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Editors' Preface

It is unusual that an archaeological site, which was previously practically unknown, electrified archaeologists of the Southern Levant and biblical scholars in such a short time and equally made headlines not only in scholarly literature, but also in newspapers throughout the world. The excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa at the entrance to the Elah Valley, carried out by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Antiquities Authority and directed by Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, caused sensation from the very beginning. Already in the second year of excavation an inscribed ostracon was found, which was widely and controversially discussed among scholars. Later, other spectacular finds followed, e.g., the two shrine models discovered at the very end of the 2011 season, which are analyzed in depth in this publication.

The dating of the archaeological remains also created attention, for according to the excavators the settlement, which was enclosed by a wall with two gates, only existed for a relatively short time-span of 50 years during the 10th century BCE – the time of the early Judahite Monarchy. From the moment at which the excavations were associated with the name of David, the first great king of Judah and Israel, Khirbet Qeiyafa was on everyone's lips. Immediately, vigorous debates erupted about the dating of the remains, the biblical identification of the site, and the ethnic allocation of the material culture.

Meanwhile, buses soon brought archaeologically interested tourists to the small parking lot near the foot of the hill, since an excavation with such spectacular and coherent horizontal exposure of an ancient town is rare: walls, gate complexes, dozens of houses one beside the other next to the casemate wall, rooms with indications of cultic activity, plazas and even a small quarry could all be seen at this one site.

The discussions about the finds and findings from Khirbet Qeiyafa among the scholarly community are at times quite heated, not just in Israel. When we invited the members of the Swiss Society for Ancient Near Eastern Studies (SGOA) to a conference on September 6, 2014 with the excavator Yosef Garfinkel and other renowned presenters, it was our aim to facilitate scholarly discussion without undue excitement and at a level at which the main issues could be easily understood. Thanks to the informative and factual contributions, we were able to achieve this aim. The conference participants were able to get a good overview of the significance of the site, the excavations, individual finds and the archaeological and cultural-historical context. Encouraging feedback has led us to make the results of the conference available to the wider public through the series 'Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis'. Even though publications discussing Khirbet Qeiyafa are quite numerous, particularly in Israel and in the English-speaking world, based on its concise layout and content the present volume should nevertheless prove useful to readers. In response to the comprehensive, though naturally condensed, report of the excavator, the con-

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tributions of Aren Maeir (Bar Ilan University) and Thomas Römer (University of Lausanne/Collège de France) formulate scholarly questions and comments from various angles and at times also express disagreement. Further contributions continue the discussion about some particular subjects: Benjamin Sass (Tel Aviv University) on the epigraphic corpus of Khirbet Qeiyafa; Stefan Münger (University of Bern) on some details of the material culture; Silvia Schroer (University of Bern) on the iconography of the shrine models. A short epilogue by Ernst Axel Knauf (University of Bern) concludes the present volume.

We want to express our thanks to Yosef Garfinkel for his presence and his considered discussion. We also thank all the colleagues who presented at the conference and later provided these presentations to us in written and edited form. For the co-organization of the conference our thanks go to Dr. Patrick Wyssmann. We gratefully present his bibliography on Khirbet Qeiyafa in an appendix. We would also like to thank Tim Frank for his revision and correction of the language and grammar of the contributions. Nancy Rahn and Myriam Röthlisberger helped us in the preparation of the manuscript.

We thank the executive committee of the Swiss Society for Ancient Near Eastern Studies (SGOA) for the friendly support of the conference and the inclusion in its conference series. We are grateful to the editors of the series 'Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis' and to SGOA for including this publication in the series and for the financial support, respectively.

Bern, August 2016

Khirbet Qeiyafa – Some Thoughts of a Biblical Scholar. Response to Yosef Garfinkel and Aren Maeir

Thomas RÖMER

The article challenges the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa with Shaaraim, mentioned only three times (or even less) in the Hebrew Bible. It also questions Garfinkel's idea that the place should be related directly to King David. The absence of iconic material and pig bones cannot be used to claim a Judahite character of the site.

