

itself (I Macc. iv. 15, v. 68), but Jonathan (*ib.* x. 84, xi. 4) destroyed it and burned the old temple of Dagon (compare I Sam. v. 2, 3; see also *ib.* xvi. 10). According to Josephus, "Ant." xiii. 15, § 4, Alexander Jannæus possessed it (contrast "B. J." i. 7, § 7). Pompey restored its independence ("B. J." i. 6, § 4), which apparently means only that he reconstructed its walls. It belonged to the dominion of Herod and Salome ("Ant." xvii. 18, § 9). Vespasian had to take it by force ("B. J." iv. 130); so that the Jewish inhabitants must have been in the majority. The New Testament mentions Azotus in one passage only (Acts viii. 40). The modern Esdūd is an in-

tiate of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. He subsequently visited Paris, Berlin, and other European cities, acquiring professional experience. Ashenheim practised for some time in London, lecturing frequently and being an active contributor to the Anglo-Jewish press. He emigrated to Jamaica in 1843 and settled at Kingston, where he practised till 1850, when he removed to Falmouth, a port on the north coast of Jamaica. In addition to his practise, and lectures more or less connected with his profession, he addressed the public, through the press, on sanitary reform and on compulsory vaccination, of which he was an able advocate. At Fal-



GENERAL VIEW OF MODERN ASHDOD.  
(From a photograph by Boufila.)

significant village nearly four miles from the sea. To the west of the wooded height on which the village stands, traces of the ancient harbor—now known as Minet el-Ḳal'a—can still be seen. The statement of Ptolemy and Josephus that it was a maritime city, is explained by the possession of a harbor on the shore, which is called "Azotus by the Sea" ("Ant." xiii. 15, § 4). This place has been compared with the Asdudimmu mentioned by Sargon, but the comparison is hardly justified. See PHILISTINES.

J. JR.

W. M. M.

**ASHDOTH-PISGAH:** The declivities of the Pisgah range on the east of the Jordan, which were handed over to the Reubenites (Deut. iii. 17, iv. 49; Jos. xiii. 20) (see **PISGAH**).

J. JR.

G. B. L.

**ASHENHEIM, LOUIS:** Scotch physician and surgeon; born at Edinburgh 1817; died at Jamaica Nov. 26, 1858. Educated in his native city, he obtained honors at the university, and became a licen-

mouth he rendered valuable services during an outbreak of cholera.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** *Falmouth Advertiser*, Oct., 1858; *Falmouth Post*, Oct., 1858; *Jewish Chronicle*, Dec. 3 and 10, 1858.

J.

G. L.

**ASHER.**—**Biblical Data:** The eighth son of the patriarch Jacob, and the traditional progenitor of the tribe Asher. He is represented as the younger brother of Gad; these two being the sons of Zilpah, the handmaid of Leah (Gen. xxx. 10 *et seq.*, xxxv. 26). Four sons and one daughter were born to Asher in Canaan, who went down with him to Egypt (Gen. xlv. 17). See **ASHER, TRIBE AND TERRITORY**; and on the general view to be taken of the tribes of Israel, **TRIBES, TWELVE**.

J. JR.

J. F. McC.

—**In Rabbinical Literature:** For a time Asher was not on good terms with his brothers, because he had informed them of Reuben's sin against his step-mother Billah, and they would not believe him;

indeed they reproached him instead. Not until Reuben repented and confessed his crime did they realize their injustice toward Asher. From the first he had had no evil intentions against Reuben; in fact he was the very one whose endeavor it had always been to reconcile the brothers, especially when they disputed as to who among them was destined to be the ancestor of the priests (Sifre, Deut. 355). In the Test. Patr., Asher, 5, Asher is regarded as the example of a virtuous man who with single-mindedness strives only for the general good.

Asher married twice. His first wife was 'Adon, a great-granddaughter of Ishmael; his second, Hadurah, a granddaughter of Eber and a widow. By her first marriage Hadurah had a daughter SERAH, whom Asher treated as affectionately as if she had been of his own flesh and blood, so that the Bible itself speaks of Serah as Asher's daughter ("Sefer ha-Yashar, Wayesheb"). According to the Book of Jubilees (xxxiv. 20), Asher's wife was named "Iyon" (probably יונה, "dove").

