

## A Graeco-Jewish Epigram from Beth She'arim

by M. SCHWABE

During the 1939 excavations at Sheikh Abreiq a Catacomb was unearthed in the neighbourhood of which stood a Mausoleum decorated with arches and animal friezes. In the debris of Mausoleum, fragments of a marble inscription came to light, evidently broken on purpose.

The inscription runs as follows:

Κεῖμαι Λεοντείδης νέκυσ <Σ>αφο[ῦς υἱὸς Ἰοῦ]στος,  
 ὃς πάσης σοφίης δρεψάμενος [...].ν  
 λεῖψα φάος, δειλ[οὺς γ]ονέας ἀκα[χημέν]ους αἰε[ί],  
 αὐτοκασιγνήτους [τ]ε, οἴμοι, ἐ[ν οἷς Β]εσάρ[οις].  
 5 Καὶ γ' ἔλθ[ὼν] ἐ[κ] τῆς Ἀθην Ἰοῦστος [... αὐ]τόθι κεῖμα[ι]  
 σὺν πολλοῖσιν ἑοῖς, ἐπ<ε>ὶ ἤθελε Μοῖρα κραταίη.  
 θάρσει, Ἰοῦστε, οὐδέεις ἀθάνατος.

„I, Justus, the Leontide, son of Sappho, am lying dead, after having picked [e. g. the fruits(?)] of all wisdom; I relinquished the light, the unhappy parents, who will mourn constantly, and the brothers, woe, in my Beth-She'arim. And after having gone to the Hades, I, Justus, [e. g. (the son) of Leo?], am lying here with many of my folk, because such was the wish of the powerful Fate. Be confident, Justus, nobody is immortal.”

The parts in line 1 which have been completed seem sure, inspite of the metric irregularities caused by the proper names. The patronymicon (Λεοντείδης) has, to our knowledge, no analogy in Jewish epigrams. The second line ὃς πάσης σοφίης δρεψάμενος [...].ν contains a metaphor commonly found in poetry and elevated prose. The gap may be filled in e. g. by [καρπό]ν or [τὸ καλό]ν or by [πετάλω]ν or by [κλαδέω]ν or even better by [βιβλίω]ν (cf. CIA III 779). At the end of line 4 a group of letters ECAP is preserved. As there is no doubt that these letters should be completed into ἐ[ν οἷς Β]εσάρ[οις], the identification of Sheikh Abreiq with the ancient Beth She'arim, first suggested by Prof. Klein, is now fully established. The form Βεσαρα = Βησαρα (Josephus, *Vita*, 118, 119) may be either feminine or neutrum, as in the case of other place-names formed

with the word Beth, found in Josephus. All the personal names are Jewish and known as such from Jewish inscriptions. In <Σ>αφο the first letter, Σ, is missing by haplography, because of the preceding νέκυσ, and it should be completed to <Σ>αφο[ύς] (= Σαφοῦς). The name Σαφώ found twice in Beth She'arim is a hypocoristicon of Σαπφείρα, like Δημώ of Δημονόη (cf. *AP* XII, 173, *Hermes*, XV p. 459; *AP* V, 115) or Ξανθώ of Ξανθίππη (ib. IX 570). In line 5 a vertical stroke is still visible, which may be the beginning of the letter Λ. Perhaps the whole word should be completed to [Λέου]? The Jewish name Λέος (= Λέοντιος?) being found in Frey, *Corp. Inscr. Iud.* I 157. (to be continued)

### Notes on the Map of Palestine of the Traveller Moses Basola

by D. BENVENISTI

The list of place-names shows that the map was not made by a traveller but by a reader or by an author who wished to describe the boundaries of Palestine. A detailed comparison with the book *כפתור ופרח* of R. Eshtori Happarchi shows that there existed a close connection between them, or even that the map of Basola was perhaps copied from a map attached to a manuscript of the above mentioned book.

### On Money Lending in the Fifth Century

by D. FREIDENBERG

A Papyrus of the Fifth century C. E. is explained as a financial transaction between a learned man from Lydda and a man from Galilee. The former borrowed from the latter a certain sum and paid it back in instalments.