Introduction: Biblical Scholarship and Archaeology

Everybody will agree that the results of the excavation of Khirbet Qeiyafa have produced enormously interesting and intriguing discoveries and these finds certainly belong to the most important contributions to the archeology of Iron Age Israel/Palestine in recent years. During the last three years, I had the chance to visit the site three times and it is indeed, also for the non-archaeologist, a very impressive site.

Reading and listening to both presentations and taking into account also the numerous publications related to Khirbet Qeiyafa (Garfinkel 2009 and 2015, Na'aman 2010, Pioske 2015), the site as well as the finds, provide some comfort for the biblical scholar because the opinions and interpretations are as various as the results of exegetical research.

Some of my colleagues still are of the opinion that archeology can give a definite answer to unresolved questions of biblical scholarship, but to understand and to interpret finds of an excavation also necessitates a theoretical framework that should be open to revision as should be theories of biblical scholarship. This does, however, not mean that I am advocating a postmodern position according to which "anything goes".

In his article Yosef Garfinkel speaks of a "complex love-hate relationship between archaeology and the Bible" (Garfinkel, *supra* page 47). It is true that the so-called "Biblical Archaeology" was often used in order to prove the "veracity" of the biblical texts as well as their historicity, especially in conservative Christian and Jewish milieux (see for instance Keller 2009[1]). I do not want to discuss here the role of "Biblical Archeology" in the context of the foundation of the state of Israel and the role of archeology in providing the feeling of a historical continuity between the young state and the time of the Patriarchs or

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[1] This book – published for the first time in 1955 – was edited anew several times and translated into twenty languages.

the time of David (see on this Smyth-Florentin 1993). It is however obvious that the claim of archeologists to have discovered remains of the Davidic palace in Jerusalem or a Davidic administrative center in Khirbet Qeiyafa always makes it to the headlines of newspapers and into other media.

The relationship between archeology and Biblical Studies was indeed never an easy one. After having been considered by biblical scholars as a "Hilfswissenschaft", archeologists working in the "the Holy Land" wanted to emancipate and did not much care about the results of critical biblical research. Sometimes archeologists also had the idea that archeology could definitely settle issues of dating and understanding biblical texts, so that the question arose whether archeology could really be the "High Court" of biblical and historical scholarship (Na'aman 2011). In my view, both disciplines should work autonomously but also in interaction or to put it with Garfinkel, "archeology, history and the biblical text should be integrated" (Garfinkel, *supra* page 45), and that we should avoid circular reasoning. With my colleague Israel Finkelstein, whom I do not consider a "minimalist" (see Garfinkel, *supra* page 42), I have recently tried to investigate from an archaeological and Biblical Studies viewpoint the formation and possible dating of the Abraham- and Jacob narratives, not in order to prove or to deny the historicity of the Patriarchs, but to see when certain locations make sense and when not or less, and then to combine these results with recent theories about the formation of Genesis 12–36 (Finkelstein and Römer 2014a and 2014b). I found this collaboration stimulating and helpful and would like to see a similar approach also to the many "riddles" of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

Let me first comment on some more general issues before turning to questions related to biblical scholarship.

The Question of Date and Ethnicity

According to Garfinkel, "it is clear that the city came to an end before 970 BCE" (Garfinkel, *supra* page 30) whereas Aren Maeir reminds us that this view has been challenged by Singer-Avitz (2010 and 2012) and Finkelstein and Piasetzky (2010), firstly because of the pottery of the site, and secondly because of the radiocarbon dates, which would as of yet only permit a dating of the Iron Age occupation somewhere between 1050 BCE and 915 BCE. I agree with Maeir that these different proposals of dating "do not change much in the importance, and character, of the site" (Maeir, *supra* page 64, see also Lemaire 2015: 18). But maybe there is some impact for the understanding of the history of the site whether one puts the date of its abandonment or destruction around 970 BCE or 915 BCE. A date by 915 would put the end of Iron Age Khirbet Qeiyafa after Solomon,[2] whereas 970 corresponds to the traditional date of the

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[2]   Whose death is traditionally dated around 930 BCE.

end of King David's rule. Is this only by chance that this date is suggested by Garfinkel?

