

tribunal sat. We are not, however, told in what direction from the city the place of execution lay. One local Jewish tradition considers the Convent of the Cross (el Mûsallabeh) to be situated on the site of the בית הסקילה, and another points to the ground above Jeremiah's Grotto with the precipice as the Place of Stoning. This is, perhaps, the Place of Stoning alluded to in the notice in the "Athenæum" mentioned in my letter of last week. The general opinion amongst those Jews of whom I made enquiries on the subject of the location of the Beth Hasekeelah, who did not seem to know anything of, and to whom I took care not to mention, the traditional sites I have just referred to, is that the Place of Stoning was situated outside the city and not far from the Damascus Gate, or rather the place now occupied by that gate.

The chief arguments in favour of the supposition that the place above Jeremiah's Grotto really was the Jewish Place of Stoning seem to be (1) the tradition; (2) its position outside the city; and (3) the adjacent precipice, though the last does not appear to have been an absolutely necessary adjunct to the Beth Hasekeelah, which, it seems, was a sort of scaffold ("ein Gerüst," Rabbinowicz, 'Einleitung in die Gesetzgebung und die Medicin des Thalmuds, aus dem Französischen übersetzt,' Trier, 1881) from ten to twelve feet high (*see* Lightfoot on Acts vii, 58), or twice a man's height.

If, therefore, we are able to identify the place above Jeremiah's Grotto with the ancient Jewish Place of Stoning, where after death the bodies of executed criminals were hung up by the hands (a proceeding suggestive of crucifixion), the question very naturally suggests itself as to whether this spot may not have been the Golgotha of the New Testament, conspicuous "afar off" (Mark xv, 40, Luke xxiii, 49), near a great high road leading up "from the country" (Mark xv, 21, Luke xxxiii, 26), and "nigh to" but "without" the city gate. Compare John xix, 20, with Hebrews xiii, 12.

This theory seems to have great probabilities in its favour, though, as I remarked in my former letter, it will probably always remain an open question as to whether the recently discovered Herodian tomb be the actual "Sepulchre in the Garden" or not.

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## SITE OF MEGIDDO.

ABERDEEN, 30th March, 1881.

ROBINSON identifies Megiddo with Lejjun, and Conder with Mujedda in the Jordan valley.

There is one important notice of Megiddo that seems not to have been taken into account in determining the site, 2 Kings ix, 27, "But when Ahaziah, the king of Judah, saw this, he fled by the way of the garden

house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so at the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there." This seems to me absolutely to exclude Mujedda from identification with the Megiddo here mentioned. Jehu would come from the direction of Mujedda. It is not likely that Ahaziah would flee in that direction, but rather towards Jerusalem. This agrees with one of the places mentioned in the same verse—Ibleam. According to Conder's "Handbook," this is to be identified with Wâdy Bel'ameh, south of Jenin. This is exactly the course that Ahaziah would likely take, but it is irreconcilable with Megiddo being either Lejjun or Mujedda.

There are three passages in the Bible which give definite indications regarding the site of Meggido.

1. Judges v, 19, "Then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo." The obvious meaning of this is that the battle was fought in Taanach, and that Taanach was by or over the waters of Megiddo. Whether Taanach be a town or district, if the battle was fought south of Tabor, the only waters in which it could be fought are some of the sources of the Kishon. It is a question, however, whether the words may not be rendered "The kings of Canaan, in Taanach, by the waters of Meggido, fought." The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the text thus, "then the kings of Canaan began war; in Taanach did they dwell, and extended even to the waters of Megiddo." Jonathan was probably well acquainted with Palestine, and felt the difficulty of connecting Taanach either with the battle between Barak and Sisera, or with the waters of Megiddo. The only other of the ancient versions whose author we may suppose to have known Palestine, the Syriac version, indicates a consciousness of the same difficulty. It drops Taanach altogether, and translates "The kings came and fought by the waters of Megiddo." Thus the passage, in the light cast on it by these two translations, rather opposes than favours the idea of any close connection between Taanach and Megiddo.

2. 2 Kings ix, 27. The flight of Ahaziah. The localities indicated here are the garden-house, or Beth Gur, the ascent of Gur near Ibleam, Megiddo. If the situation of Megiddo were once determined, it would determine the direction of the other places; or if the position of the other places were determined, it would determine the direction of Megiddo. Lieutenant Conder, in his "Handbook," where there is no theory to support, identifies Ibleam with Bel'umuh, near Jenin, in which case Jenin might indicate the site of Beth Gur. In the last number of the *Quarterly Statement* he identifies it with Yebla. It is thus evident that mere similarity of name is not a sufficient guide. We must turn to other considerations to find out the direction of Ahaziah's flight. Jehu approached Jezreel from the direction of Mujedda. It is not likely that Ahaziah would flee in that direction, or that he would flee in a direction that would cut him off from his own kingdom, Judah. It is most probable that he would take the road for Jerusalem, and the natural road would be through

Samaria. The account in Chronicles says that he was hid in Samaria. Jehu, when he was on the way to Samaria, met the brethren of Ahaziah. It seems to have been then the recognized route for the princes of Judah to take in visiting their kinsmen in Jezreel. The whole connection of the passage would indicate Jenin as the road which Ahaziah took rather than Beit Jenn. It would be absurd to suppose that he went thence to Lajjun, but it is as difficult to see how he would go thence to Mujedda.

