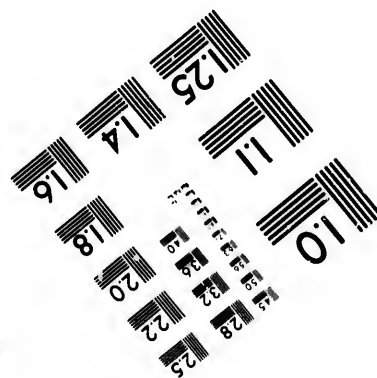
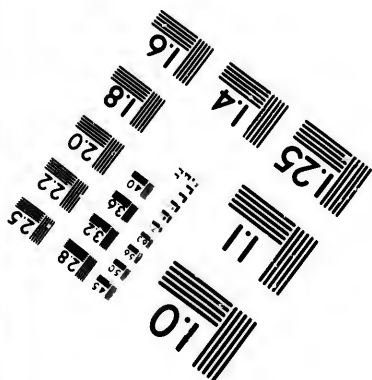
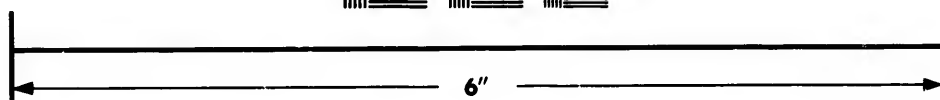
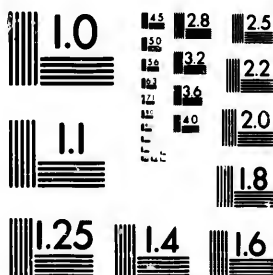