One should, however, remember that the length of 40 years which the biblical authors attribute to the reigns of both, David and Solomon, certainly reflect the fact that they were unsure about the real dates so that they invented for both a symbolic number. It is therefore possible that the duration of their respective reigns was indeed a much shorter one (Finkelstein and Silberman 2006: 19–20). This observation makes it already complicated to date the existence and the end of Khirbet Qeiyafa precisely under one of the first Israelite or Judahite kings.

A similar difficulty arises in regard to the question of the ethnicity of the population of Khirbet Qeiyafa. In the current discussion three or even four options are discussed. The site was a Judahite fortress and part of the Davidic kingdom (the majority's opinion), or it belonged to the Saulide kingdom (Finkelstein 2013: 54–59), or it was a Philistine site (Na'aman 2008), or it belonged to a "Canaanite" as-yet unidentified political identity (Na'aman 2010; Koch 2012). Yosef Garfinkel and Aren Maeir opt – with different degrees of certainty – for the Judahite identity of the site. However, Maeir rightly points out "that the cultural borders in this region were quite fluid and [that] perhaps, one should not talk of distinct cultural and/or political boundaries during this period between the coastal plain and Philistia and the inland … regions" (Maeir, *supra* page 65). Indeed, the biblical stories in the books of Samuel depict a Philistine domination of the Shephelah and present David in some stories as a vassal or a warlord in Philistine service. One may also ask whether the application of our concepts of ethnicity and identity applied to the Levant of the 2nd or 1st millennium BCE is not somewhat anachronistic. People living in a certain area identified themselves probably more with a certain clan or tribe than with a larger political entity, and people living in a certain territory could probably come under rules of different kingdoms without being much aware of that. This is evidenced by the Mesha inscription, where people living north-east of the Dead Sea were sometimes under Israelite and sometimes under Moabite rule. Did they consider themselves as Moabites or Israelites? Hard to say.

I would like to add that the traditional opposition between "Canaanites" and "Judahites" or "Israelites" should also be handled with much caution. As shown by Othmar Keel and others (Keel 2002; Staubli 2011), in many biblical texts the opposition between Canaan and Israel is an ideological one, and was mainly set up in order to denigrate veneration of gods other than YHWH or certain religious customs as "Canaanite" in a context of religious innovations during the 7th or 6th centuries BCE that prepare the new religion that will be called later "Judaism". One should therefore define precisely in what sense one uses the term "Canaanite".

Yosef Garfinkel indicates some ethnic markers that according to him prove the Judahite character of the site, like the absence of pig bones or the absence

of anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figurines (Garfinkel, *supra* page 35). Does this mean that he thinks that the Decalogue existed already in the 10th century BCE? There is much evidence for "iconism" in Israel and Judah, figurines, seals etc., as shown by Silvia Schroer, Christoph Uehlinger and others (Schroer 1987; Sass and Uehlinger 1993; Niehr 1993; Uehlinger 1996), so that the absence of such material cannot prove much in my view. The case of the pig bones is interesting and complex. There is indeed a striking difference between Khirbet Qeiyafa and Tell eṣ-Ṣafi. But does this mean the inhabitants of Khirbet Qeiyafa respected already the kashrut? According to a rare consensus in North American and European critical scholarship the two texts of Deut 14 and Lev 11 (one text probably depends on the other, or they share both a common *Vorlage*) date at earliest from the 7th or 6th century (Nihan 2007: 283–299). According to recent articles by Lidar Sapir-Hen *et al.* (2013 and 2015), it seems indeed that there is a difference between pig husbandry in Iron Age Israel and Judah. Contrary to Judah, pigs were apparently quite popular in cities of Israel; however they only appear sparsely or not at all in non-urban settlements even in the presumed Philistine territory. Maybe there are other explanations for the avoidance of pigs in Judahite territories; it is, however, questionable whether the absence of pig bones in Khirbet Qeiyafa should be seen as an ethnic marker.

Let me now address some points related to the "Khirbet Qeiyafa and the Bible".