3. 2 Kings xxiii, 29. The battle between Josiah and Nechoh could hardly have taken place at Lajjun. Lieutenant Conder's objections to this seem unanswerable. But the corresponding passage in Chronicles speaks of the battle as taking place in the *valley* of Megiddo. Mujedda would be a good situation from which to attack an army wishing to cross the Jordan, as Lieutenant Conder points out. But to a non-military reader it appears not to be secure against an enemy coming up from Egypt, unless the heights to the west were also occupied, and if they were occupied, it is more likely that the battle would take place towards Jenin.

With regard to the two sites, Lajjun and Mujedda, the former seems to have nothing to support it, the latter has its name. Biblical indications do not point to either, but rather to some point on the road, or near the road, from Jezreel to Samaria, where an army approaching from Egypt by the coast might be encountered.

4. The battle of Megiddo. We read in 2 Kings xxiii, 29, that Nechoh slew Josiah at Megiddo when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem." In 2 Chron. xxxv, 22, we read that he came to fight in the *valley* of Megiddo. There seems also to be little doubt that the reference, Zech. xii, 11, "the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the valley of Megiddon"—is to the same event.

These are all the references we have to this battle in Scripture. If Nechoh's army followed the usual route by the plains, the only possible part of the plain of Erdraclo, in which the battle could have been fought would have been about the head, somewhere near Jenin. To a non-military reader Mujedda would not seem a very safe position unless the heights to the west were occupied, and if they were occupied, the battle would more likely be on the western side towards Jenin. It is difficult, too, to conceive why Josiah should have allowed Nechoh to march all the way up the coast without attacking him.

But it is highly probable that this was not the route which Nechoh took. Herodotus (II, 159) informs us that he constructed a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean, which he used as he had opportunity; that he invaded Syria, and defeated the Syrians at Migdol. The natural inference is that he invaded Syria by sea. He was obviously anxious to avoid all quarrel with the king of Judah, and to strike a blow at the Assyrian power. The point from which he could most effectively do this with a fleet at his command was obviously Accha, and it is probable that this was the base of his operations. He would consider the kingdom of the ten tribes as part of the possessions of Assyria while Jenin laid claim to it.

Hence the conflict between the two. Migdol has been considered a corruption of Megiddo, but on the map there is a place marked el Mejdil, south of Aecho, which an army advancing from the latter place would naturally occupy in going to encounter an army coming from Jerusalem. It may have been the head-quarters of the Egyptian army, and Hadad Rimmon that of the Jewish army, while the battle would probably take place between the two.

While the Bible does not supply data to enable us to determine with absolute certainty the site of Megiddo, all indications point to the plain of Erdraclo as being the valley of Megiddo.

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### REMARKS ON THE "JAM SUPH."

In the *Quarterly Statement* for April, p. 107, the writer of the "Notes on the Topography of Exodus" says, "It is remarkable that throughout the direct narrative there is no mention of a Jam Saph. Let us look at Exodus xiii, v. 17, there we are told that God led them (the Israelites) not by way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near . . . . but God led the people about (the original implies a circuitous route) the way of the wilderness, literally Jam Saph (there is no *of*); and verse 20 says God led them to the edge of the wilderness (clearly still the same as before, Jam Saph); there we find them encamped. The narrative then is continued in Chap. xiv. And God spake to Moses, 'Speak . . . . that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth between Migdol and the sea.'" Here we find the direction of their march altered, they are to turn. Now let me remark that the writer having stated that they had encamped on the edge of the wilderness, defined by Jam Saph, must in his continuation of the narrative when he speaks of the sea of necessity refer to that particular sea described as Jam Saph, and so I would say throughout the narrative, and this is confirmed by the repetition of Jam Saph in the song in chap. xv, and in v. 22 we have it stated that Moses brought Israel from Jam Saph.

Further, in Deut. xi, 4, we have these words of Moses in his exhortation to the people, "What He did unto the army of Egypt, and how He made the water of the Jam Saph to overflow them as they pursued after you." Other passages in the Old Testament clearly state that it was Jam Saph that was dried up (see Joshua ii, 10, iv, 23). Joshua xxiv, 6, relates Joshua's speech before his death. He was an eye-witness, and says it was the Jam Saph. Surely these places are rather too numerous to be accounted for, as Mr. Greville Chester does, by saying that the Jam Saph has crept into the text; can any one doubt with these passages before them that the Jam Saph was the sea where the miraculous preservation of the Israelites and destruction of their enemies took place? In the New Testament, Acts vii, 36, St. Stephen mentions *ἐρυθρὰ θάλασση*, the Red Sea. This alone would prove little; but on turning over the same passage