

**Rain and water conditions in the Negev**

by D. ASHBEL

In this article the rain and water conditions of the Negev are discussed. The author expresses his conviction that no change occurred in the climate of this part of Palestine during the last 3000 years, and that the amount of water needed by the inhabitants of the now ruined towns of the Negev could be met even under present conditions. The main source of watersupply was in ancient times (as it might be now) the floodwaters resulting from occasional cloudbursts every winter, here and there in this region. The irregularity of the rainfall in the Negev and the frequencies of droughts existed in ancient time as at present. But no strict correlation could be found between droughts in the Negev and in other parts of Palestine. In the contrary dry years in Palestine may correspond to very rainy winters in the Negev.

**Documents relative to the Jewish Communities at Ramle and in the Shephela**

by S. ASSAF

The author deals with five Hebrew documents from the Cairo Geniza. The first three refer to the Jewish community at Ramle in the eleventh century. The fourth, of the 9th century refers to the settlements in the plain of Lydda. The fifth is an appeal by the heads of the Jerusalem *Yeshivah* to all Jewish communities in Palestine, its fortresses, towns and villages.

**The estates of Debora in the Agada**

by A. J. BRAWER

The author analyzes Jud. IV, 4-5 and Jonathan b. 'Uziel's commentary thereto; this Targum is a valuable historical source which can be dated. It mentions six estates of Debora (which are identified by the author). The author thinks *Rama* (Jud. IV, 5) to correspond not to er-Ram but to Ramallah.

**On the history of the Purchase of the "Tombs of the Kings" in Jerusalem**

by I. PRESS

The author publishes (1) a letter by Mme. Berthe Amalie Bertrand in which she announces her purchase in 1874 of the plot containing the tombs, (2) the confirmation of the purchase by Rabbi Isidore, Chief Rabbi of France, at that date.

## Imitations and Originality in Josephus' Antiquities by A. KAMINKA

Remarks and notes caused by the publication of the first volume of A. Shor's Hebrew translation.

## Note on the Shechem Stele

by S. YEIVIN

The only possible way to read the inscription is from the top downwards. However the position of the signs representing a head and a hand (?) cannot be easily reconciled with this assumption. — The only identifiable sign so far is the *r* (the human head).

## Topographic Notes (annotations to S. Klein, *The Land of Judah*) by S. YEIVIN

1. Ἀζώτου ὄρους. — This reading (*I Macc.* IX, 15) has been recognised as a corruption, and Père Abel proposed in emendation: Ἀζώρου ὄρους. This emendation seems unsatisfactory. The author proposes to read עַד אֶשְׁדָּת הָהָר (to the slopes of the mountainous massive, north of Berea). This was misunderstood by the translator as a n. pr. l., and corrupted by later copyists: Ἀσδώτου = Ἀσδώδου = Ἀζώτου.

2. Sacrificial doves were supplied from somewhere on the Mount of Olives. Josephus' description of the Roman circumvallation of Jerusalem (*Bell. Jud.* V, 12, 2) helps to locate these dove-farms more precisely. The περιστρεφον rock was situated just above Siloam. Dove-breeding on a large scale was common in the ancient Near East (e. g. at Karanis in the Fayyum, II-III cent. A. D.). Such were the small irrigated kitchen gardens of Siloam where vegetables were, and are still, raised for Jerusalem market.

## Sheikh Abreik or Sheikh Ibreik?

by St. H. STEPHAN

The form is evidently *brk* and as such has a connexion with "blessing". Its diminutive is nothing else but Bureik (or, as a commonly pronounced (i)breik) met with in such names as Kafr *Ibreik* and this Sheikh *Ibreik* (proofs for this latter form can be cited from Turkish firmans issued some 250 years ago).

Rabbi Dr. J. Unna writes to say that the late Prof. S. Klein was a student of the orthodox *Rabbinerseminar* of Berlin and not of the *Hochschule*, as stated in the obituary notice published in our Bulletin VII, 3—4, p. I.