The Use of the Term "Minimalists"

According to Garfinkel's presentation of the evolution of biblical scholarship, since the 1980s "new approaches developed," which gave rise to the "so-called 'Minimalist school' [that] claims that the Hebrew Bible was written in the Hellenistic period" (Garfinkel, *supra* page 41). I am somewhat unhappy with this use of the term "minimalists". Garfinkel uses it also to qualify those who suggested that Khirbet Qeiyafa is a Philistine city (Garfinkel, *supra* page 42). But this has nothing to do with dating. So one may get the impression that "minimalists" are all those who do not agree with Garfinkel's interpretation of the site and its historical role.
But let us come back to the use of "minimalist" to qualify biblical scholars. If the question is about "dating the final writing of the Hebrew Bible" (Garfinkel, *supra* page 41) into the Hellenistic period, then almost all academic scholars are "minimalists", because it is clear that all scrolls of what will become the Hebrew Bible underwent revision as late as the Hellenistic period. As for the Former Prophets, there are certainly revisions that took place still during the 3rd or 2nd centuries. Suffice to remind of the important differences between the Greek and the Hebrew texts in these books.

Dating the final revision of the books of Samuel (and others) into that time does, however, not mean that they do not contain any historical memories and that they were invented. As E. Axel Knauf and many others (Knauf 2001; Brettler 1995; Blum 2000) have argued, the stories about the Philistine connections of David are hardly set up in the Persian and Hellenistic period, but that does not mean that they were written down by an eye-witness of the events.

If "minimalists" are all those who think that the narratives about David's ascent to the throne and his succession were composed later than during his lifetime, then again almost all serious biblical scholars are "minimalists", but contrary to Garfinkel's presentation most scholars would also date the first edition of the books of Samuel and other biblical books much earlier than the Hellenistic period, in the 8th or 7th century BCE. I would suggest to refrain from using the term of "minimalists" in a too broad sense because it is of more ideological than scientific use.

The "House of David" and the Problem of the "Historical David"

Yosef Garfinkel makes rightly use of the Tel Dan inscription (Garfinkel, *supra* page 41) that mentions, if one follows the reading of a very large majority, a "house of David" (see for an overview Athas 2003). The identification of the same expression in the Mesha stele is, however, less certain: André Lemaire has suggested to read in the very damaged line 31 "House of David" (Lemaire 1994), whereas Nadav Na'aman has suggested "house of Daudoh", a local ruling family (Na'aman 1997). The problem is that in line 12 there is already a mention of DWD but followed by an H, which could be a suffix. The expression 'R'L DWDH can hardly be translated as a reference to David (as suggested by Rainey 2001), but seems more likely refer to the name of a deity (his "Beloved one") and his altar, that Mesha takes as a booty. So for the moment the only clear mention of a "House of David" – according to the vast majority – is the Tel Dan inscription.

But here again we should apply a strict methodology in reading this inscription. The mention of a "House of David" in an inscription from the 9th or 8th century does not prove *per se* the historicity of King David. It only proves that the kingdom of Judah was also named "House of David", parallel to the "House of Omri" that appears in Assyrian sources. The Tel Dan inscription tells us only that a man called David was considered to be the founder of the Judahite dynasty.

There is an interesting parallel with the figure of Balaam, who appears in the Bible in Numbers 22–24 and also in the wall inscription of Tell Deir Alla dated to the 9th or 7th century. If one compares both texts, it is clear that they both refer to the same seer Balaam, son of Beor, but the biblical account that presents Balaam interacting with YHWH is quite different from the text of Deir Alla (Blum 2008). It appears therefore that the author(s) of Numbers 22–

24 have taken over a traditional legendary or historical figure in order to set up their own account.

The Tel Dan inscription can therefore not be used to postulate the historicity of the biblical accounts about David. It only shows that David was at the time when the inscription was made considered to be the founder of a dynasty.

