

New Light on En-Gannim

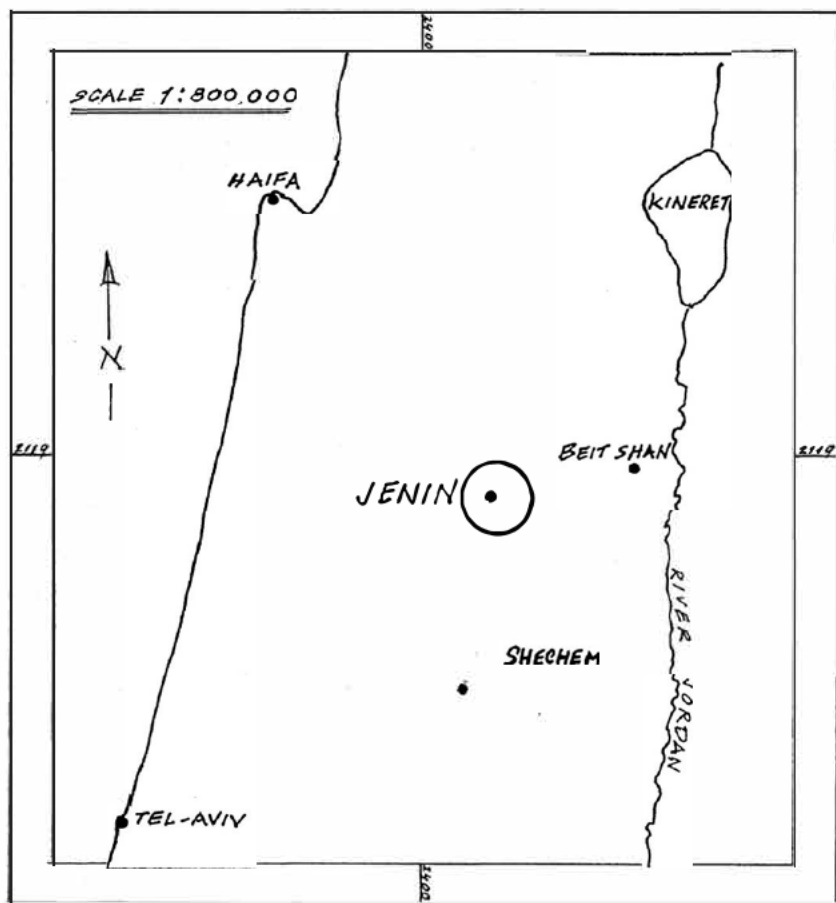
Nehemia Tzori



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NEHEMIA TZORI

En-Gannim is mentioned in the Amarna letters¹ and in the Bible it is mentioned twice; it was allotted to the tribe of Issachar and given to a levitical family of the children of Gershon, with



Map 1. The Situation of Jenin

its suburbs.² There is a tendency for En-Gannim to be identified with Ginath (the city of Tibni).³ The city was mentioned as Beth-haggan in connection with the flight and death of Ahaziah, king of Judah.⁴ Josephus calls it Ginea, and says that it lay in the great plain and was

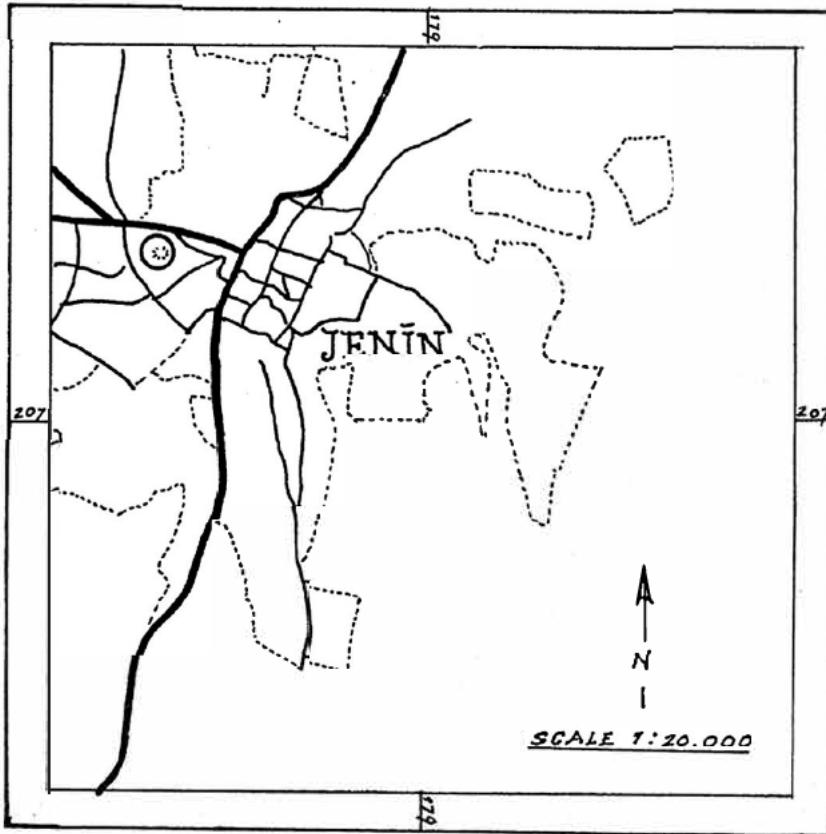
¹ A. F. Rainey, 'Gitti-Padalla', *Braslawi Festschrift* (Jerusalem, 1970), 392 (Hebrew); English version in 'Gath-Padalla', *IEJ* 18 (1968), 8, n.39.

