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SITES AND ROADS IN ASHER
AND WESTERN JUDAH

BY
AAPELI SAARISALO

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I ASHER

According to the traditional view Harosheth of the nations was a Canaanite stronghold in the Western Galilee, Judges 4: 2, 13, 16. It is often identified with *tell el-ḥarbadj*, a commanding site overlooking the right bank of the Kishon river. Albright prefers *tell el-ʿamr*, farther upstream, near *el-ḥaritiyeh*, which seems to preserve the name.

Except in Judges 4 Harosheth, however, is not mentioned in the Bible, not alone and not as a part of a place name. Goyim may denote an ethnic group, nomads or semi-nomads settled in a certain area, as it is used in connection with Galilee, »district of goyim», Is. 9: 1. Harosheth may be the designation of a region, not of a place. Sisera resided in Harosheth. He oppressed the children of Israel twenty years — probably the Galilean tribes, Asher, Issachar, Naphtali and Zebulun. Harosheth seems to denote the mountain region of Galilee. Here were these four tribes of Israel surrounded by the fortified Canaanite towns. Sisera was commissioned by Jabin, the king of Hazor, to enforce his rule in this mountain region. Barak succeeded in drawing Sisera out from this region into the plain of the river Kishon and to beat the army of the Canaanites.

Harosheth is derived from the Hebrew word *ḥōreš*, »a hill covered with forest», cf. 2 Chron. 27: 4. This word has penetrated in Aramaic and Palestinian Arabic with the meaning »forest». It is possible that Harosheth is a collective noun (mountains, covered with forest). This is a suitable parallel to the *gʾlil ha-goyim*. It is not impossible that *goyim* denotes the four tribes of Israel, which settled in this region (of Galilee) after that they had given up their life as nomads (see B. Maisler-Mazar, Hebrew Union College Annual (1952—1953)).

There is hardly any city in Palestine that has seen more history than Acre, Jerusalem perhaps excepted. This is due to its geographical situation. The plain of Acre extends from *rās en-Nāqūra* in the North to Carmel in the South. In shape it may be described as like a capital B, the coast line forming the vertical stroke, and the hill country of upper and Lower Galilee rounding off the Plain into the two curves, while sending to the coast approximately in the centre a spur which divides the Plain into almost distinct sections. The town of Acre situated at this central point draws, as it were, the two parts of the Plain together, and affords a meeting place for the streams of commerce which converge upon it both by land and sea. And we will later note the fact that it was the terminus of the important road which is called by the Arabs *darb el-ḥawārneh*, »the road of the men of Hauran«.

Tell el-fuḥḥār (the mound of potsherds), an imposing site, which lies east of Acre near the spring *ʿain es-sitt*, is a large natural hill, the northern side of which is rounded, the southern irregular in shape. On this there lies a quantity of debris, 2 1/2 m. in depth in the south-east, but in the north and north-east deeper. In that direction the mound is higher, with steep slopes, but it descends gradually towards the south-west; on the surface and in the upper strata Hellenistic sherds abound. The occupation originally covered the north-eastern top of the mound, but later on gradually expanded towards the spring and the plain. I have found there sherds of the Middle and Late Bronze and Early Iron I—III. According to the ceramic evidence of both this *tell* and Acre, which does not exhibit any earlier potsherds than those of the Hellenistic period, the Acre of the Bronze Age and of the Early Iron, i.e. of the Akkadian, Egyptian and Old Testament records, was situated on *tell el-fuḥḥār*. Afterwards the city was gradually removed to its present site, which might easily have been an island in earlier times, like Athlit and Tyre.

In the Bible Accho is never mentioned between the early tribal period (Judges 1: 31) and the Roman Age (Ptolemais, Acts 21: 7). But Accho and Philistia are the two names mentioned together with Dor (which was then the capital of an Assyrian province) in

connection with a treaty between Esarhaddon and the king of Tyre.¹ Also Sennacherib mentions Acre in connection with his third campaign against Syria and Palestine and the siege of Jerusalem.² Assurbanipal in his ninth campaign against the Arabian tribes destroyed utterly the population of Acre.³ After this destruction Acre, *tell el-fuhhār*, was restored again according to its ceramic evidence and soon a new seaport was established on the peninsula, about 400 B. C. Thus Acre continued its existence as a double city like Jamnia, while the new port grew in importance as a city during the Ptolemaic and the Roman period, and gradually the old town *tell el-fuhhār* became a suburb *Καφαρεκχω*, Hebr. *kʰfar ʿakkō*.

The site of the ancient Accho, i.e. *tell el-fuhhār*, was occupied, according to ceramic and literary evidence, through the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The *Καφαρεκχω*, which we find in Josephus (B. J. II 20: 6) is without doubt identical with the *kʰfar ʿakkō* of Yebamot XII: 6, which also shows that before the end of the first century of our era *kʰfar ʿakkō* was occupied by the Jews, since a Jewish teacher called Rabbi Hyrkanos was resident there at that time. Talmudic literature mentions many rabbis as residents of this place (see Klein, Beiträge, pp. 19—20, esp. p. 9, who would identify it with the modern *ʿamqa*). When Rabbi Simon ben Yehudah, the resident of *kʰfar ʿakkō*, writes that he left his place for Galilee (Klein, op.cit., p. 20), it shows that his village was not situated in the hill country, which belonged to the land of Israel. But *ʿamqa* and its close neighbour *kefr yāsīf* both lie inside the land of Israel and belong thus to Galilee, since all the land east of the road between Accho and Achzib belonged to the land of Israel. (According to this tradition the modern Jews of Acre still bury some of their dead in *kefr yāsīf*). And the name »Village of Accho« is to be explained most naturally as the village nearest to the city, or more exactly, as the suburb of the city of Accho.

»We learned from a Baraita what is part of the Holy Land and what outside its boundaries. All of the land sloping from the hills of Amnon and in front of them, is considered the Holy Land. From the hills of Amnon and beyond them is outside the Holy Land« (Gittin

71). It appears that between Acre and *ez-zīb* there was a stretch of unholy land, i.e. land free from offerings and tithes. »If one walked from Accho to Achzib, on one's left hand to the west — the road is considered unholy because it was part of the land of the Gentiles and was free from tithes and from the laws of the Sabbatical year. On one's right hand, to the east, the land is part of the Holy Land and is subject to the laws of tithes and the Sabbatical year.» (Yerushalmi, Sheviith VI).

Acre was often in contact with Egypt. It is already mentioned in the list of Tuthmosis III in the fifteenth century B.C. Later the Amarna letters show the position of Acre in the line of traffic between Egypt and Mesopotamia. During the time of Rameses II Acre with the rest of Phoenicia fell under the dominion of Egypt. After this date it is not mentioned in the Egyptian documents. In the Persian period Artaxerxes Mnemon mustered his troops there in order to invade Egypt (Diodorus Siculus 15: 41). During the Greek and Roman periods, as well as during the time of the Crusaders and of Napoleon, Acre was distinguished as a place of military importance. About the beginning of our era it was called Ptolemais. In describing the occupation of the city by Antiochus the Great in 219, Polybius (5: 61 f.) mentions that it was already then called Ptolemais, according to the dynasty of Ptolemaeans in Egypt.

According to the Biblical evidence Accho is never mentioned during the period of the kingdom of Israel. Before 900 B.C. we learn from Judges 1: 31 that Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Accho. This suggests that the city had gradually declined during the Israelite period, since it was cut off from its commercial connexion with the mainland. As one illustration we might mention that the Galilean prophet Jonah did not embark from Acre but from Jaffa.

