

books, the dangers and possible changes through which they have passed; they may presume to find fault with its method, its style, its historical statements, its chronology and science; they may think themselves quite able to prove it all wrong with respect to botany, astronomy, and geology, although the book was never intended to teach these sciences; and they may be greatly vexed with its miracles, and its fulfilled and unfulfilled prophecies, and with the uniform prominence given to the supernatural from first to last; and they may inveigh with the utmost bitterness and persistency against creeds, confessions, and systems of doctrine drawn from the Book; but as perishing men, as creatures conscious of having the sentence of death in themselves, feeling that they are sinking under an intolerable burden of guilt and misery, what have they to say against a great and glorious Redeemer?

While the Christian apologist, therefore, neglects no fact of science or history and keeps his eye upon the movements of the enemy in every department of knowledge and research, and feels it necessary to change his methods to meet the varying forms of unbelief that may appear, he must never forget his great stronghold and that he is not called to defend a multitude of conjectures, mere theories, philosophical speculations, or even well concatenated theological dogmas, but the perfect redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the record of whose life has come down to us authenticated beyond all human history. He is the Alpha and Omega of the revelation for which we contend—the incarnate Word of God who is destined to prevail against all his enemies.

A Ride from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.

ON the 29th of March, 1882, I left Jerusalem to visit Bethlehem. My companion was a young American, Rev. J. S. Smart, of Cambridge, N.Y. I found him a most genial and intelligent traveller. We took Alexander, our guide, and the owner of the horses upon which we rode came to attend to them. We started from the north of the city, near the Damascus Gate. As we rode along the streets of the Holy City our horses' hoofs rattled on the rough stone pavement. As our horses were ascending the face of the hill Acra, they slipped and stumbled on the round stones of the pavement, which were slippery by a recent rain. Christian and David streets, through which we passed, were thronged with pilgrims. There were Russian men, women and children, the men clad in their fur jackets and caps, and heavy gray trousers and massive boots. The women wore a dress of heavy, gray, home made material, and on their head a napkin. Besides these, were Greeks from the Islands of the Mediterranean, and Syrians from northern Palestine and from Damascus, and members of the Latin church. It was Easter week and thousands were wending their way through the narrow streets of Jerusalem to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It required care and dexterity to guide our horses among such a seething mass of human beings. We finally passed out through the Yaffa Gate, Alexander leading, Mr. Smart and myself next, and our Mahomedan muleteer in the rear riding a small donkey, across whose back were strung two bags containing provender for our horses and our own food. We found our muleteer a most bigoted Mahomedan who was also determined we should not swerve from the beaten track. He soon discovered that we were determined men, who had come to see the land and the people, and after cursing our father a few times he submitted. Outside of the gate we emerged on a level area, formed by the deposit of rubbish for centuries in the upper part of the Vale of Hinnom. Here women were selling onions, grass and bundles of dried branches. Horses, camels and donkeys were intermingled with men and women of every race, language and costume. Far up at the head of the valley is the Upper Pool of Gihon, now called Birket-el-Mamilla. It is

over 300 feet long, 250 feet broad, 25 feet deep, with stairs leading down from one or two corners. It receives the watershed of the hills on the west, and also had the supply of some springs in ancient times. In 2nd. Chron. xxxii, 30, we read that Hezekiah stopped the upper outflow of the waters of Gihon, and brought it down to the west side of the City of David. I examined the cisterns and deep well hewn out of the limestone on Mount Zion, within the garden of the Church of England Mission School. They are very old and have been inside the wall, and in all probability an aqueduct will be found leading from Gihon to these immense reservoirs. We rode down the valley along the brow of Mount Zion, and crossed it south of the Lower Pool of Gihon, near Birket-el-Sultan. I thought of the ancient splendor of Zion, for there the great kings of Judah lived and reigned. This once was the joy of the whole earth. The wealth and wisdom and power of its kings were the wonder and envy of other princes, but Jerusalem has fallen and her glory gone; Mount Zion is a heap of ruins, and where once the palaces of David and Solomon stood and terraced gardens reached down to the pool of Siloam, now wheat is grown.

We rode up the hill of Evil Counsel, over a narrow, rough pathway. As we reached the plateau, on our right is the large house built by Montifore for the poor Jews; on our left, after a few moments, we pass some ruins that mark the traditional site of the house of Caiaphas. Our road lay due south. In the fields the farmers were ploughing with their primitive ploughs, drawn by two small oxen. Though near Hebron, I saw a camel and a donkey yoked together. The plough-share is a hard piece of wood, pointed at one end. I saw, however, a sheath of iron was put on this when the soil was hard or stony. The ploughs in Palestine and the east generally have only one handle. The farmer holds this with his left hand, and a long goad in the right.

In my ride through the country I saw, every hour almost, evidence of the truthfulness of the Bible story. In the intensely conservative East the structure of the ploughs has remained unchanged. So when our Lord refers to the earnestness and perseverance of the farmer as a type of the believer, He says no man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God. If the plural instead of the singular were used it would have given the plough a handle too many, and unbelievers, also, a real handle against the Record. But in the minutest detail I found, in reference to many objects, the word of Scripture was truth. I have one of these primitive ploughs, used in ploughing the Mount of Olives, immediately above the Garden of Gethsemane, which is of interest to all students of the Bible. I will be glad to show this to any of the students of the College at any time in Brockville.

The road to Bethlehem was decked with floral beauty on both sides; the sky was clear and the air fresh. We were in good spirits and rode rapidly to the birth-place of our Lord. This old road was famous in history and dear to every Christian. Abraham had travelled it, and David when he reigned in Hebron. Solomon rode over it every morning to his gardens near Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary had gone over it from the north country, and the feet of our Blessed Lord Himself had doubtless trodden its dust. I felt, therefore, the very stones and dust under our horses' hoofs were dear to us. Passing the tomb of Rachel on the right, a square building with a dome, we came in sight of Bethlehem. She sits like a queen among all the princesses of Judah. Her throne is a limestone range and the diadems round her brow are the vineyards and olive and fig gardens. On our left is the well for whose waters David longed, and which his three warriors brought at the risk of their lives, and which he poured out as an offering to God. We rode through the narrow streets of glorious Bethlehem. The houses are of whitish