² Joshua 19:21; 21:27-29.

³ 1 Kings 16:21-22.

⁴ 2 Kings 9:27.

the northern limit of the province of Samaria: and here occurred, according to the same historian, a massacre of the Galileans by the Samaritans.⁵ In the talmudic literature, the river inside of En-Gannim is named Ginea.⁶ Eshtori Happarchi in the fourteenth century mentions the place many times, and says: 'On the south side of Jezreel, a straight two hours' distance,



Map 2. Jenin. The archaeological site is marked with a circle.

there is En-Gannim and inside it a spring called Gennin'.⁷ The usual identification of En-Gannim with Jenin (see Map 1) is very well known, though nobody has indicated an antiquities' site on it.⁸ Starting with P. Abel and continuing with younger scholars like Y. Aharoni, nobody has indicated the exact site of ancient En-Gannim inside Jenin: moreover the recent book of Z. Kallai dealing with the problem of En-Gannim concludes: 'We do not know anything about the identification of this place'.⁹

⁵ Ant. XX, vi, 1.

⁶ Jerusalem Talmud, Demai, I, 3.

⁷ Eshtori Happarchi, *Kaphtor wa-Perach* (ed. A. Asher, London and Berlin 1841), vol. II, 433.

⁸ M. V. Guczin, *Description Géographique, Historique*

et Archéologique de la Palestine, Seconde Partie, Samarie, Tome première (Paris 1877), 327-32; P. Abel, *Géographie de la Palestine* (Paris, 1938), 317.

⁹ Z. Kallai, *The Tribes of Israel* (Jerusalem, 1967), 358 (Hebrew).

THE IDENTIFICATION

In the course of archaeological trips during the last twenty-five years I had the opportunity, in 1969, to discover an antiquities' site inside Jenin, southwards of the war memorial where a plot of land was utilized some years ago for the erection of a shed belonging to the bus company (see Map 2). The place is called by the villagers et-Tell, or el-Mejenne (cemetery). There used to