The idea has been generally accepted that Palestine was always an important bridge between the two centres of culture, Egypt and the Euphrates Valley. This commercial bridge could not pierce the wild hill country of Palestine without bringing into existence caravanserais and settlements in addition to those settlements that were

already established along the route. This does not refer to the isolated mountain range of southern and central Palestine but the northern part, Galilee, only, since it seems that the so-called *darb el-ḥawārneh* serves as the easiest road across Galilee. The port of Damascus is now Beirut. But before the modern railway across Lebanon and Antilibanus not one of the ports of the Mediterranean from Tyre northwards was suitable to serve as the port of Damascus. To get to Tyre, again, the road must first pass Hermon to Banias or Hasbeya and then cross the difficult heights of Northern Galilee. Accho alone was the natural port of Damascus and the easiest roads to it run through Lower Galilee. The railway from Haifa to Damascus was built along the Nahr Jalud via Beisan. But this line along the entire length of the alluvial plain of Accho and Megiddo to Beisan as well as its continuation along the Ghor was not easy to traverse during the rainy season. Except for travellers who had some local business in Beisan, the road from Damascus to Accho and Megiddo via Beisan was a long unnecessary detour. The neighbouring wadi to the North (w. *šerrār*) is quite impracticable with its steep rocky sides which continue all the long distance between the Jordan and Mt. Tabor.

Only one wadi (w. *fedjdjās*) remains to be considered, and the road through it seems to be the shortest and easiest. If the road followed this wadi, the ancient route between Damascus and Accho traversed the plain of Hauran, came down into the Jordan Valley just south of the Sea of Galilee via *fīq* and passed on to the Mediterranean straight westwards up *wādī fedjdjās* and thence north of Tabor and through the southern edge of the plain *sahl el-battōf* via *wādī 'abellīn* to Accho. The limestone country is comparatively dry even in the rainy season, since this road avoids all the alluvial plains, except for the necessary crossing of the narrow valley of the Jordan south of the Sea of Galilee. There are no difficult gorges along this road. It is true that *wādī fedjdjās* and w. *el-mu'allaqah* have steep sides, but only on the north. Their southern sides, on the contrary, slope gently and are quite convenient for the *darb el-ḥawārneh* route.

In my study »The Boundary between Issachar and Naphtali»

I point out that all the sites of the Early Bronze Age existing between Mt. Tabor and the Jordan (eight in number) form a line which coincides completely with the old commercial road *darb el ḥawārneh*. There is not one Early Bronze Age settlement to be found in this region away from this route. Among the numerous early settlements there were also several, which do not lie near a cultivated plain. The early existence of settlements of this kind without a tillable plain must be due to the presence of a caravan route. Thus this road evidently existed first and then gradually the settlements grew up along its course.⁴

But if we continue along this road west of Mt. Tabor toward Accho the chain of Early Bronze Age settlements is cut off altogether. In the whole distance between Mt. Tabor and Accho there is only one Early Bronze Age site to be found along this road, namely *tell kīsān*, on the plain of Accho, and this western part of the road is three times as long as the eastern stretch between Mt. Tabor and the Jordan. The earliest chain of settlements to be found here belonged to the Late Bronze Age, with the following names from east to west: *tell el-bedēwīyeh*, *ḥ. el-lōn*, *ḥ. el-djahūš*, *ḥ. eṭ-ṭireh*, *ḥ. 'aiṭāwānīyeh*, *tell kīsān*.

What does this indicate? Naturally that the Early Bronze route from Damascus to Egypt did not run via Accho or the plain of Accho, but continued past Mt. Tabor via *debūrieh* and *tell el-mutesellim* (the pass of Megiddo) to the maritime plain south of Carmel and so on to Egypt. Not until the beginning of the Late Bronze Age could the *darb el-ḥawārneh* exist in its present form, connecting Damascus and the granaries of Hauran with Accho, and Mesopotamia with Egypt.

We learn from the Amarna tablets that this commercial road via the plain of Accho was actually used in the Late Bronze Age as a highway from Mesopotamia to Egypt. The relations between Burnaburias of Kardunias (Babylonia) and Egypt were friendly; he had given his daughter to Amenhotep III. There was much traffic between them, for we read: »The ambassadors of your forefathers came to my forefathers» (Am. 10: 9, 17). And in one letter, addressed to

Amenhotep IV (1377—1361), the king of Kardunias complains that Zitatna of Akku has murdered the king's ambassadors and appropriated the gifts they were carrying to the Pharaoh. In this letter (Am. 8) the Babylonian king Burnaburias mentions the old friendly relations between him and the Pharaoh (8—12) and complains that his commercial caravan together with his ambassadors has been robbed by the people of Accho in Hinnatuni.⁵ Since Kinahhi (Canaan) belongs to the Pharaoh, the latter is requested to punish these robbers and take care that this banditry shall not continue in the future, since the road will otherwise be blocked.

The roads to Accho and to Egypt diverged at the western end of *wādī 'abellīn*; here the road to Accho separated near the Bronze Age site of *h. djāhūš* to continue northwards east of the swamps of *nahr na'amēn*, or it ran via *tell kurdāneh* directly to the seashore and used the convenient ford of *nahr na'amēn* just as is the case with the modern automobile route, which crosses both *nahr el-muqatta'* and *na'amēn* (by shore) without bridges. In the latter case *tell kurdāneh* was the point of junction, where the highway to Egypt turned southwest in order to use the easy ford of *nahr el-muqatta'* by the shore and to continue around Mt. Carmel to the maritime plain south of it.⁶

In the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age the Israelite tribes occupied the Galilean heights. Concerning this period we read (Judges 5: 6): »In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the caravans moved through byways.» This however does not imply that the caravan route was blocked through the whole tribal period, since we read in Deut. 33: 18—19 that »Zebulun and Issachar call peoples unto their mountain (Tabor, the boundary between those tribes), for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas and of the treasures, hid in sand.» Often this »mountain» has been understood to mean Carmel.⁷ But if we remember the existence of the connecting link *darb el-ḥawārneh*, the contradictions between Tabor, the holy mountain of the inland tribes Zebulun and Issachar, and the mention of the sea will disappear. Also if Deut. 33: 18—19 is not enough to indicate

that the Israelite tribes as a rule permitted a trade route through Galilee to exist, at any rate the entire length of the Canaanite plain of Megiddo as far as Beisan could be used as a route before the consolidation of the kingdom of Israel. The route via Beisan ⁷, however, was inferior to the *darb el-ḥawārneh*, since the former is almost impassable during the rainy season. If not commercial caravans, at least royal ambassadors passing between Babylonia and Egypt would have to travel during the winter also.

It has been generally acknowledged since the Survey was made that a Roman road closely followed the course of the *darb el-ḥawārneh*, all the distance from Accho to the Jordan (one branch forked from the pass of *el-mu'allaqah* directly to Tiberias.) We know that the first Roman road in Palestine was built from Antioch to Ptolemais along the coast in the time of Nero. Now follows the question: How soon and in what direction were the new branches built from Ptolemais as a centre? Naturally we would expect that the ancient road of the men of Hauran would deserve immediate attention in order to connect the Decapolis and the troublesome eastern frontier with the military port of Ptolemais, as well as with Tiberias and Sepphoris, the two capitals of Galilee. But according to the first known milestone of this road, found by me in 1928, the road appears to have been first built about 130 A.D., i.e. about the time of Bar Cochba's rebellion. (This road was accordingly built before the important one from Ptolemais to Caesarea, which was first built about the end of the second century under Septimius Severus and Caracalla, according to the few milestones discovered.⁹ The Galilean milestone was found half-way between *'abellīn* and *tell kisān* at a place called *debbet el-ḥān* which lies on the *darb el-ḥawārneh*, opposite *ḥ. et-ṭīreh*, on its southern side. *H. et-ṭīreh* is found on the English map. I read the text as follows: IMP(ERATORI) CAESARI / DIVI TRAIANI FIL(II) / DIVI NERVAE (NE)PO / TI TRAIANO HADRI(ANO) / AVGVSTO PONTIF(ICI) M(AXIMO) / TRIB(VNICIAE) P(OTEST)ATIS XIX / CO(N)S(VLI) III P(ATRI) P(ATRIAE) / X.