Asher's descendants in more than one regard deserved their name ("Asher" meaning "happiness"). The tribe of Asher was the one most blessed with male children (Sifre, *l.c.*); and its women were so beautiful that priests and princes sought them in marriage (Gen. R. lxxi., end). The abundance of oil in the land possessed by Asher so enriched the tribe that none of them needed to hire a habitation (Gen. R. *l.c.*); and the soil was so fertile that in times of scarcity, and especially in the Sabbatical year, Asher provided all Israel with olive-oil (Sifre, *l.c.*; Men. 85b; Targ. Yer. on Deut. xxxiii. 24). The Asherites were also renowned for wisdom (Men. *l.c.*).

J. SR.

L. G.

**ASHER, Tribe and Territory.** — **Biblical Data:** The fortune of Asher is foreshadowed in the BLESSING OF JACOB, where it is said: "Asher, his food shall be rich, and he shall yield the dainties of a king" (Gen. xlix. 20, Hebr.). Until the settlement in Canaan, the tribe stood in honor. Of its lot in Egypt there is no record; but after the Exodus its men numbered 41,500 strong (Num. i. 41); and at the close of the desert

**Situation.** i. 41); and at the close of the desert march the census showed that it had reached 53,400 (Num. xxvi. 47). During the journeyings the tribe had its station between Dan and Naphtali, north of the Tabernacle (Num. ii. 25 *et seq.*). It also had its representative among the tribal chiefs sent to spy out the land of Canaan (Num. xiii. 13).

The blessing of Moses, delivered, according to tradition, at the close of the march, is put forward as partly predictive: "Blessed be Asher with descendants, and let him be pleasing to his brethren, and let his foot be dipped in oil" (Deut. xxxiii. 24, Hebr.). The material portion of this aspiration, like that of Jacob's blessing, was in large measure fulfilled. The territory allotted to Asher (Josh. xix. 24-31) was the coast-land extending from Dor (Tanturah) on the south to Sidon on the north. It thus included, north of Mount Carmel, the territories of Aecho, Achzib, Tyre, and Sidon. The coast-land west of the shoulder of Carmel, though assigned to Asher, was occupied by Manasseh (Josh. xvii.

11). The tribe was thus settled on the western slopes and valleys of Upper and Lower Galilee and on the Phœnician plain. Here was some of the most productive land in Palestine—pasture, wooded hills, and orchards—noted especially for the abundance and richness of its olive-oil. On account of its remoteness from the centers of national life, and its facility of communication with the Phœnician markets, as well as the ease with which it could

support itself, the tribe speedily became dissociated from the rest of Israel, so that it took no part against the Canaanites with Barak and Deborah (Judges v. 17). Yet it joined

in the pursuit of the Midianites after the victory of Gideon (Judges vii. 23). It is also said (I Chron. xii. 36) that a great host of Asherites offered their support to David when he succeeded to the kingdom of Saul, and that some men of the tribe "humbled themselves" in the reformation of Hezekiah (II Chron. xxx. 11).

J. JR.

J. F. McC.

—**Critical View:** Asher is one of the most indistinct and elusive of the tribes of Israel. It is difficult to fix the boundaries of the tribe's possessions; and it is not even certain that it inhabited any extensive continuous territory. There is, as mentioned above, no trace of its clansmen south of Carmel; and

it is not clear in what sense this district was assigned to them. Possibly the tradition is based on some migration of Asherites northward through that region. Many of the towns allotted to them north of Carmel can not be identified. But those whose sites are known (among them Cabul, Achshaph, Helkath, Neiel) suggest by their location a distribution of settlements rather than a compact and well-defined tribal possession. Besides the Phœnician coast cities (Aeche, Tyre, Sidon), Beth-dagon further inland was probably never Asherite.

Asher appears to have had at no time a close connection with the body of Israel. It had more at stake than any other tribe in the common struggle with the northern Canaanites, and yet it held aloof. In the light of this outstanding fact, it is not easy to understand how it could have become so loyal at any later date as to send 40,000 men to join the standard of David (I Chron. xii. 36). The probability of such a statement is lessened by the fact that in the tabulation of the several contingents (verses 23-38) the largest quotas are said to have come from the tribes that were most remote from the centers of the life and activity of Israel. On the whole the conclusion is irresistible that Asher consisted of certain clans that were affiliated with portions of Israel, but were never incorporated into the body politic.

Critical opinion is divided as to whether Asher was a name originally Israelitish, or whether it was adopted by certain of the outlying

**Name and** tribesmen from a Canaanitic source.

**Origin.** What light does the story of the birth of Asher throw on the question? He was the full brother of Gad, and the names have the same meaning. Gad is a Canaanitish god of fortune, and Asher is from a root meaning "prosperous,"