, and had 318 men "trained" (? drilled) so as to meet the emergency. Happily for the four kings, Hebron did not lie within the sphere of their operations, and the patriarch had no interest in this eastern question, as between them and the five cities. But when, in an unlucky hour, they seized Lot and his goods, and one escaped and told Abram "that his brother was taken captive," then the tie of consanguinity, which throws light on many obscurities in the Bible, aroused the avenger of blood to start in deadly pursuit with characteristic promptitude.

Mr. Merrill seems inclined to think that the five cities of the plain were situated on Tells, and that the five Tells already named exactly suit the position required. As, however, "Lot beheld all the plain of Jordan . . . until thou comest unto Zoar," *i.e.*, as far as Zoar, which was therefore the limit of the "plain," *i.e.*, of the Ciccar, it seems to me that Suweimeh, several miles farther south, could not be one of the five cities. We must accordingly examine the "plain" for another probable site, and extend our search, if necessary, at least as far as "the oasis of Wady Shaib or Nimrin" ("the waters of Nimrin," Isa. xv. 6), "which really belongs to the Shittim plain," in order to take in some other Tell to complete the required five. From Wady Shaib northwards to the Jabbok, near Tell Damia, the plain is "desolate and barren, owing to the fact that there are no fountains or streams flowing down upon it from the hills" (*Quarterly Statement*, 1876, p. 177).

It formerly seemed to me that the Damieh fords represented the name and general position of Admah, one of the five cities of the plain, but the interposition of this large barren tract renders this impossible. The plain, or Ciccar, which Lot beheld was "well watered *everywhere*," and must therefore have been limited on the north by this "real desert" region.

In finding Zoar we had the help of many indications, and we know for certain that Sodom was near it.

Towards fixing the precise position of the three remaining cities, all we have to guide us is that (1) they were *in the* "plain," *i.e.*, the Shittim oasis from Wady Shaib to Wady Hesbân, or to the Dead Sea; and (2) possibly, the *order* in which they are named, "Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah and Zeboim, even unto Lasha" (? Laish). Zoar does not appear in the first list (Gen. x. 19).

This second point might lead us to conjecture that as Sodom was to the south, Zeboim, the last named, must have been the most northern city in the plain. Is there any Tell in this part bearing a name at all like Zeboim?

ZEBOIM.

ABOUT seven miles north-west from Tell esh Shâghur is a hill marked on Van de Velde's map as Tell esh Sha'ib. There seem to be good reasons for regarding this as Zeboim.

As the Z of Zoar has become "Sh" in Shâghur, we should expect the same change in Zeboim, and so we have above *Sha'ib*.

Zeboim (Auth. V.) seems to stand for two different Hebrew words, one meaning "hyenas" (Neh. xi. 34, and valley of Zeboim, 1 Sam. xiii. 18); the other "gazelles" (in Genesis Zeboim), from the Hebrew Tzebi (whence Tabitha), a gazelle. I consider, therefore, the essential part of the word Zeboim is preserved in Sha'ib. Thus as to position and name the identification seems to be sound.