The number XIX does not involve any difficulties. TRIB. P(OTEST). I lasted from the eleventh of August to the ninth of

December, A.D. 117. So TRIB. POTEEST. XIX (of the milestone) means the year between the tenth of December, 134, and the ninth of December, 135. The last TRIB. POTEEST. was the twenty-second, from the tenth of December, 137 to the tenth of July, 138, when Hadrian died. On the other hand, there were only three consular periods, namely I 108—117, II 118, III 119 and so on until the death of Hadrian. Thus the TRIB. POTEEST. XIX is not out of harmony with the COS. III, i.e. the third consulate.¹⁰ The milestone was erected immediately after the rebellion of Bar Cochba. Naturally there was need to build a first class military road directly through the heart of Galilee, known for its rebellious Jews.

The second milestone confirms the originality of the site of the first one, which is the tenth milestone from Acre. The direct distance on the map between *debbet el-hān* and Acre is however hardly eight Roman miles. But the plain between these two points is nearly impassable during the winter. Thus it would appear that the Roman road made a curve to the north, probably via the line *el-berweh* and *et-tantūr*, which is dotted with settlements of the Roman Age and is still used in the winter by travellers on the *darb el-ḥawārneh*.

During the Roman period this road passed by the city of Asochis, which Josephus often used as his military headquarters. This has been generally located on *tell el-bedēwīyeh*, a strategical point on the southwestern edge of the plain of *el-baṭṭōf*, where many roads meet: the first from the west, from *šefa' amr*, the second from the southwest along the *wādī el-mālik*, the third from the south, from the capital city of Sepphoris, the fourth from the southeast along the *darb el-ḥawārneh*, the fifth from the northeast from the great plain of *el-baṭṭōf* via Ruma (mod. *rūmeh*), the sixth from the north, from Kefr. Menda, the seventh from the northwest, along the *darb el-ḥawārneh*.

We learn from Josephus, that »the great plain, where he lived» (i.e. the modern *sahl el-baṭṭōf*) was called after the name of Asochis rather than after one of the numerous other cities flourishing on it (B. V 41: 4). Further we learn that Ptolemy Lathyrus, who came from Ptolemais, took the city of Asochis and after its destruction tried

to take Sepphoris also, »the site of which was not far from that destroyed» (B. I 4: 2, A. XIII 12: 4). Those that were sent from Jerusalem continued their journey from Sepphoris down to Asochis and further on to Gabara (A. V 45). Josephus resided in Asochis twice, and the Galilaeans gathered themselves on the plain in order to compel him to remain there, (A. V 41) as also on another occasion to prepare an attack against Tiberias (A. V 68). In conclusion we should therefore locate Asochis on the main road between Ptolemais and Sepphoris and between Sepphoris and Gabara, i.e. Garaba, ('*arrābet el-battōf*) northeast of Sepphoris.

Asochis is without doubt a Hellenistic modification of the original Aramaic name *šōh̄n̄*, which very often occurs in Talmudic literature with the later form *ših̄n̄*.¹¹ We learn from Tosefta Nidda VIII 6 that Sihin was near Sepphoris¹², and from Tos. Bab.m. VI 3 that Sihin exported black egg-shaped lumps of clay, while Shabbat 120 b tells us that the pottery made in Sihin was of good quality.¹³ The Aramaic name *ših̄n̄* is naturally derived from the sources of black clay for the manufacture of pottery. Aramaic *ših̄n̄* is a common synonym in Talmudic literature for *bōr̄im* and *m^oarōt*. It is interesting to note that together with the other towns of the plain of *battōf*, Roma, Rometta (mod. *rummāneh*) and Cana of Galilee, there also existed in the time of the Crusaders a town called Caphra-huspeth, the name of which is derived from the Aramaic word for »potsherd», which might be identified with Sihin (see KLEIN, Beiträge, p. 77).

According to Josephus and Jewish literature we are obliged to search for Asochis on the western edge of the plain of *el-battōf*, where only two localities have hitherto been known, Kefr Menda and *tell el-bedēwīyeh*. But since the former is known to have existed during the Talmudic age also, there remains only *tell el-bedēwīyeh*, which has been hitherto generally identified with Asochis. This mound however does not present any Roman potsherds, and there is a gap from the Early Iron to the Arabic age. I have found the remains of a Roman town, two kilometres north of *tell el-bedēwīyeh* and slightly over one kilometre southwest of Kefr Menda. This site fits all the literary and archaeological requirements for Asochis. The local Arabs

have no special name for it, but it may be called *h. el-lōn*, since all the district around it is called *arḡ el-lōn*. The Survey mentions only »Tell Seraj Alaunneh» (i.e. »the mound of the coloured ridge»), which is a natural mound, situated over three kilometres southwest of Kefr Menda and two kilometres southwest of *h. el-lōn*. This *hīrbeh* seems to have been once known because of its export of clay for making pottery. The *hīrbeh* lies on a low rocky ridge, which gently slopes eastward towards the plain just north of the beginning of the *wādī bedēwīyeh*, along which runs the Roman road from *wādī 'abellān* to *tell el-bedēwīyeh*. On this ridge there is an area of debris with a length of 270 m SWW-NEE, with quantities of Hellenistic and Roman sherds and a few of the Late Bronze Age. The three Roman sarcophagi which are used as troughs at the spring of Kefr Menda, were transported hither from *h. el-lōn*, as I was told in Kefr Menda.

The modern road which connects Acre with the mainland, is Acre-Safad. This follows the southern slopes of the ridge, which runs east-west as the boundary between the higher Upper Galilee and the less elevated Lower Galilee. The road passes *el-berweh* north of the *w. ša'ab* via *medjdel krām* and *er-rāmeḥ*. In the Late Bronze Age this same road connected Acre with Upper Galilee, since we find the following late Bronze Age sites along its course, starting from Acre: *tell eṭ-tanṭūr*, *tell el-berweh*, *el-ba'neh*, *naḥf*, *sēdjūr*. If we follow the course of *wādī ša'ab*, which seems more natural for a road in ancient times without artificial cuts, we can add two Late Bronze sites after *tell el-berweh*, namely *h. ya'nīn* and *ša'ab*. *H. ya'nīn*, an imposing mound, which commands the narrow pass of the fruitful *w. ša'ab*, may be identified with the Biblical *ne'i'ēl*, Jos. 19: 27, which is mentioned in the description of the boundary of Asher between *bēt 'ēmeq* (mod. *'amqa*) and *kābūl* (mod. *kābūl*). These three sites are all situated in a line from south to north, *ya'nīn* being in their midst. *'Amqa* is 10 km north and *kābūl* 3 km south of it. The name *ya'nīn* may have the same Arabic ending as mod. *bētīn* (*bēt ēl*), and may stand for *ya'nīl*. This name could then stand by transposition for *yan'īl*, which would be derived from the imperfect form instead of the imperative as in *ne'i'ēl*.

With regard to the identification of the Biblical *bēt-‘ēmeq* I have come to the conclusion that instead of being identified with the present village of ‘*amqa*, which affords no earlier remains than those from the Hellenistic period, the Biblical town is to be identified with the modern *tell mīmās*, which lies close to ‘*amqa*. The rich spring of *tell mīmās* is still used by the village of ‘*amqa* during the dry season. *Tell mīmās* is the only place with Biblical remains in the neighbourhood of the village of ‘*amqa*; the other two, *h. būda* and *h. el-mūneh*, are out of the question.

The Biblical *yānōḥ* (2 Kings 15: 29) has been identified with two modern sites, both of which are now called *yanūḥ*. The one is a village, which crowns a mountain top (about 700 m) overlooking both the northern and southern plains of Acre, eight kilometres east of ‘*amqa*. According to its ceramic evidence this was inhabited during the Early Bronze and Early Iron Age, and can be proposed as the site of ancient *yānōḥ* with better reason than the other *yanūḥ* near Tyre.

