

Beshit	Bozkath.
Shâmeh	Sharaim.
Huleikât	Gath.
Bir en Nahl	Enam.
Hatta	Ether.
Beit Affa	Jephta.
B'alín	Dilean.
Ibneh	Libnah.
Moghara	Makkedah.

SITE OF LIBNAH.

THIS ancient city was one of the most important of those attacked and taken by Joshua, and its subsequent history leads to the surmise that it occupied a strong and commanding position; its site, however, has hitherto escaped discovery, although it is suggested as being represented by Arâk el Menshiyeh (Vandevelde), by Tell es Safieh (Dean Stanley), and by Beit Jibrin (Lieut. Conder).

Jabneel and Jabnah are each only mentioned once in the Old Testament, and are recognised as being one and the same place. I propose to identify these names with that of Libnah, the modern equivalent being Ibna, a ruined city situated on a conspicuous hill on the sea-coast between Jaffa and Ashdod.

The Jabneel of the Old Testament is given as Lebna in the LXX., and again the Libnah of the Old Testament is in one instance given in the LXX. as Lemna.

We have Jebneel, Jabnia, Jamnia, Jafneh, Iamnia, Ibelin, Ivelyn, Libnah, Lebna, Lemna, Yebna, and Ibna as various changes upon the old words Libnah and Jabnah, the modern word Ibna representing both these early forms.

Libnah was given over to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and subsequently we find Jamnia to be the great seat of Hebrew learning, where the Sanhedrim sat.

The modern Ibna occupies a very commanding position on the great road along the coast of Palestine; it is 170 feet above the level of the sea, and has an ancient port attached, as had Gaza, Ascalon, &c. It was in the time of Josephus one of the most populous cities of Palestine. In modern days the encroaching sand has swallowed up the once fertile sea-board of Philistia. The position I thus assign to Libnah appears to agree well with the account of its attack by Joshua.

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NOTE ON SHAARAIM.

IN Joshua xv. 33-36 there occurs the following group:—

“Eshtaol, Zoreah, Ashnah, Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim, fourteen cities with their villages.”

Ashnah = Asalin, quite close to Sara.

En-gannim = Um Jina.

Tappuah = Artuf.

In my paper on Adullam will be found some notes on Azeka.

As to Shaaraim, I am very nearly convinced that we find it in the ruin Sa'irè, which is not marked on any map, but is in Robinson's lists district of Arkab between Shuweikeh (Socho) and Beit Netif—*i.e.*, precisely in the region required.

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AVEN HASH-SHETEYAH.

IN Joma v. 2 we read, “there was there (in the Holy of Holies) a stone from the time of the first prophets. It was called Sheteyah, and its height from the earth was three fingerbreadths.” Upon this stone the ark would appear to have been placed, and it was a notion of the rabbis that the earth was founded upon, or rather *from*, it. In the Toldoth Jesu the Aven Sheteyah is affirmed to be the stone which the patriarch Jacob anointed at Bethel. Upon it was said to be written the nomen tetragrammaton, the ineffable name of God, and lest any one should learn the letters of this name, and become possessed of the wondrous powers which that knowledge conferred, two dogs were placed near the sanctuary, which, if any one had succeeded in learning the letters of this name, barked so fiercely at him as he was passing out as to cause him immediately to forget it. It is said that Jesus having entered, learned the name, wrote it upon parchment, and placed the parchment in an incision which He made in His thigh, the skin growing over it on the name being pronounced, and having escaped the canine guardians of the place, thus became possessed of the supernatural powers which He afterwards manifested.

Rabbi Schwarz (Das Heilige Land) identifies this wonderful stone with the Sakhrab, and after remarking that it is now raised about 10 feet above the ground, adds, “so that since that time (when Joma was written) the temple hill has been lowered nearly 10 feet.”

It seems strange that this stone should have been confounded with Zohelath, yet in the Jewish manual *arb'a taanoth* (*tisha b'av*) this identity is suggested.

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