

I remember very vividly, the peculiar feeling with which I passed inside the gate. It was difficult to realize, it was almost impossible to realize, that the experience was real, that I was myself and that this was Jerusalem. For the moment I did not see the dirty, desolate, decaying Moslem town, I saw Jerusalem, the Jerusalem of Bible history, the city of David, and of David's Son and Lord. I heard not the confused chatter of mongrel Arabic, from swarthy Arab or slouching Jew. I heard the songs of Zion, as the king came up victorious to his house, or the priests marched solemnly through the temple precincts, or some high religious festival. I could realize, I can realize now, something of the wonderful enthusiasm this city has aroused through all the ages since her awful fall; the enthusiasm which brought to her rescue the warlike hosts of the chivalrous Crusaders, which for eighteen hundred years has brought, annually to her sacred shrines, myriads of pilgrims, Jewish and Christian, from every part of the world. Superstition there has been in it, no doubt, and superstition there is in it to-day; but I can understand and appreciate the underlying sentiment—nay, it is more than sentiment—that moves and thrills the thousands that throng her streets year after year.

Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities of the world, and certainly the most famous. Other cities, such as Damascus and Jaffa, may surpass it in age, but no other can possibly rival it in interest. What associations cluster around it from the time when its king Melchizedek went out to meet Abraham, through all the centuries intervening between that age and this. As Jebus, it defied the efforts of the Israelites to take its stronghold until David's day, when it became the civil and religious centre of the kingdom. Here was erected the beautiful Temple of Solomon, the most splendid fane ever built by man; above the golden mercy-seat in which there hung, while Israel was faithful, the awful Shekinah, the visible symbol and evidence of the presence and favour of Jehovah. Hither when His chosen people rebelled against Him, came the victorious armies of invaders, and the fair city and fairer temple were trodden beneath their heel. Syrian, Chaldean, Egyptian, Greek, they came as the appointed means of a proud and perverse people's punishment, and banishment, and oppression; the Jew remembered Zion and wept.

Again and again it rose and fell, until Herod, by Roman armies and aid, rebuilt it and its temple in unparalleled splendour, just before our Lord was born. Then the sin of the chosen people cul-