Five kilometres north of *yanūḥ* is a village called *m‘āliā*, with a *ḥirbeh* just south of it, called *h. ‘āliā*. This village is situated in the midst of a fruitful valley and built on a typical and commanding mound, the debris of which exhibits potsherds of the Late Bronze Age in abundance, and some of the Early Iron Age. *M‘āliā* might provisionally be identified with Biblical ‘*alōt*, which is mentioned in the list of Solomon’s administrative districts in connection with the tribe of Asher.¹⁴

The narrow plain from *medjdel krūm* to *er-rāmeḥ* with its Late Bronze Age settlements is not mentioned in the historical records. This road was not an important throughfare; the plain lived its quiet existence apart from the restless world.

The same may be said concerning the hill-country between this road in the north and the *darb el-ḥawārneh* and the *sahl el-battōf* in the south as far as the small plain of *sahnīn* in the east. This area is hydrographically an exception in Galilee; there are no springs, except two insignificant ones south of *kaukab*. The nearest springs surrounding this hill-country are: that of *ša‘ab* in the north, *ed-damūn* in the west, *kefr menda* in the south, ‘*ain el-qattāra*, east of *sahnīn*.

The spring at Kefr Menda is called *bīr medyana* (the well of the Midianites), and *djēbel deidebeh*, the high mountain north of the village, exhibits on its top a cave and enclosure dedicated to *nebi ša'ib*, i.e. to Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. The Arabic geographer Yaqut, gives a similar account (thirteenth century). He identified Kefr Menda with *medyana* (Yaqut IV 291, line 11 and IV 451, line 14.).

If we bear this hydrographical situation in mind it is no wonder that the earliest occupation found here belongs to the Late Bronze Age in contrast to the many Early Bronze Age sites on the maritime plain south and north of Acre, with a couple of Early Bronze Age sites on the *sahl el-baṭṭōf*. The early sites of this district are situated in a line which follows the watershed. Between *ḥ. qānā* and *ḥ. ya'nīn* from south to north: *ḥ. qānā* (Early Iron), *ḥ. djfāt*, the site of Jotapata (Late Bronze, Early Iron), *ḥ. djumeidjmeḥ* (Late Bronze), *nī'ār* (Late Bronze). On the other hand *kābūl* in the west, the tillable ground of which belongs to the maritime plain, was already occupied in the Middle Bronze Age. *H. 'abdeh*, the Levitical city of Abdon (Jos. 21: 30), belongs rather to the hill-country, but was occupied during all the periods of the Bronze Age. This is probably due to its strategic position and good water-supply.

A useful hint for the topography of the coastal plain north of Acre is given us in an ancient book of travel, the so-called Papyrus Anastasi I. There we read: »Where is the stream of *N-t-n?* (Litani). What is *I-t* like? (Old Tyre = Assyrian Usu on the mainland.) They tell of another city in the sea, Tyre-the-port is its name. Water is taken over to it in boats, and it is richer in fishes than in sand. — I will tell thee another misery — the crossing of *D-r-'-m*.¹⁵ Thou wilt say: »It burns more than a (hornet-) sting!» How ill it goes with the Maher! Come, set me on the road southward to the region of Accho (?) Where is the road of Achshaph?¹⁶ Beside what city (does it pass)?¹⁷

The name of the locality referred to as *d-r-'-m* may possibly be an Egyptian transcription of a Semitic word, which might phonetically correspond to the Hebrew *šālā'im*, i.e. ribs, as *'-d-m-m* corresponds to the Hebrew *'adummim*. In the expressive nomenclature of the

Hebrew language we are often led to notice the early tendency to personify and treat as living creatures or members of the body the objects of the landscape. The Hebrew word *šēlā'* »rib«, is used in speaking of the Mount of Olives (2 Sam. 16: 13, ἐκ πλερωᾶς τοῦ ὄρους).¹⁸

Undoubtedly this point (»another misery«) of the coastal road between Tyre and Acre must be the modern *rās en-nāqūra*, or its close neighbour *rās el-abyaḍ*. There are two steep promontories projecting into the sea from the commanding mountain ridge which still serves as the boundary between Lebanon and Israel as well as between the districts of Tyre and Acre. From this ridge one obtains a view over the coastal plain as far south as Carmel (which also seems to be mentioned in the description of the Papyrus later on). At this point the question is asked: »Where is the road of Achshaph?¹⁹ Beside what city does it pass? Here the few modern sites which exhibit ancient remains on the coastal road between the ridge and Acre cannot be identified with Achshaph (*ḥ. el-mušeirefeh*), *ez-zīb* (*Ach-zīb*), *tell es-semērīyeh*. It must be sought farther from the coastal road, otherwise the writer would not speak of a »road of Achshaph«. On the other hand the nearest inland settlements at that time (according to the present archaeological evidence) were situated on a line parallel with the coastal road, between the mountains of Galilee and the coastal plain. These were 1) *ḥ. 'abdeh* (Abdon, Jos. 21: 30), 2) the two sites at *en-nahr*, 3) *tell mīmās* (Beth-emek; Jos. 19: 27) in the south. Achshaph cannot be farther east of the coastal plain, because it is described as a city which furnishes chariots of war²⁰. Thus the northern and southern sites must be eliminated and only the middle one at the modern village *en-nahr* remains to be identified with Achshaph.²¹

Here we find the remains of two ancient settlements close at hand. One of them, *et-tell*, is a typical mound. The plain is fertile and the water supply (*en-nahr* = the stream) most abundant. The »'-k-š-p« of the Papyrus should without doubt be read *'aksapa*, and be identified with the Biblical Achshaph. The Bible (Jos. 11: 1; 12: 20) and the list of Tuthmosis III both mention *'-k-š-p* and Jos. 19: 25 includes Achshaph in the territory of the tribe of Asher, in harmony

with the Egyptian documents.²² The question of the Papyrus, »Beside what city does it pass?» seems thus to refer to the city of Achzib, for at *ez-zīb* the road of *en-nahr* most conveniently diverges from the coastal road.

We mentioned earlier that the first road to connect Palestine with the Roman imperial system of roads was built from the Syrian Antioch southwards along the coast of the Mediterranean as far as Ptolemais (Accho). Only a couple of milestones have so far been found along this road in the neighbourhood of Accho and also comparatively few along the whole stretch of the road between Antioch and Ptolemais. In the year 1922 a milestone was found near the village of *ez-zīb* (Achzib). According to this inscription the stone is from an early period, only one quarter of a century after the foundation of the road by Nero. The name Caesar Domitianus gives us the year 83 A. D. We learn from Tacitus that Titus Atilius Rufus was governor of Syria until his death in 84 A.D. This governor is mentioned in the inscription as the highest inspector of the building of the road. But how should we understand the number of miles at the end of the inscription, CCCIV?

According to the numbers of other milestones found along the same road, the numbers of miles increase from north to south. With regard to the starting point and the terminal point, we have no longer any doubts since the discovery of a milestone from which we learn both points of the road (MOUTERDE, *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale*, Beyrouth, 2, p. 336ff). At least at the time of the foundation of the road it was considered as a special line of communication. Antioch was the starting point (*caput viae*) when the construction of the road began, i.e. in 56 A.D. If we compare other milestones found north of *bērūt* we can see that the distance was reckoned from Antioch later also, e.g. in the time of Domitian. There are no signs to show that the numbers were reckoned from south to north, from Caesarea or Ptolemais. But we must see whether the number 304 of the stone of *ez-zīb* agrees with the distance Achzib-Antioch.

The milestone from the time of Nero, which was found south of *bērūt*, at *nahr el-ghadīr*, unfortunately gives a broken number, i.e.

only the end of a number — — — XIII. But the same number is restored on the same column, at the end of a later text from 72 A.D. (Vespasian), CCXXXIII. This number of 234 miles from Antioch may be used to check the number of the stone of *ez-zīb*, since there are no alternative lines of communication between *bērūt* — *ez-zīb* because of the narrow stretch of coast between the sea and the Lebanon mountains. The distance between the two milestones (along the modern road) is 103 km, i.e. almost 70 Roman miles. This corresponds to the difference between the numbers of the two stones 304 (*ez-zīb*) — 234 (*nahr el-ghadīr*), i.e. 70 Roman miles. The distance Achzib-Accho is 14 kilometres, i.e. 9 Roman miles. The pilgrim of Bordeaux gives the distance as 8 Roman miles from Ptolemais to the »mutatio Ecedeppa» (Achzib), the first point for changing riding animals north of Ptolemais. Eusebius gives the same distance as 9 Roman miles between Ptolemais and the village of Ecdippa. The difference of one mile seems to be caused by the fact that Eusebius reckoned as his starting point the centre of Ptolemais and not the first milestone at the northern edge of the civitas Ptolemais. (See ALT, Antiochia — Ptolemais, ZDPV, 1928, p. 253—264).