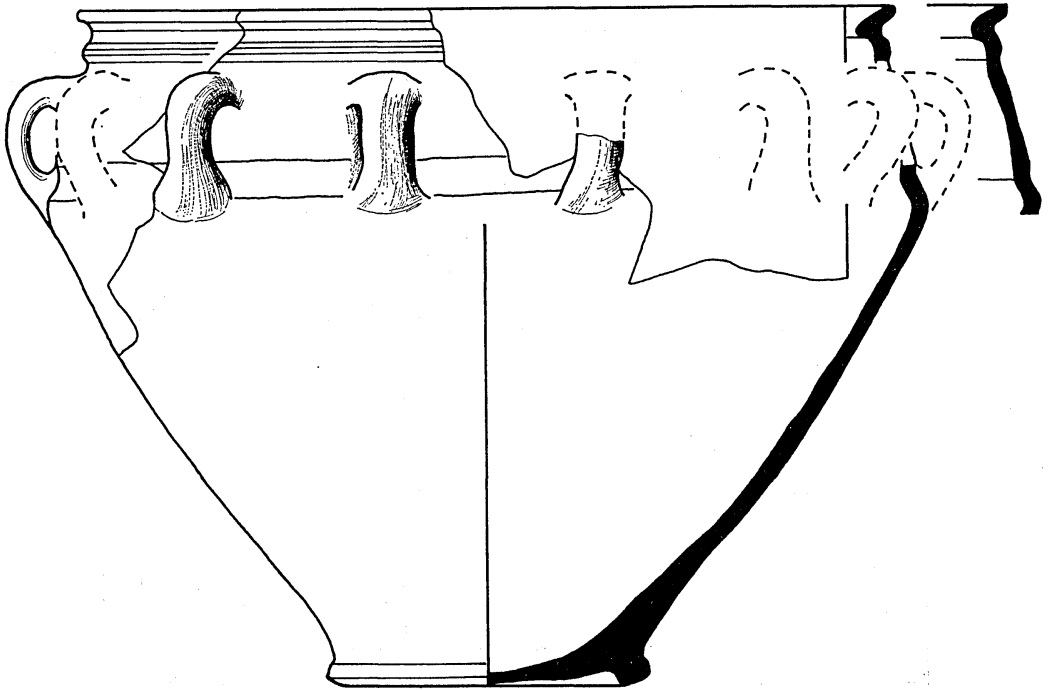


Fig. 1. A multiple-handled bowl

be a water supply nearby, according to the statement of Thomsen:¹⁰ 'The stream, after irrigating the garden, flows away in a northerly direction through the plain.' However no active springs are known there now, as the Hydrological Department of the State of Israel informs me.¹¹

¹⁰ W. M. Thomsen, *The land and the Bible* (New York, 1882), 172.

¹¹ The author is indebted to Dr Gvison of the Hydro-

logical Department of the State of Israel, for the important information concerning this matter.

The site is sectioned on the northern side by a cut to a depth of 5 metres, though not reaching virgin soil. The size of the area concerned is 200 m from east to west, and 150 m from north to south, approximately. Many remains of buildings constructed from stone, or brick, are visible in the section. Two pottery vessels and some sherds from the Israelite period have been found in our survey (Figs 1-3).