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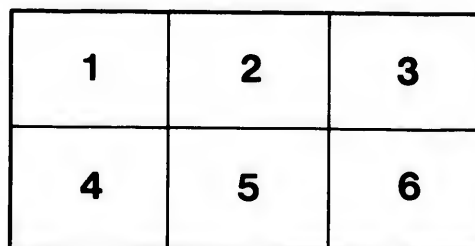
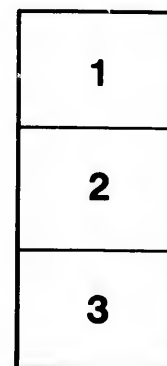
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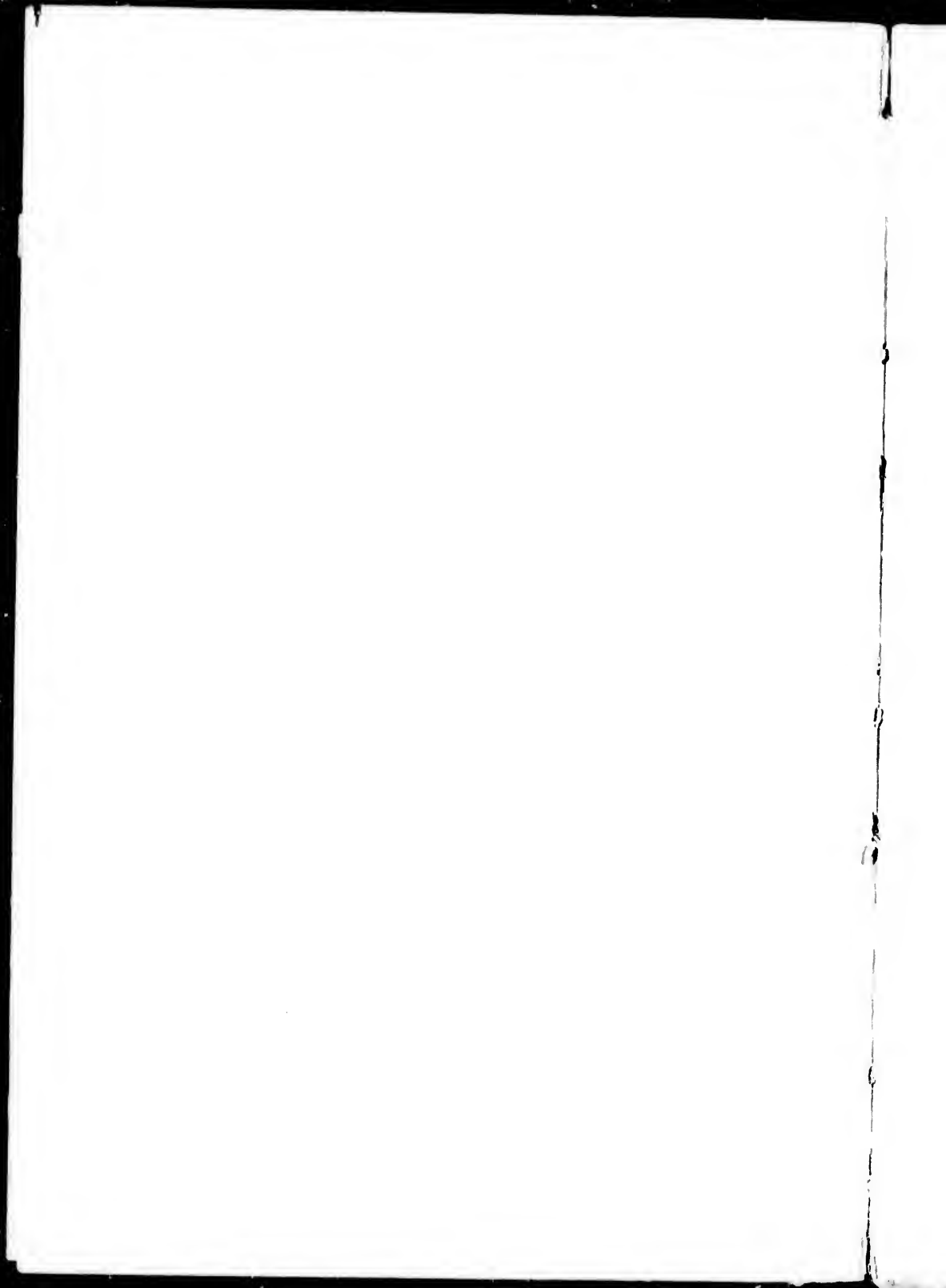
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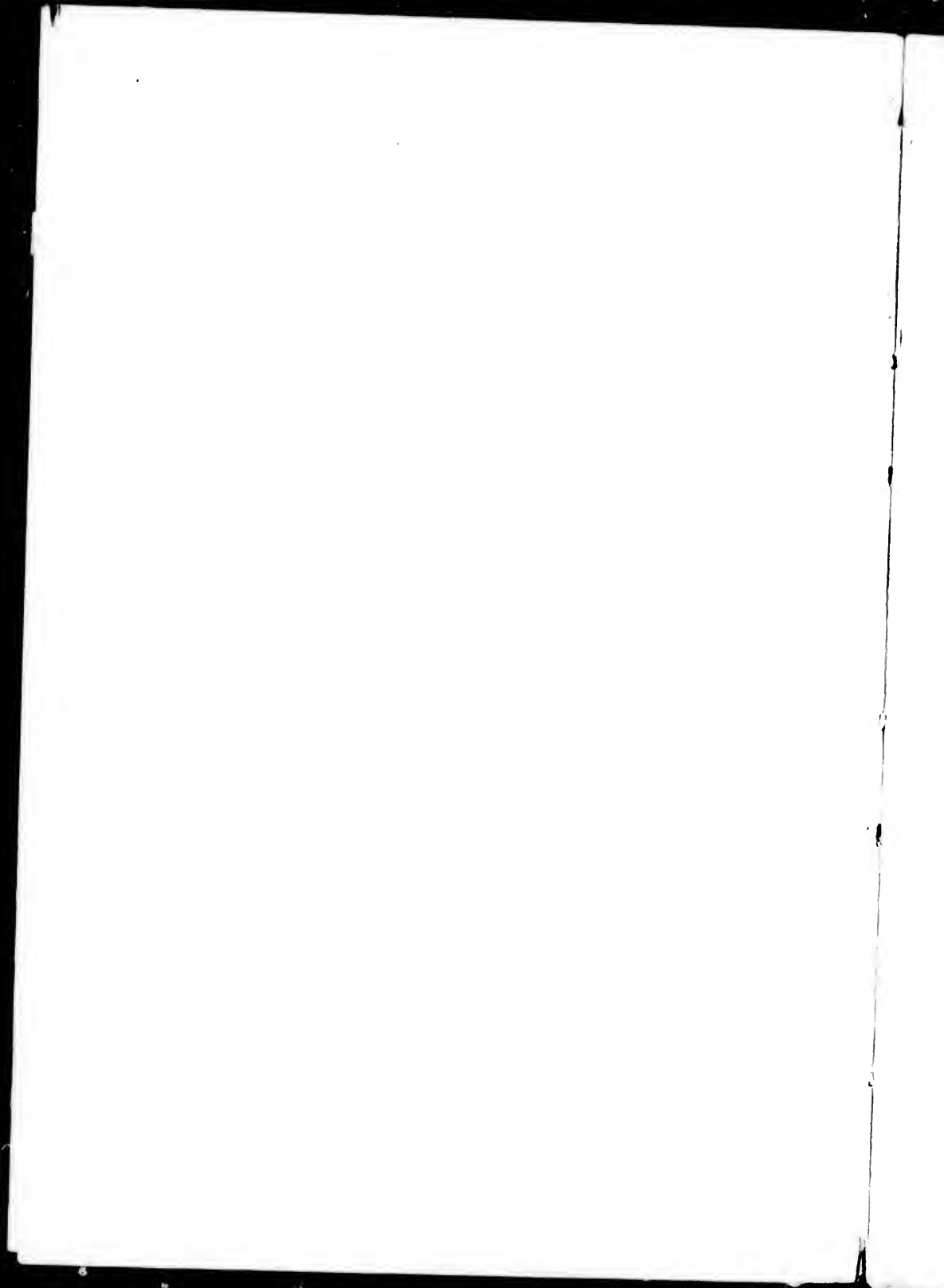
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SUNDAY NIGHT LECTURES  
ON  
"THE LAND AND THE BOOK"