¹ BORGER, Die Inschriften Asarhaddons, p. 108 III 19.

² »In my third campaign I went against the Hittite land (Syria) . . . Great Sidon, Little Sidon, Bit-Zitti, Sariptu, Mahalliba, Ushu, Akzib, Akku, his strong walled cities, where there were supplies (lit. fodder and drinking-places) for his garrisons, — — the terrors of the weapon of Assur, my lord, overpowered them and they bowed in submission at my feet,» cf. LUCKENBILL, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia, vol 2, pp. 118—119.

³ »on my return march I captured the city of Ushu (Tyre) . . . The in-submissive people of Akku I slaughtered. Their corpses I hung on stakes, surrounding the city (with them.) Those who were left I carried away to Assyria, joined them to (my) military organisation, adding them to the many troops which Assur had given me,» LUCKENBILL, op.cit., p. 830.

⁴ With regard to the Early Bronze Age there have been many scholars who oppose the existence of a commercial road between Egypt and Mesopotamia crossing Palestine. FRANKFORT, Egypt and Syria in the First Intermediate Period (Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, 1926) maintains that »by land Egypt did not come into contact with any Asiatic power of political or cultural

importance». He also maintains that Palestine was isolated from the general influence of Asiatic civilization, in the third millennium B.C. He speaks of »the legend of a great trade route running through the country from north to south». Against Frankfort Albright speaks of the old highway (Early Bronze) running north from the Egyptian frontier to the plain of Jizreel, which followed the line Gaza — Gath — Aphek — Aron (*Tell 'Arā*) — Megiddo. There can be no doubt that the continuation of this route in the third millennium followed the Beth-shan pass to the Jordan Valley, which it traversed as far as the southern end of the Sea of Galilee. This is proved especially by the vast extent and relative wealth of Beth-yerah, at the southwestern corner of the lake, where the Jordan emerges from it. The *via maris* has always been the main trade route from Damascus to Egypt, except in the Roman-Byzantine period, when it passed through Galilee. Setting out from Damascus, caravans proceeded to Quneitrah, just as to-day, and thence southward to the famous Pass of Aphek, from which they followed the winding road down into the Jordan Valley, just opposite Beth-yerah. There was thus an old trade route running from north to south in Palestine, a route which cannot have served any particular military purpose for much of its course. W. F. ALBRIGHT, *Palestine in the earliest historical Period (JPOS, II); Egypt and Palestine in the Third Millennium B. C. (Sellin Festschrift); ALT, Die Landnahme der Israeliten in Palästina, 1925; Eine galiläische Ortsliste in Jos. 19, ZAW, 1927, p. 59—81.*

⁵ This, the Biblical Hannathon, Jos. 19: 14, is identified by ALT PJB 22 (1926) p. 63—64 with *tell el-bedēwīyeh*, since Hinnatuni is twice said to have been situated on a road to Accho, and according to the Biblical evidence appears to lie near the head of the *wādī el-mālik*.

⁶ ALT PJB 24 (1928) identifies provisionally *tell kurdāneh* with the Biblical Aphek of Asher. His starting point is the meaning of the Hebrew name *'afēq*, »strong spring». It is true that the *nahr na'amēn* starting from this mound is a strong stream, but at any rate at present there is not one real spring to be found and all the water starts by seeping out of the ground. I tried to find one but did not succeed and the local Arabs assured me that there were none. According to ALT the name of the *tell* may have originated during the Arabic period, but the similarity of the name to *kirdān*, »necklace», may rest on a popular etymology. The natural highway to Egypt via the plain of Accho must pass the mound *tell kurdāneh*, which was occupied during all the periods of the Bronze Age. If this site is still called by its old name, then we should locate Aphek somewhere else. Among the numerous Bronze Age sites of the northern plain of Accho there are many strong springs, especially three around two mounds near the modern village of *en-nahr* (the *el-Kahweh* of the Survey). The north-eastern mound, *zahr et-tell*, is not shown on the map. The south-western one, called *et-tell*, might be more difficult for the Asherites (Judges

1: 31) to take than *tell kurdāneh*. It also fits the literary requirements of Esarhaddon's military station between Tyre and Egypt.

⁷ See SELLIN, *Geschichte*, 1924, p. 119, »Karmel, nicht Tabor».

⁸ If the Aphek (*fīq*) and Beth-Yerah (*el-kerak*) route did use Jordan Valley between the Lake and Beisan, one would expect to find more early sites at intervals along it, but there are only two, *tell el-ʿabediyeḥ* and *el-ʿešše*.

⁹ THOMSEN, *Die römischen Meilensteine der Provinzen Syria, Arabia und Palaestina ZDPV* 40 (1917) p. 18.

¹⁰ Contrast JPOS, 9, 34. See e.g. WILLY LIEBENAM, *Fasti consulares Imperii Romani*, p. 107 (Kleine Texte).

¹¹ See KLEIN, *Beiträge, zur G.u.G. Galiläas*, pp. 63—70 and *Neue Beiträge*, p. 6.

¹² We see, in *Tosefta Shabbat XIV 9*, *Nedarim IV 57*, that Sihin was so near Sepphoris that the soldiers who went from the citadel of Sepphoris to Sihin to help fight a fire returned to Sepphoris the same day.

¹³ In addition we learn from *Tosefta Erubin IV 17* that the distance between Sihin and Ruma was two Sabbath-journeys, i.e. four thousand Hebrew cubits, since we read: »R. Yehudah said: It happened once that the families of »Mamal» and »Gurion» distributed dried figs during a year of famine, and the poor people of *kjar šihīn* came and thus made the connection (sc. the Sabbath-connection between Sihin and Ruma) and in the evening-time they went out to Ruma and did eat there» (see KLEIN, *loc.cit.*). *Tell el-bedēwīyeh*, which was earlier identified with Asochis, is to be combined with the Biblical name of Hannathon (akk. Hinnatuni). Hannathon was a frontier town of Zebulun (Jos. 19: 14), on a road from Megiddo to Accho and also from Bet Yerah to Accho (Amarna letters). Hannathon was also adjacent to the territory of Asher. See footnote 5.

¹⁴ Cf. ALBRIGHT'S study of Solomon's administrative districts, JPOS, 5 (1925).

¹⁵ This locality is compared by MAX MUELLER with *šorʿā*, *Σαγαα* of Jud. 18: 2; Jos. 19: 41, which was in Dan. This seems too far south for the context. DE ROUGÉ cleverly suggested that there is here a pun upon the word »horns», see next sentence.

¹⁶ Not Achzib, contrast ED. MEYER, *Encycl. Bibl.*, p. 3733.

¹⁷ GARDINER, *Egyptian Hieratic Texts*, I (1911), p. 23.

¹⁸ Other words, used with this object in relation to mountains or hills are: *rāšē* (heads), Gen. 8: 5; Ex. 19: 20; Dt. 34: 1; 1 Kings 18: 42 — *aznōt* (ears), Jos. 19: 34 — *kislōt* (loins), Jos. 19: 12, 18 — *ammā* (elbow), 2 Sam. 2: 24 — *kʾtēfāw* (shoulders), Dt. 33: 12, Jos 15: 8, 10; 18: 16 — *jarkʾtē* (thigh, back), Is. 37: 24 — *šad* (side), 1 Sam. 23: 26, 2 Sam. 13: 34 — *šʾkem* (back), Jos. 24: 32 etc.