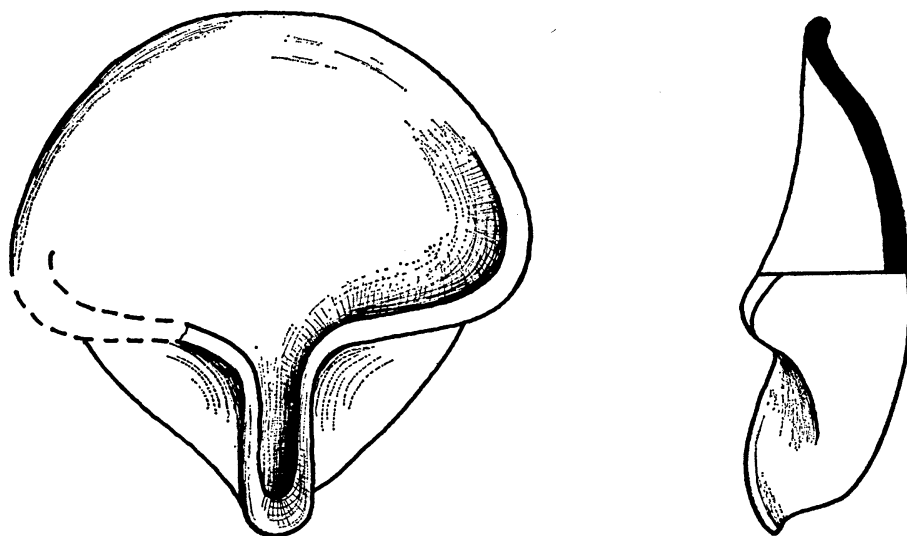
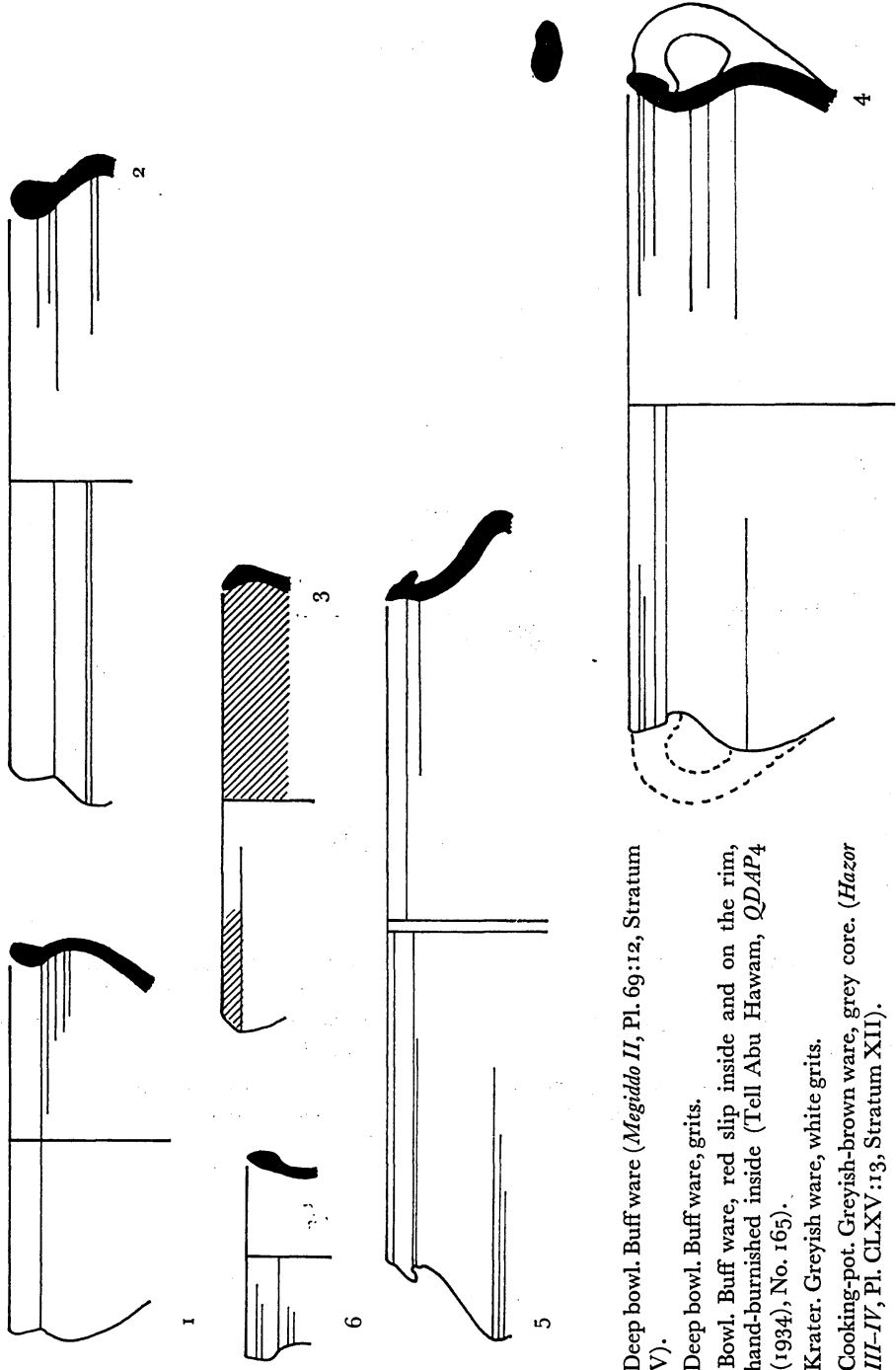


Fig. 2. A pottery lamp

It is worth mentioning also a small collection of pottery, apparently from this site, which is exhibited at the museum of the Franciscans in the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem.¹²

Despite the lack of any earlier material than these finds from the Iron Age, one may expect that excavation here would reveal deposits of the Canaanite period.

¹² The author is indebted to Prof P. Spijkerman, the Curator of the Museum, for allowing him to mention the collection where seven pottery vessels of the Early Iron Age are exhibited.



1. Deep bowl. Buff ware (*Megiddo II*, Pl. 69:12, Stratum V).
 2. Deep bowl. Buff ware, grits.
 3. Bowl. Buff ware, red slip inside and on the rim, hand-burnished inside (Tell Abu Hawam, *QDAP* 4 (1934), No. 165).
 4. Krater. Greyish ware, white grits.
 5. Cooking-pot. Greyish-brown ware, grey core. (*Hazor III-IV*, Pl. CLXV:13, Stratum XII).
 6. Jar. Buff ware (*Tell en-Nasbeh II*, Pl. 27:444).

Fig. 3. Sherds.