### The Topography of Palestine in the Prophecies of Micah

by Z. VILNAI

The prophet Micah describes in chapter I, verses 8-16, the campaign of Sennacherib in Palestine and mentions in connection with this event a series of places between Lachish and Jerusalem. Being himself from the neighbourhood of Lachish, he naturally knew that region very well.

The place-names are used by Micah in plays upon words. גת is according to modern scholars Tell el Menshiyeh.

בכר refers to the town כבון, in the district of Judah and has apparently to be identified with the modern village of Kabo in the neighbourhood of Bittir.

בית לעפרה is probably represented by the Arab village Beit Apha near Lachish.

שפיר is to be sought in the Arab village of Sawafir el Gharbiyeh.

The expression "Bosheth", usually explained as "shame", is according to the writer equally a place-name. Besheth is to be identified with the Arab village of Bashith near Gederah.

צאנן may correspond to Suweidan, situated near the Via Maris.

בית האצל is of difficult identification but it may be Tell Judeideh.

מרית equal to ירמות of Judah, is to be sought at Khirbet Yarmuk.

The name of אכזיב is preserved in the modern village Ain Kuweizibeh near Beit Natif. ירש is Tell Sandahannah and עדולם is now Id el-Miah near the Lachish-Jerusalem road.

### Is the Plain of Sharon on the Coast?

by J. WAITZ

The writer has reasons to doubt the commonly accepted view that the Plain of Sharon extends along the Mediterranean.

Sharon is not mentioned in Deuteronomy nor in Joshua among the provinces of Western Palestine. On the other hand, there is a "Sharon" called also "Mishor" (Plain) in Transjordan (I Chron. V, 16). The part of Transjordan which could be identified with Sharon of the Book of Chronicles exhibits in present times the following characteristics:

- 1) It is very spacious and extends over millions of dunams
- 2) It is now and it always used to be a pasture-land
- 3) It is a place where fruit trees and wine are cultivated
- 4) The plain is bordered by the Hills of Moab and Gilead.

The analysis of all the relevant biblical passages shows that the features of the supposedly western Sharon, correspond in reality to the Transjordan plain.

The name of Sharon is also mentioned in other ancient sources. In the Mesha inscription we find a "Man of Sharon" which obviously refers to Transjordan. The passage in the Eshmunazer inscription is not clear.

The writer concludes that the erroneous identification of Sharon with the Coastal Plain was first made by Eusebius who was then followed by Jewish and non-Jewish scholars.

### To the History of the Synagogue on Samuels Tomb

by S. ASAPH

Additional information on the subject may be obtained from a letter of R. Isaac Ben R. Musa published by Mr. Toledano. R. Isaac describes the tomb and adds that many people used to come from Damascus and from Egypt to light candles and to deliver speeches at the tomb of the Prophet.

### Note to "The History of the Synagogue on Samuels Tomb"

by S. H. KOOK

According to Mr. Shochat the Synagogue on the Tomb of the Prophet Samuel is first mentioned in the 15th century. The author adduces evidence that the Synagogue was known as early as the 11th century, but was owned at that time by the Caraites Community.

### Lehayath — a vulture

by M. ZEIDEL

Following Mr. Aharoni's view that lehayath is a name for the vulture (see BJPES, 7, pp. 98-9), the author suggests that also in *The Psalms*, LXXIV, 19 the word lehayath means nothing else but a vulture.

### Has Hyrcanus been appointed "Brother of the King"?

by A. SCHALIT

The article deals with the period following the death of Queen Shlamzion. A war broke out between her two sons Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, at the end of which Hyrcanus was defeated. The events that followed are twice described by Josephus, each time differently: according to *Antiquitates*, Hyrcanus retired completely from the public affairs, while in *Bellum Judaicum* we find him appointed "Brother of the King".

This title was well known in the ancient Near East and implied participation in the government. If we accept the version of *Bellum Judaicum*, we have to assume that the power was divided between the two brothers, Aristobulus being king and Hyrcanus High Priest. But if we consider the importance of the High-Priesthood, it can hardly be admitted that Aristobulus would have granted it to his vanquished brother. Therefore the idea current to-day among most scholars has to be accepted, i. e. that the *Antiquitates* give the true state of affairs and that Hyrcanus had to retire completely.