THE TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

1. Roman Road from Lydda to Joppa (Fig. 10)

2. Bouquet Waterhouse

3. Bouquet's Ridge

4. Ancient Caravanserai

5. Vindicata, the Imperial Road, with the modern Hebron Road

6. Doughty's Expedition

7. Acre, the Hellenistic City
the high place of Baal from which Balaam saw the Israelite (Num 23:28) camp on the plains of Moab.20

This identification of the sixth milestone station with Beth-Peor (the “house of Phogor” in the LXX and classical sources) tallies with the OT information: Balaam (Num 31:16; cf. Rev 2:14) made the temple of Baal Peor a focal point for an “apostate” Israel (Num 25:1-3; Ps 106:28; Mic 6:5); thus the Hebrew encampment was near Mount Peor. Both neighboring mountain spurs, Pisgah and Beth-Peor, overlooked the same desert region of Jeshimon (Num 21:20; 23:28),21 and Moses died and was buried in the region of Nebo/Pisgah (Dt 34:1, 5, 6) opposite Beth-Peor.22 The ridge el-Mushaqqaq with its western promontory, Khirbet el-Meachīta, is the only ridge directly facing the burial place of Moses (the valley of ‘Ayān Mūsā, and the slopes of Rād es-Siyāqah.

Khirbet el-Meachīta, with its strategic view of the Chor, now treeless and desolate under a burning sun, must have been once an oasis restful to both the eye and the body, with its flourishing grove of shade trees and its nearby spring, ‘Ain Sheyghah.23 The ruined walls, gates and towers of a comparatively large Roman fortress (grid reference 2186.1341) are now all that remain of this important center (Fig. 11). Most of the sherds picked up at the site were Byzantine or Roman.

20 Specifically, the ‘Arbāth Mū‘ab was the southeastern Jordan Valley floor between the present-day Wadi Nimrin in the north and the Wadi el-‘Āqrim (in the south, near the northeastern end of the Dead Sea).

21 See above, n. 13.

22 In Deuteronomy, Moses apparently died in the locality of Nebo/Pisgah, but was buried in “the valley.” That valley, elsewhere called the “Slopes of Pisgah” (see above, n. 14), obviously is Wadi ‘Ayān Mūsā. The Arabic name itself, “the springs of Moses” reflects a long-standing tradition relating this valley to Moses. See the discussion in Saller, Memorial, 1: 343, 344 and accompanying notes. Compare also Dt 3:29 and 4:46.

23 Ancient pagan high places were noted for their groves of trees (Hos 4:13). In 1941 a tree still was to be seen standing at el-Meachīta; see Saller, Memorial, 2: Plate 11, 1. The name Sheyghah refers to a type of desert scrub-brush which has completely overgrown the ancient spring (which used to be called ‘Ain Meḥattā).