The Model Shrine and the Temple of Solomon

The very interesting shrine model discovered in Khirbet Qeiyafa is presented by Yosef Garfinkel as a proof that there was already a model for Solomon's temple before he built the sanctuary. I have no competence in deciding whether this model is a local one or whether it belongs to the imported goods that have been discovered at Khirbet Qeiyafa. Similar shrines are also known from Phoenicia (Keel 1997: 158–159) so that one should also check the possibility of an imported model. The other question is, however, how this model can be related to Solomon's temple. If one reads the biblical account in 1 Kings 6–8 one may ask with Konrad Rupprecht (1977) if the account is not more an account about a restoration of a former sanctuary than a new building. Again, the biblical text of 1 Kings 6–8 did not originate from the report of an eye-witness of the 10th century but was written and heavily edited much later and in a quite complicated way, as indicated by the important differences that exist between MT and LXX. One should therefore be careful by claiming a direct relation between Solomon's temple and the shrine model.

The Identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa with the City of Shaaraim

Because of the presence of two city-gates, Yosef Garfinkel claims that the site should be identified with biblical Shaaraim.

In his monograph on Joshua 15, Jacobus de Vos (de Vos 2003: 388), reminds us of earlier identifications of Shaaraim: Khirbet esh-Sharīʿa (Dagan 1996: 139; map ref. 145.124), Khirbet es-Saʿīre/Ṣaġīre (Aḥituv 1995: 260; map ref. 145.124) or Khirbet Saʿīre (Rainey 1975: 70; map ref. 152.127). The names of these sites may indeed keep some memories of the name Shaaraim or Shaarim.

Shaaraim is mentioned three times in the Hebrew Bible: in Joshua 15:36, 1 Samuel 17:52 and 1 Chronicles 4:31. Let us consider briefly the content of these passages:

Joshua 15:36 is part of a description of the towns belonging to Judah, and the section – often qualified as "District II" – concerns cities of the Shephelah:

[33] And in the Lowland, Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, [34] Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, [35] Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, [36] *Shaaraim*, Adithaim, Gederah, Gederothaim: fourteen towns and their villages[3].

Older research has often considered the list of Judahite towns as "priestly" or "post-priestly" (for a history of research cf. de Vos 2003: 491–520). Following Albrecht Alt (1925) who suggested that the list reflects an administrative organization under Josiah, recent commentaries have argued for a 7th century date, as for instance E. Axel Knauf (2008: 145): "Die Ortsliste verwertet eine geographische Statistik des Königreichs Juda vom Ende des 7. Jh. v. Chr.". Frank Moore Cross and G. Ernest Wright (1956: 226) and also Volkmar Fritz (1994: 164) suppose that the list is older and think of the time between the 9th and the 8th century BCE. Even if one accepts this "high" date, it does not fit well with the suggested identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa, because why would a destroyed place be counted among Judahite towns and villages during the time of the monarchy?

The mention of Shaaraim in Chronicles occurs also in a list (1 Chr 4), which has Joshua 15 and Joshua 19 as *Vorlage*. The context is a genealogy of the tribe of Simeon (starting in v. 24):

[28] They lived in Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual, [29] Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, [30] Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, [31] Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns until David became king and their villages.

The book of Chronicles is commonly dated (with almost no exception) to the late Persian or early Hellenistic period. Interestingly, places that in Joshua 15 and 19 belong to Judah are here attributed to the Simeonites, a tribe that in other biblical texts is closely related to Judah (especially in Judges 1). There is much discussion why in the Persian or Hellenistic period the author of 1 Chronicles 4 makes such a change. Gary Knoppers (2004: 372–375) points out that the Chronicler – contrary to the so-called Deuteronomistic History, which presents the history of the Northern and Southern kingdoms – is more interested in a "tribal" Israel. This question does not need to be discussed further. Interestingly v. 31 ends with the statement "These were their towns until David became king and their villages". This phrase has sometimes been considered a gloss, the aim of which would be to harmonize the attributions of these places to the Simeonites with the book of Joshua by claiming that there were only Simeonites until the beginning of the monarchy (Michaeli 1967: 50).

The mention of Shaaraim may not have played a major role in this context, since the author of 1 Chronicles 4 just took it over from Joshua 15.

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3   There is a problem with the number 14, since 15 places are enumerated. The last name is probably the result of dittography (Fritz 1994: 166).