¹⁹ On Achshaph cf. THUREAU-DANGIN, *Rev. d'Assyriol.*, 19 (1922), p. 91 f.; DHORME, *Rev. Bibl.*, (1924), p. 11; JIRKU, *Zeitschr. f. Assyriol.*, (1924), p. 64.

²⁰ See ALT, *PJB*, 20 (1924), p. 27.

²¹ The village *en-nahr* is called by the Survey *el-kahweh*, which name is known among the Arabs.

²² Achshaph is identified with the modern *h. iksāf* near the *nahr el-qāsi-mīyeh* (which is too far north) by GUÉRIN, *Gal.*, II, p. 269 f., and later by GAUTHIER, *Dict. des noms géogr.*, p. 111, 112, 159 and DUSSAUD, *Topogr. hist. de la Syrie*, (1927), p. 6 etc.

Abbreviations:

B	Early Bronze Age (before 2000 B.C.)
MB	Middle Bronze Age (2000—1600)
LB	Late Bronze Age (1600—1200)
EI	Early Iron Age (I: 1200—900; II: 900—600; III: 600—300)
H	Hellenistic (300—0)
R	Roman (0—300 A.D.)
B	Byzantine (300—700)
BA	Byzantine-Arabic (500—900)
EA	Early Arabic (700—1200)
A	Arabic

Early and Middle Bronze.

The northern plain of Acre.

<i>h. el-mušēirefeh</i>	EB, MB	<i>zahr et-tell</i> ¹	EB, MB
<i>ez-zīb</i>	EB, MB	<i>tell es-semēriyeh</i>	EB, MB
<i>h. 'abdeh</i>	EB, MB	<i>tell el-fuhḥār</i>	MB
<i>et-tell</i>	EB		

The southern plain of Acre.

<i>h. ya'nīn</i>	EB	<i>tell kurdāneh</i>	EB, MB
<i>ša'ab</i> ²	EB, MB	<i>tell el-'aḡām</i> ³	MB
<i>tell el-ḡarbī (berweh)</i>	MB	<i>tell ḥasan</i> ³	MB
<i>tell kīsān</i>	EB, MB	<i>tell en-nahl</i> ⁴	EB, MB

The hill-country.

<i>nahf</i> ⁵	MB	<i>tell el-wāwīyāt</i> ⁶	MB
<i>kābūl</i>	MB	<i>tell el-butmeḥ</i> ⁶	EB
<i>yanūḥ</i>	EB, MB		

Late Bronze and Early Iron.

The northern plain of Acre.

<i>ḥ. el-mušeirefeh</i>	LB	<i>et-tell</i>	LB, EI, I, II, III
<i>ḥ. el-ʿamrī</i> ⁷	LB	<i>zahr et-tell</i>	EI, I
<i>ez-zīb</i>	LB, EI, I	<i>tell es-semēriyeh</i>	LB, EI
<i>ḥ. ʿabdeh</i>	LB, EI	<i>tell mīmās</i>	EI, I, II, III
<i>ḥ. ḥamsīn</i> ⁸	EI, II	<i>tell el-fuḥḥār</i>	MB, LB, EI,
<i>ḥ. suweidjireh</i> ⁹	LB		I—III, H

The southern plain of Acre.

<i>ḥ. yaʿnīn</i>	LB, EI	<i>tell el-ḡarbī</i>	LB, EI, I, II
<i>šaʿab</i>	LB, EI	<i>tell kīsān</i>	LB, EI, I, III
<i>ḥ. daʿūq</i> ¹⁰	LB, EI, I, II	<i>tell ḥīyār</i> ¹³	LB
<i>ḥ. ʿaiṭāwānīyeh</i> ¹¹	LB	<i>tell zubdeh</i> ¹⁴	EI
<i>ḥ. et-tīreh</i>	LB	<i>tell el-ʿaḏām</i>	LB, EI, I, II
<i>ḥ. el-djāḥūš</i>	LB	<i>tell el-naḥl</i>	LB, EI, I
<i>tell kurdāneh</i>	LB, EI, I—III	<i>tell abū ḥūwām</i>	LB, EI, I, II
<i>tell eš-šumrā</i> ¹²	LB, EI		

The hill-country.

<i>tell et-tantūr</i> ¹⁵	LB, EI, I, II	<i>ḥ. qānā</i>	EI
<i>el-baʿneh</i>	LB	<i>tell el-wāwīyāt</i>	LB
<i>naḥf</i>	LB, EI	<i>rummāneh</i>	EI, I, II
<i>sēdjūr</i>	LB	<i>ḥ. rūmeḥ</i>	LB
<i>nīʿār</i>	LB, EI	<i>tell el-butmeḥ</i>	LB, EI
<i>ḥ. djumeidjmeh</i> ¹⁶	LB	<i>ḥ. el-lōn</i> ¹⁷	LB
<i>ḥ. djfāt</i>	LB, EI	<i>yānūḥ</i>	LB, EI
		<i>mʿāliā</i>	LB, EI
		<i>ḥ. umm el-ʿamūd</i>	LB

Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Arabic.

The northern plain of Acre.

<i>ḥ. el-mušeirefeh</i>	H, R, B	<i>ḥ. el-būbrīyeh</i> ¹⁹	R, B, A
<i>el-baššeh</i>	B, A	<i>ḥ. suweidjireh</i>	H, R, B, A
<i>ḥ. maʿašūb</i>	R, B	<i>el kābrī</i>	H, R, B, A
<i>ḥ. el-djudeideh</i>	R, B	<i>et-tell</i>	R, B, A

<i>ḥ. ʿabbāsīyeh</i>	R, B	<i>zahr et-tell</i>	R, B, A
<i>ḥ. el-ʿamrī</i>	R, B, A	<i>tell es-semērīyeh</i>	H, R, B, B—A
<i>ḥ. el-ḡureib</i>	B, A	<i>tell mīmās</i>	H, R, B, A
<i>ez-zīb</i>	H, R, B, A	<i>ʿamqa</i>	H, R, B, A
<i>ḥ. aītaiyim</i> ¹⁸	B, A	<i>ḥ. būda</i>	R, B
<i>ḥ. ḥamsīn</i>	R, B, A	<i>ḥ. mūneh</i>	A
		<i>tell. el-fuḥḥār</i>	H, R
<i>ḥ. ʿabdeh</i>	H, R, B, A		

The southern plain of Acre.

<i>ḥ. el-ʿaiyādīyeh</i>	B, A	<i>ḥ. djelameh</i>	H, R, B—A
<i>tell el-ḡarbī</i>	H	<i>tell kurdāneh</i>	H, R, A
<i>tell kīsān</i>	H, R, B, A	<i>tell el-ḥīyār</i>	B
<i>ḥ. daʿūq</i>	H, R, A	<i>tell el-ʿaḏām</i>	H, R
<i>ḥ. ʿaiṭāwānīyeh</i>	H, R, A	<i>tell ez-zubdeh</i>	H, R, B—A, A
<i>ḥ. et-ṭireh</i>	H, R, A	<i>tell en-naḥl</i>	R, B, A
<i>ḥ. el-djāḥūš</i>	R, B, B—A	<i>tell abū ḥūwām</i>	H, R, B

The hill-country.

<i>tell et-taṭūr</i>	H, R, B	<i>ḥ. djumeidjmeḥ</i>	B, A
<i>ḥ. qabrā</i>	R, B, A	<i>sahnīn</i>	B, A
<i>ḥ. djallūn</i>	B, B—A	<i>ṭamrah</i>	R, B, A
<i>el-baʿneh</i>	H, R, B, A	<i>ḥ. ʿabellīn</i>	B
<i>naḥf</i>	B, A	<i>kaukab</i>	R, B, A
<i>sēdjūr</i>	B, A	<i>ḥ. qānā</i>	R, A
<i>ḥ. yaʿnīn</i>	H, R, B, A	<i>kefr mendā</i>	R, B, A
<i>šaʿab</i>	H, R, B, A	<i>ḥ. el-lōn</i>	H, R.
<i>ed-damūn</i>	B, A	<i>tell buṭmeḥ</i>	H, R, A
<i>kābūl</i>	H, R, A	<i>ḥ. rūmeḥ</i>	R, EA
<i>nīʿār</i>	R, B, A	<i>rummāneh</i>	A
<i>yānūḥ</i>	B, A	<i>mʿāliā</i>	H, R, B, A
<i>ḥ. umm el-ʿamūd</i> ²⁰	H, R, B, A		

Natural mounds.

