

educated Gibeonite will say that Neby Samwil was also called Shūja, or even Mizpah.

For had not Dr. Robinson, while forced, not by luck, but by discrimination, to assign as the probable site of Ai the place with ruins south of Deir Diwan, also to make this sad admission : "The name, however, has utterly perished. We inquired diligently after it throughout the whole region, but without finding the slightest trace ?" And now forty years after we have the name Kh. Haiyan applied to this very spot, which after Mr. Trelawney Saunders' explanation about *the valley (ge)*, seems to me without question to represent the long lost Ai. Supply will finally overtake demand as to names in Palestine ; so that too much importance must not be attached to the absence or even presence of any ancient name, especially after it has been often advertised for, as is the case with Ai.

W. F. B.

EBENEZER.

AFTER Mizpeh comes Ebenezer, which seems to me to fix itself beyond question (as already noticed, 1881, 100) at Kh. Samwil, one mile south of Neby Samwil. As however this site is viewed with suspicion, and the early Christian site at Deir Abān, supported by M. Clermont-Ganneau, is adopted in preference by Captain Conder, it is desirable to demolish the claims of this rival site by sifting the notices about Ebenezer.

Deir Abān is two miles east-south-east of Ain Shems (Bethshemesh), and twelve miles west-south-west of Mizpeh.

M. Ganneau thinks that the name refers to the great stone (*eben*) in the field of Joshua (1 Sam., vi, 18.) If so the name must have moved at least two miles to the east, as the princes of the Philistines only went "unto the border of Bethshemesh." He also is of opinion that the Ark was restored at the very same place at which it was captured, and that therefore Deir Abān represents Ebenezer, which he takes to have been the limit of the pursuit of the Philistines (1 Sam., vii, 12).

But (1) The battle near Ebenezer was, however, apparently an attempt of Israel to free themselves from the Philistines (1 Sam. iv, 1, 9), and would therefore be more probably fought in the heart of the country, like the battle of Michmash, than at the foot of the hills near Bethshemesh.

(2) Ebenezer was between Mizpeh and Shen (1 Sam. vii, 12). This is a common Biblical way of describing a position :— "Between Bethel and Ai" (Gen. xiii, 3) was a distance of two or three miles ; "between Ramah and Bethel" (Judg. iv, 5) five miles ; between "Zorah and Eshtael" (Judg. xiii, 25 ; xvi, 31) two miles, if the latter be at Eshna. In these cases "between" is certainly of use in fixing the position of the particular

spot referred to. But as Mizpeh is *twelve* miles from Deir Aban, then if the latter represented Ebenezer it would have been very unlike Biblical exactitude to have described it as between Mizpeh and Shen : for some place *nearer* than the latter would assuredly have been named. For instance, if Kirjath-jearim had been (which it was not) at Kh. Erma, why not have said that Ebenezer was between that city and Bethshemesh ? The distance between the two is just four miles, while Deir Abân is half-way between the two and only half-a-mile out of the direct line.

Further, Captain Conder in support of his view that Deir Abân represents Ebenezer, brings forward the existence of other required names in its neighbourhood. He proposes to identify Mizpeh with Kh. Shúfa ; Beth-Car with 'Akûr, and Kh. el Haj Hasan, two miles west of Surah (Zorah) with Shen. But again there is a serious objection to these identifications. Deir Abân is more than two miles south of the line joining his proposed sites for Beth-Car and Mizpeh ; and again why should a more distant place be chosen when the well known Zorah was two miles nearer, and exactly on the same line ? Besides we have shown that Mizpeh was not at Kh. Shúfa, and no importance need be attached to the name Deir Abân, as it occurs elsewhere, e.g., six miles west of Samaria and a mile north of a village called Shúfeh.

Ebenezer has apparently been placed at the foot of the hills, because the expression, “*Hitherto hath the Lord helped us,*” has been wrongly taken to mean, *up to the point where the men of Israel ceased to pursue the Philistines.*

“Hitherto” seems to me rather to signify, “up to this day,” unless it can simply mean “here,” the spot where the Philistines were first discomfited by the storm.

The Philistines would naturally approach Neby Samwil from the south, and also flee in the same direction.

The examples of the use of “between” given above, would lead us to place Shen from two to five miles’ distance from Mizpeh, and we actually find a place called Deir Yesin (answering well to the Hebrew Ha-shen) *three miles south* of Neby Samwil ; while further down the valley along which the routed army must have fled, there is an eminence with the name Airo Kârim, resembling Beth-Car. Farther, Kustril, an old Roman castellum, “a fortress like village,” three and a half miles south-west of Neby Samwil, answers well in position, distance and name, to the Aphek (fortress) where the Philistines encamped when Israel pitched beside Ebenezer (1 Sam. iv, 1).

Two miles south of Mizpeh the Philistines in their flight would reach the valley, so that Ebenezer must have been somewhere near this line of two miles. It is a most remarkable circumstance that on or close to this line, just a mile from Neby Samwil, and on no other side of the hill, we meet with the name Khurbet Samwil, or the *ruin of Samuel*, a very probable name to be given to a memorial erected by the prophet, just as the cairn of stones at Ras es Sherijah raised by Captain Conder has been named by the natives “Captain’s Cairn.”

This indefatigable explorer thinks, however (1881, 258) that the ruin Kh. Samwil got its name from the hill Neby Samwil, and not the hill from the ruin. Why so? The name of Samuel was certainly attached to the hill in the fourth century, as in the time of Procopius the convent of St. Samuel stood there. Had the name of Ramah suggested that of Samuel, then the title ought to have been attached to Er Ram. The name of Mizpeh cannot have attached that of Samuel to Neby Samwil, for the early Christians (as Captain Conder points out) placed it near Deir Abân, probably at Kh. Shûfa.

The only explanation that can be given for this conspicuous hill having at so early a date acquired the name of Samuel, is that "the stone of help" on the southern slope preserved in some form or legend the name of the prophet, and subsequently gave it to the summit of the hill. Thus there seems to be every reason for regarding the ruin called Kh. Samwil as marking the site of the world-wide Ebenezer.

I may point out that Captain Conder's experience leads him to this conclusion (1881, 271), "the only really permanent and ancient names are those of villages, *ruins* and springs the ancient names of hills and valleys have, as a rule, been utterly lost."

He further adds (p. 152 *supra*), "the names of hills and valleys, as a rule, are either purely descriptive, or else taken from the village, ruin or spring." Precisely so, therefore I maintain that Neby Samwil got its name from Kh. Samwil, and the latter monument was so called from Ebenezer, Samuel's great monument.

W. F. B.

THE HIGH PLACE AT GIBEON.

As Neby Samwil undoubtedly represents Mizpeh, it is impossible for it to have been what is commonly called "the high-place of Gibeon." Mizpeh and Gibeon were (1) distinct places (Josh. xviii, 25, 26; Neh. iii, 7), and (2) more than a mile apart, separated by a wide valley, and the great high place is always in the Bible said to have been *at* Gibeon, which would have been a curious way of describing a spot situated *not* at Gibeon, but at a distance in another no less well known city.

W. F. B.
