

distance beyond the wall,\* a road, branching off to the west, leads down to Joppa; still farther on, another road leads in a north-westerly direction, to the tombs of the judges. Near the point of divergence we reach a spot to be hereafter linked in the heart of the Christian world with sacred memories,—the altar where, in the fulness of time, was offered up the divinely-appointed sacrifice for the world's sin.

From this spot let us turn and look back toward the city. 'Tis midnight in Jerusalem!—the midnight following the great day of the feast—the most sacred day of all the Jewish year. The Paschal moon hangs full-orbed in the western heavens, but to-night her radiance is dim, and the lengthening shadows assume strange fantastic shapes, in the weird, uncertain light. Not a sound falls upon the ear. No living creature is abroad. The very winds are hushed,

“And all the air a solemn stillness holds.”

As we traversed the deserted streets our footsteps gave back a muffled echo, as though we trod upon hidden graves in some silent city of the dead; and as from this eminence we gaze back upon it, it looms in the darkness like a city from which light and life have departed, and over which is gathering the pall of a hopeless doom.

Midnight in Jerusalem!—the midnight of a chequered history. Time was when she stood the peerless capital of a proud nation, her empire stretching from the entering in of Hamath to the river of Egypt, and from the Euphrates to the Western Sea; now, pent up within the narrowest limits, the conquered city of a conquered province, she mourns her departed glory, and chafes in impotent anger against Roman sway. Time was when she might have “stood against the world: now none so poor as do her reverence.” The crown has fallen! the sceptre has departed! and Jerusalem sits in darkness, widowed and alone.

Midnight in Jerusalem!—the midnight of a dying dispensation. For fifteen hundred years the Levitical economy moulded the national life, and for a thousand years Jerusalem stood a centre of light in a world of spiritual darkness. As we recall those days, imagination re-peoples the scene. Again, the queenly city, “beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, . . . in the sides of the north, the city of the Great King,” rises before us like a “vision of peace.” Her temple crowns the summit of Moriah, “a thing of beauty, and a joy for ever,” while through its open gates the mighty tide of worshippers pour with a ceaseless ebb and flow. Kings and princes wait in her courts, and rapt thousands hang upon her prophet's words. A multitude of priests and Levites minister at her altars, and day by day the smoke of her many sacrifices goes up a perpetual memorial to heaven. The very light falls like a benediction upon her palaces and towers, while behind the mystic veil of the Holy of Holies there shine the awful splendors of the Shekinah flame. O

\* The *second wall*, built by Hezekiah and others, and which enclosed the quarters known as Akra and Bezetha. I think the place of the crucifixion was to the North of the city, outside the second wall, but within the space afterwards enclosed by the third wall, built by Herod Agrippa, A.D. 45.