<i>tell zubdīyeh</i> ²¹	<i>tell eš-šbīb</i> ²²
<i>tell ez-zaʿater</i>	<i>tell saradj alaunneh</i>
<i>tell el-hawā</i>	<i>(of the Survey)</i>

- ¹ Situated nearly 1/2 km northeast of *et-tell*; not mentioned by the Survey.
- ² Called *ša'ib* by the Survey.
- ³ Marked on the map and called by the Survey *tell eš-šübāt*.
- ⁴ The Survey writes *tell en-nahl*, translating «of drinking»; my translation of bees».
- ⁵ On the plain of *medjdel krūm*.
- ⁶ On the plain of *el-baṭṭōf*.
- ⁷ The Survey: *ḥ. el-'omry*.
- ⁸ Also called *'ūr ḥamsīn*.
- ⁹ The Survey: *ḥ. suweidjireh*.
- ¹⁰ The Survey: *da'ūk*.
- ¹¹ The Survey: *'aiṭāwīyeh*.
- ¹² Situated 1 1/2 km northeast of *djidrū*, not mentioned by Survey.
- ¹³ Also called *tell eš-šübāt* by the Arabs. On the map and the Survey: *tell el-ḥiār*.
- ¹⁴ Situated beside *djidrū*, not mentioned by the Survey.
- ¹⁵ The Survey: a natural mound.
- ¹⁶ On the road along the watershed between *nī'ār* and *djġāt*, 4 km south of *nī'ār*; not mentioned by the Survey.
- ¹⁷ Not mentioned by the Survey.
- ¹⁸ Now a village called *el-ḥmēme*.
- ¹⁹ Also called *ḥ. el-menawāt*.
- ²⁰ The site of *ḥ. umm el-'amūd* may archaeologically be identified with the Hammon of Jos. 19: 28. If the three first names of this verse are in geographical order Rechob could be identified with *h. mušeirefeh*, the first being Abdon (pro Ebron), i.e. *ḥ. 'abdeh*.
- ²¹ All three between *el-baššeh* and *ḥ. 'abdeh*.
- ²² Near *ez-zīb*, called *tell šubeib* by the Survey.

II WESTERN JUDAH

The area covered by my excursions is contained in the north-western corner of the 21st sheet of the English Survey map with the village of *idna* as the southern limit and the *wādī eṣ-ṣūr* as the limit in the east. I begin with the northern part of this area, along the *wādī ed-drūseh* from west to east. On the south-western side of the wadi there is an artificial mound, called *tell el-bēḏā* (the white mound), which is isolated on all sides with steep terraces. The circle of the first terrace from the top is 265 paces. There are cisterns and caves and the debris is strewn with potsherds of the Early Iron I and especially Early Iron II.¹

In the neighbourhood of *tell el-bēḏā* there are several sites on the Survey map. North of it is *h. ḥōrān*, sloping towards the north, a Roman and Byzantine site with hewn stones and cisterns. South of it there is according to the Survey *h. mahbiyeh*, (»the hidden ruin«), which was hidden also from the present local fellahin, and *dēr el-mūs*, which shows the remnants of a few buildings only, probably of a monastery (der). Farther south is *h. el-goṭn*, which slopes only to the east. The area abounds in Byzantine hewn stones, mosaics and cisterns. East of this is *h. el-ḥammām*, the name of which indicates hot baths. The local people, however, did not know of any hot springs in the district. The *ḥirbeh* lies on an extensive flat hill, which abounds in cisterns and caves and is strewn with Byzantine mosaics. Its south-eastern neighbour *h. 'attōs* is smaller but otherwise of the same type. East of this lies, according to the Survey, *h. abu es-silāsīl*, the name of which was not known by the modern fellahin. On the northern sides of *wādī ed-drūseh* is the *h. kerma* of the Survey, which was pronounced by the local population *h. qarmā*. This is a high isolated hill with cisterns and with a Byzantine-Arabic *ḥirbeh* on top of it. The site was chosen for occupation already in the Late Bronze Age.

Though *h. ṣubē'* (»of a small lion«; contrast the Survey, according to which the name is *h. subīḥ*, i.e. »of a reddish white colour«) lies on a low hill of soft soil, it was also occupied as early as the Late Bronze Age. In the midst of this cultivated hill there is a small *ḥirbeh* with hewn stones. Between these two Late Bronze Age sites there are the three Byzantine-Arabic *ḥirāb* of *umm burdj*, *h. faṭṭūm* and *h. umm suwēd*. The first mentioned lies on a high hill, the northern side of which is covered with debris; there are many caves and cisterns. The second lies on a plain ridge. The third covers a lengthy, extensive hill with two hillocks at its western and eastern end, which is cultivated. This lengthy hill is a part of the watershed between the systems of *wādī ed-drūseh* and its northern neighbour *wādī en-naṣārā* (or, as it is also called, *wādī el-ḥīḥ*). On the southern side of this wadi there is *h. umm el-lōz*, a Byzantine-Arabic site, which lies on an elevated top of the eastern end of a ridge. Nearly at the bottom of this wadi are traces of a few ruined buildings. This place is called *h. wādī en-naṣārā*, the *h. umm el-'amdān* of the Survey. Of the rest of the names of the northern side of the wadi indicated by the Survey, *h. seba'* was not known by the local shepherds. The most significant of them, *h. kanyā* (Survey: *h. qanyā*), is a *ḥirbeh* of hewn stones and cisterns lying on a cultivated hill, the ruin area being one hundred paces around. North of *wādī ed-drūseh* this is the only one inhabited as early as the Early Iron III period. The other two, *h. umm el-baṣal* and *h. ribba* are Byzantine-Arabic sites (Survey: *h. il-baṣal*).

South of *wādī ed-drūseh* is the extensive system of wadi *eš-šerqīyeh* (the eastern wadi, which emerges to *bēt dǰibrīn* from the east). A little north of the village *idna* at *h. dǰamrūrah* it becomes united by two branches, the northern, *wādī el-merdǰ*, serving as the present road up to Hebron, while the southern, *wādī el-afrandǰ*, was employed as the basin of the Roman road from Eleutheropolis to Hebron. The situation of *h. dǰamrūrah* is an important one at the junction of the two valleys. This explains the fact that it shows traces of occupation as far back as the Middle Bronze Age. Still there is here no artificial *tell* and according to the ceramics there was a gap till the Byzantine period. Its extensive ruin area can be identified with the Gemmaruris

of Ptolemy, who mentions it as in Idumaea (Rel. Pal. p. 804). The rest of the *ḥirāb* on the northeastern side of *wādī eš-šerqiyeh* are all Byzantine or Arabic sites.

