



## Gihon

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(Sheet XXI, Mem. III, p. 309), in which is shown the traditional tomb of Esau (*El'As*), which I have fully described on a later page (p. 379).

The village appears to be the Zior of the Bible (Josh. xv, 54), but it would appear probable that at some time or other this site was regarded as the Biblical Seir, where Esau's body was buried. The legend of the head was not, however, recovered in connection with Hebron.

C. R. C.

### GIHON.

IN histories, commentaries, books of travel, and guidebooks, we read of a Mount Gihon, a Valley of Gihon, a Fountain of Gihon, and an Upper and Lower Pool of Gihon. In the Bible, Gihon, near Jerusalem, is mentioned only as a place which had an upper and, as may be inferred, a lower outflow of water (2 Chron. xxxii, 30.) It was at a lower level than the city, in the valley נחל and apparently near enough to En-Rogel for shouting and music to be there heard from it; but the two places were not in sight of each other. From Joshua xv, 7, it appears that En-Rogel was to the east or south-east of the city, and as Gihon was near it, and in a nachal, or narrow deep water-course, we must look for the latter in one of the narrow valleys which converge just below the city on the south-east. In the Chaldee and Syriac versions of the Bible, Gihon is translated Siloah, and this gives an indication of its position. According to high authorities, Gihon means a bursting forth and was therefore the name given to this water source. But this term is applied to no other spring, and it seems to me not improbable that the true derivation of Gihon is not גִּיחַ *giah*, to burst forth, but גִּחֹן *gahan*, to bow down to prostrate oneself, and that the term was originally applied, not to the fountain, but to the canal which brought the water from the fountain.<sup>1</sup> How fitting such a term would be for such a narrow passage, which can only be traversed in portions of its extent by a person going literally on his belly גִּחֹן *gahan*, everyone who has been through the canal will feelingly recognise. But however this may be, all the difficulties of the narratives, so far as Gihon is concerned, seem to disappear if we consider that the names Gihon and Siloah were applied to the canal, and especially to its southern end, which was the lower and principal outflow of its waters whilst its upper outflow was at what is now called the Virgin's Fountain. There is nothing to indicate the situation of the Shiloah alluded to by the prophet Isaiah (viii, 6), but there can be little doubt that it was identical with the Siloah, or more properly Shelach, of Nehemiah; only the prophet speaks of the softly flowing stream, and Nehemiah of the pool which it supplied. That this pool was the same as the "pool of Siloam" few will question, and if there ever was a "pool of Gihon" (which there

<sup>1</sup> The form גִּחֹן or גִּיחֹי, if derived from גִּחַ, is exactly the same as שָׁלַח or as the Rabbis spell it שִׁילֹחַ, from שָׁלַח to send (cf. John ix, 7).

was not) it would have been either here or in the other valley, in which was the upper outflow of water. By David Kimchi and Rashi, as well as by the Targum, Gihon and Siloah are regarded as identical, and this being so, it is easy, in the light of modern discovery, to understand the dictum of R. Samuel that "Siloah was within the city" שלוח היה באמצע המדינה. (Talm. Jer. Chag., page 4). The entrance to the passage leading down to the shaft by means of which the branch of the aqueduct was reached from above, as discovered by Sir Charles Warren, was almost certainly within the ancient city. This shaft and passage may have been constructed partly for convenience of ordinary life, but were no doubt chiefly designed to enable those within the walls to obtain the water when the outer approaches to it were stopped and hidden.<sup>1</sup> This branch aqueduct is a part of the canal which I venture to think was called Gihon or Siloah, and thus Siloah might be truly said to be within the city.

THOMAS CHAPLIN, M.D.

### SITE OF CALVARY.

Now that so much interest is concentrated on the excavations in progress in and near Jerusalem, in which the readers of the *Quarterly Statement* are being well posted up by Herr Schick, would you be so good as to insert the enclosed letter, which I happened to come upon when turning over a copy of "Mount Seir," and which in justice to the late Colonel Churchill ought to be made public?

Allow me to add that, in my opinion, the recent excavations in the neighbourhood of "Jeremiah's Grotto," so clearly described by Herr Schick, all tend to confirm the view that this spot is without doubt the site of the Crucifixion and of the Holy Sepulchre.

EDWARD HULL.

"Ordsall Rectory, Retford, Notts.

"SIR,—May I take the liberty of saying that nearly 20 years ago the site of Calvary as you and Captain Conder indicate it, was pointed out to me by Colonel Churchill (now dead), the historian of the Lebanon?

"His arguments were identical with yours, though we neither of us knew of the Roman Causeway. On two subsequent visits to Jerusalem the idea became a certainty to me.

"I do not think Colonel Churchill mentioned his idea to many persons, as it met with much disfavour.

"I am, Sir,

"Faithfully yours,

"S. KELSON STOTHERT.

"To Professor Hull."

<sup>1</sup> No doubt Hezekiah stopped the lower outflow as well as the upper, for he stopped "all the fountains." The Jews who sustained the siege by Titus were not so prudent.