The third mention of Shaaraim occurs at the end of the David and Goliath narrative in 1 Samuel 17, where after David's victory, the Philistines are entirely defeated.

> [52] The men of Israel and Judah rose up and shouted and pursued the Philistines [lacking in LXX] as far as Gath and the gates of Ekron (*šaʿărê eqrôn*), so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way of Shaaraim (*bəḏereḵə šaʿărayim*); as far as Gath and Ekron.

There is a text-critical problem in this verse. Instead of "way of Shaaraim", LXX reads: ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ τῶν πυλῶν. Therefore several scholars following Wellhausen (1871: 109–110) translate "they fell on the road of the [Twin] Gates" (Auld 2011: 205, see also 207; Dhorme 1910: 157). If one does not accept this text-critical operation, the verse would rather suggest a location of Shaaraim west of Azekah, since it appears then as the most Western place before arriving in Gath or Ekron (de Vos 2003: 393–394; Knoppers 2003: 366).

Whatever decision one is willing to take, the text does not reflect a situation of the 10th century. The mention of the "troops of Israel and Judah" may indicate that the text reflects the situation of the two kingdoms. In addition, Goliath's armor reflects the garb of Greek hoplites in the 7th to the 5th centuries BCE (Finkelstein 2002: 147). – The story is therefore hardly older than the 8th or 7th century.

Yosef Garfinkel writes that "the biblical traditions do indeed locate a large number of military clashes in these settings" (Garfinkel, *supra* page 45). If the "setting" means Khirbet Qeiyafa = Shaaraim, 1 Samuel 17:52 would be the only place. If he alludes to the conflicts between the Philistines and the "Israelites" that are related in the books of Samuel, things become more complicated, since David also appears as an ally of the Philistines, so that one could even speculate whether the "historical David" was in fact a Philistine vassal.

Summing up our enquiry on the biblical Shaaraim, it can be said that none of the three texts belong to the beginning of the 1st millennium. In fact, it is even possible that there was only one mention of Shaaraim in the Hebrew Bible if Joshua 15 has been copied (partially) by the author of 1 Chronicles 4[4] and if 1 Samuel 17 alluded to city gates.

Be that as it may, it is clear that the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa with Shaaraim raises two related problems that should be resolved: Khirbet Qeiyafa was destroyed or abandoned in the 10th century BCE. Why then is the site mentioned, not as an important site of the past as for instance Shilo, but *en passant*, in texts from the 8th to the 4th century BCE? If Khirbet Qeiyafa was an important place of David's reign, coming immediately after Jerusalem, as sug-

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[4]   And even there some suspect that the primitive text did not mention Shaaraim (see the summary in Knoppers 2003: 361)

gested by Yosef Garfinkel, why then are the biblical texts not at all interested in this place?[5]

What Happened to Khirbet Qeiyafa?

The short lifespan of Khirbet Qeiyafa in the 10th century BCE is commonly accepted. The interesting question, however, is: how do we explain the end of the site? Was it destroyed and by whom? Aren Maeir suggests to understand the existence of the site as a "short lived attempt of the Judahite polity to extend its influence to the west", an attempt that was squashed by the Kingdom of Gath (Maeir, *supra* page 81). If this is the case, why don't we have traces of that in the Hebrew Bible? If Khirbet Qeiyafa was so important for the Davidic administration why is its disappearance not reflected at all in the Bible? In my view this question is important in order to solve the historical riddle of Khirbet Qeiyafa.

Brief Summary

Everyone will agree that the excavation of the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa counts among the most important archaeological finds in Israel during the last decades and we should thank Yosef Garfinkel for sharing so quickly the important discoveries that he and his team made. Khirbet Qeiyafa sheds new light on the 10th century BCE, but we still need to understand what this new light means for historical and biblical research. Maybe one should not "personalize" the site too much by relating all kinds of buildings and finds to David and Solomon. It could be that the historical reality of the 10th century in Judah and Philistia is quite different from a biblical historicist reconstruction.

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5   The identification with Shaaraim has also been challenged by Na'aman (2008: Gob); Dagan (2009: Adithaim) and Galil (2010: Neta'im).

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