On the south-western side of this wadi, *h. sinnābre* (cf. Sennabris) was occupied during the Middle Bronze Age like *h. djamrūrah* along the same wadi. Since there is no water here and there are not as good possibilities for agriculture as for instance in the neighbouring *h. qilā*, the occupation of which did not begin before the Iron Age, I suggest that an ancient road from the maritime plain to Hebron created these small Middle Bronze Age settlements along its course. In *h. šebraqah*, an extensive site, there are rock-cut tombs with *kōkīm* and a small spring. With the exception of this *ḥirbeh*, the occupation of which dates back to the Hellenistic period, all the other five *ḥirāb* on this side are Byzantine and Arabic sites.² All the valleys mentioned above run from east to west. On the other hand *wādī eš-šūr*, passing their starting points in the east, runs from south to north. At its starting point in the south, near to *wādī el-merdj*, is *h. bēt nāšif* with its abundant Early Iron II potsherds. Nearly opposite to it, on the western side of the wadi, is a Byzantine site called *bēt našīb*. In Jos. 15: 43 *nəšīb* is named as a city of the Shephelah of Judah, together with *q'īlā*, i.e. *h. qilā*. In the Onomasticon *nəšīb* is placed nine miles (seven in the Latin) from Eleutheropolis, on the way to Hebron. The Biblical name has survived in *bēt našīb* which is not »on the way to Hebron«. Since *h. bēt nāšif* is the only Israelite site on the way to Hebron and at a distance of seven miles from *bēt dǰibrīn*, it can be identified with the Biblical *nešīb*. Opposite to it, on the southern side of *wādī el-merdj* is the village of *tarqūmieh* (τρυχωμία). According to its name it was once the leader of a confederation consisting of three villages. Apparently *h. bēt nāšif* was one of them.³

South-east from *tarqūmieh*, between the Roman and the modern road, towers on its commanding height *h. eṭ-ṭaiyibeh*. At the western end of the ancient site is the actual *ḥirbeh* with a castlelike building, mentioned by MADER, (Altechristliche Basiliken und Lokaltraditionen in Südjudäa), as being »auf dem Osthügel der alten Stadt.« There is a very extensive area strewn with potsherds south and east of

the *hīrbeh*. The gradually sloping wadi south of it is called *hallet 'āmer*, in the bottom of which is a good spring. The slope west of the *hīrbeh* is a rocky hillside without debris and building stones. The access from *tarqūmieh* is fairly easy⁴, without a single crossing of valleys; this may have been used in ancient times as a shorter road to Hebron, especially in the winter time. The site of *et-taiyibeh* (802 m. above sea level) is an extraordinary good point for seeing distant views — the whole Shephelah as far as Jaffa to the north, and *el-'arīš*, the Brook of Egypt, to the south. This natural watch-tower is situated in the midst of two valleys used as passes leading from the maritime plain to Hebron, and has a good water-supply from its spring. Building on these facts we can expect to find here traces of an ancient settlement. In addition the name *h. et-taiyibeh*, »the good ruin,» hints at an older name with radicals 'fr, which sounds too much like the Arabic 'afrīt, the name of a demon.⁵

In the first chapter of Micah mention is made of a town *bēt l'ofrā* (1: 10). Though most of the towns mentioned in this chapter seem to belong to the neighbourhood of Micah's native place, i.e. the district around *bēt djibrīn*, *et-taiyibeh* is certainly not too far distant, especially since no fixed geographical order can be found in the list (e.g. that they follow the one route from the Shephelah towards Jerusalem, as in the somewhat parallel passage in Is. 10: 28—32). Also in case *et-taiyibeh* — *bēt l'ofrā* should in the light of further identification remain the only town in this list belonging to the Judaeen mountains, it is not impossible to suppose that the author was obliged to search for this particular type of name from a little further distance in order to build up this pun: »At Beth-le-Aphrah have I rolled myself in dust» (the Hebrew root 'fr, 'āfār means dust; cf. the similar pun with Achzib in Micah 1: 14).⁶

With regard to the Roman roads in this neighbourhood see THOMSEN, ZDPV 40, p. 78—84; ALT, PJB 24, p. 16—18; PJB 27, p. 13—20; KUHLE, PJB 24, p. 126, 127; ABEL, Géographie de la Palestine, II, 1938, pp. 222—231; AVI-YONAH, Map of Roman Palestine, 1940; The Development of the Roman Road System in Palestine, Israel Exploration Journal, 1950—51; Quart. Dept. Antiq. Palest., 2, 1932, p. 120 and 12, 1946, pp. 85—102.

<i>abu er-rawāzin</i>	R, B, A.	<i>ḥ. kanyā</i>	E I, III, H, R, B.
<i>bēt ʿalām</i>	B, A.	<i>ḥ. qarmā</i>	LB, H, B, A.
<i>bēt lām</i>	B, A.	<i>ḥ. ḥarūf</i>	B, A.
<i>bēt naṣīb</i>	B, A.	<i>ḥ. el-qoṭn</i>	B, A.
<i>burdj bēt nāṣīf</i>	A.	<i>ḥ. qaṣṣāh</i>	B, A.
<i>ḥ. ʿaṭṭōs</i>	B, A.	<i>ḥ. en-naṣārā</i>	A.
<i>ḥ. bēt nāṣīf</i>	EI, II, B, A.	<i>ḥ. ribbā</i>	B, A.
<i>ḥ. el-biss</i>	A.	<i>ḥ. sinnābreh</i>	MB, B, A.
<i>ḥ. umm el-baṣal</i>	B, A.	<i>ḥ. šebraqah</i>	H, R, B, A.
<i>ḥ. faṭṭūm</i>	B, A.	<i>ḥ. eš-šerwī</i>	B, A.
<i>ḥ. ḥōrān</i>	H, R, B, A.	<i>ḥ. ṣubēʿ</i>	LB, A.
<i>ḥ. el-ḥammām</i>	EI, III, B, A.	<i>ḥ. ṭāwās</i>	B, A.
<i>ḥ. djamrūrah</i>	MB, B, A.	<i>ḥ. tell el-bēḏā</i>	EI, I, II
<i>ḥ. djabr</i>	B, A.	<i>ḥ. eṭ-ṭaiyibeh</i>	EI, I, II, B, EA, MA, LA.
<i>ḥ. umm el-ḥanāzīr</i>	B, A.	<i>muʿarraš bʿārah</i>	B.
<i>ḥ. umm el-lōz</i>	B, A.	<i>umm burdj</i>	B, B—A.
<i>ḥ. zaʿqūqah</i>	B, A.	<i>umm suwēd</i>	B, EA.

In the neighbourhood of *bēt djibrīn* there are the following shrines:

<i>en-nabi djibrīn</i>	<i>šēḥ maḥmūd</i>
<i>al-weli tamīm ed-dārī</i>	<i>šēḥ al-sālim</i>
<i>šēḥ ibrahīm</i>	<i>šēḥ az-zawāwī</i>
<i>šēḥ šaʿēš</i>	<i>šēḥ al-ʿadjamī</i>
<i>šēḥ šaʿēb</i>	<i>šēḥ burāq</i>

¹ Identified with Achzib, ELLIGER, *Die Heimat des Propheten Micha*, ZDPV 57,2; cf. JEREMIAS, PJB 29.

² The name of the northernmost *ḥirbeh* was pronounced *abu er-rawāzin*; cf. the Survey.

³ Northwards along the course of *wādī eš-šūr* there are the known Biblical sites *qʾilā* — *ḥ. qilā* and *ʿadullām* — *ḥ. ʿid-el-mā* (also called *ḥ. ʿid el-mīya*) north of *ḥ. eš-šēḥ madkūr*. The ruin still further north, which has no name on the Survey map is called *ṭaff djibrīn nakkār* (»place of a jealous brow«).

⁴ From the west, however, along the Roman road the access is very difficult. At *ḥ. djamrūrah* this height with its ruins is to be seen at a short and easy distance, from which I started once on a clear February morning walking up to *eṭ-ṭaiyibeh*. A fellah told me: The ruin is right in front of you (*quddāmak*). But because I had no Survey map or a compass with me, I was lost for a whole day in the zigzag of the many branches of valleys owing to the February clouds which hid the sun, so that I could not get directions from it. Also from the village of *ṭuffāh*, from the south-east, the access is hampered by deep zigzag-

ging valleys, The importance of *et-ṭaiyibeh* is wholly overlooked in the archaeological description of the Survey.

⁵ The name *et-ṭaiyibeh* is an abbreviation of *ṭaiyibet el-ism* (Euonymos), a name given euphemistically to places whose names had a bad sound, and at least a few towns of this name in Palestine can be proved to have originally borne a name with *ʿpr*, see ALBRIGHT, AASOR, VI (1926) p. 35.

⁶ A very thorough historical description of the area of *bēt djibrīn* — Eleutheropolis is given by BEYER, Das Stadtgebiet von Eleutheropolis im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr. und seine Greuznachbarn, ZDPV, 54.