

GEBIM.

Is once mentioned in the Bible, in Isa. x. 31, "The inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee." It seems to have been visible from and east of Geba (*Quarterly Statement*, 1877, 56; 1879, 103).

The name apparently survives in Gobâ (Captain Warren's letter, 29), otherwise called El Kuba' or Kub'a (1879, 125, 127). It is not far from the cave of the six hundred Benjamites, to which place the men of Gebim doubtless carried off their worldly goods on the invasion of Sennacherib. Genesis says the full idea of the words above is, "they hurry off to conceal their treasures;" and where, if not in their great cave? One of the traditions collected by the Rev. H. B. Rawnsley seems to me to refer to this period, viz. (1), "That the Christians used it a long while ago, when God sent an evil wind to destroy them."

Time, I venture to think, has substituted *Christians for Jews*, and *them for the Assyrians*. The legend hardly disguises the sudden destruction of Sennacherib's great host, foretold in the words, "I will send a blast upon him" (2 Kings xix. 7). It is probable, therefore, that the cave (Mugharet el Jai) again did good service to Benjamin in Hezekiah's time, and that the feet of the inhabitants of Gebim helped in ages past to polish the descent to Ain Suweinit (*Quarterly Statement*, 1879, p. 123).

I find that twelve years ago Captain Warren obtained a trace of this spring, since he says (Letters, 19), "The wady which runs from Beitin between Mukmas and Jeba is first called Towahin, and . . . becomes W. Shiban, then W. *Ain*, Suweinit, and then W. Farah."

M. Ganneau also appears to have recovered a name indicating that W. Suweinit was used as a place of refuge, when he states (Letter, June, 1879) that "the wady running from the west to the east, immediately north of Jeba, is called Wady *el Meysa*." This word seems to me to represent in Arabic the Hebrew word *Mahseh*, translated "refuge" in Ps. civ. 18, "The rocks (lit. *Selas* = cliffs) are a *refuge* for the conies." The same name curiously clings to the traditional and true cave of Adullam, now called not only Mugharet Khureitún, but also M. el M'asa (Drake and Conder); M. el Misa (Ganneau). The wady below bears, I believe, also the same name.

W. F. B.

 THE PLACE CALLED BETHSO.

"But if we go the other way westward (first wall), it began at the same place (Tower Hippicus) and extended through a place called Bethso to the Gate of the Essenes."—Josephus, Wars v. 4. 2.

DR. ROBINSON, in his *Bib. Researches*, has a note in relation to this place called Bethso which needs correction, as other eminent critics have adopted his opinion. He says: "Bethso, which Josephus does not translate, seems to be the Hebrew *Bethsoah*, dung-place, and not im-

properly marks the spot where the filth of this part of the city was thrown down from Zion into the valley below. From this circumstance the adjacent gate might naturally receive the synonymous name *Dung Gate*."

Mr. W. F. Birch has adopted the same opinion, for he says: "The *Dung Gate*, near south-west corner of the Upper City. Here apparently was 'the place called Bethso' (= dung-place)."—*Quarterly Statement*, Oct., 1879, p. 178.

I have seen the same identification assumed several times in the same periodical by different writers; and it has crept its way into some standard works on Jerusalem topography.

It is much more likely that Bethso comes from *Beth-tzo*, "Interdicted Place," or a place from which persons are prohibited and excluded, such as we may very naturally suppose the military parade-grounds of the Three Royal Towers to have been, lying along the fortifications of the west wall from Hippicus to the Tower and Gate of the Essenes. The Hebrew word *Beth-tzo* means a place over which persons are forbidden to pass or trespass. It was doubtless the royal parade-grounds for the soldiers in the Three Royal Towers, which were located on this spot.

In the form *Beth-tzoh* it literally means the House of the Commander. And the title of commander, which is used only once in the Bible, is *tzoh* in the original (Isaiah lv. 4). In this form it would mean the Commander-in-Chief. But the name, in all probability, was not applied to the house, but to the district, grounds, or surroundings of his place of residence, and be in the form *Beth-tzo*=the interdicted and forbidden place.

Whenever a positive command, injunction, or precept—in the form of a forbiddance, prohibition, ordinance, or interdiction—is given in the Bible, this word has the form of *tzo*, as in Isa. xxviii. 10, 13, where it reads, "precept upon precept, precept upon precept." The word is invariably used for the Ten Commandments, or Interdictions and Precepts (Exod. xx. 6; xxiv. 12; xxxiv. 4, 32, 34; Deut. iv. 13; v. 31; x. 14; xi. 12). Dr. Robinson's explanation of the word, and its derivation, almost forces a smile. Its identification as the site of the *Dung-gate* is equally as absurd. We cannot for a moment suppose that the *Dung-gate* would be located on the highest point of Zion, and in the very neighbourhood of the royal towers, gardens, and palace.

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EPIPHANIUS ON GOLGOTHA.

Having lit upon the following passage in Epiphanius on Heresies, treating of the locality of Golgotha, I thought it would be interesting to the friends of the Palestine Exploration Fund to present it to them:—