SUNDAY NIGHT LECTURES  
ON  
"THE LAND AND THE BOOK"

BY  
ROBERT STUART MACARTHUR

AUTHOR OF

*"Current Questions for Thinking Men," "The Celestial Lamp,"*  
*"Quick Truths from Quaint Texts," "Bible Diffi-*  
*culties and Their Alleviative Interpretation,"*  
*"The Old Book and the Old Faith"*  
*etc., etc.*

*In those holy fields  
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet,  
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd  
For our advantage on the bitter cross.*  
—Shakespeare

PHILADELPHIA

A. J. Rowland—1420 Chestnut Street

1900

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## PREFACE

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THIS volume will possess at least the value of showing that a great amount of traveling can be done in Palestine in fifteen days. Many busy pastors and laymen are prevented from attempting to visit Palestine because their time is limited, and they think they must spend a month or six weeks in the Holy Land. Doubtless one might well remain as long as that, if he had sufficient time for that purpose. Special students do well to spend years in this historic country; but this volume will show that much can be done in two weeks. With the exception of Hebron, Tyre, Sidon, and a few other localities, all places of great interest west of the Jordan were visited; but some points of the country in the vicinity of the Dead Sea had to be seen partly through the eyes of others. The country is small, and an energetic traveler, especially one who is not greatly fatigued by riding his horse, can accomplish much in fifteen days. Soon railways will be built over all the country, and while they will rob it of much of the archaic charm of its ancient customs, they will greatly facilitate travel over this rough and desolate, but still interesting and sacred land.

Many pastors and business men are deterred

from visiting Palestine because summer is their usual holiday season. With most pastors the winter and spring are the harvest seasons for their churches; to be absent then is virtually to lose a whole year's work. Of course, spring is the best time in which to visit Palestine. Then the grass is abundant and green; then flowers of many kinds make the country beautiful with varied charms. Then also the weather is pleasant, and traveling in companies can more readily be arranged than at other seasons. In summer, or in the early autumn, the country is parched from the heat, vegetation has largely disappeared, and with it many attractions. But, on the other hand, prices are then much lower, hotels are not crowded, and dragomans are more easily secured. Those who speak of the heat as being so great in India, Egypt, and Palestine, are usually tourists from Great Britain or from northern Germany. The writer was in the Hawaiian Islands, in Japan, China, Ceylon, India, Egypt, and Palestine between the months of June and October, arriving in Palestine at the end of September, and leaving about the middle of October; and he found no day in any country as hot as were the closing days of May in New York before he left for his trip. A clerical friend spent the months of June, July, and August, in the city of Jerusalem, and he affirms that it was one of the pleasantest summer resorts he ever enjoyed. There is a vast amount of worthless tradition regarding the great heat of these countries.

A visit to Palestine will be disappointing to

many excellent Christians; but if a tourist goes with the present condition of the country clearly in his mind, and prepared to experience some discomfort, and to judge rightly the changes which time and mis-government have wrought, he will come back with his faith strengthened, his knowledge greatly increased, and his Bible illumined. He will be able to say with Renan: "I had before my eyes a fifth Gospel, mutilated but still legible, and ever afterward in the recitals of Matthew and Mark, instead of an abstract Being that one would say had never existed, I saw a wonderful human figure live and move." Never before were both Testaments so real to this writer as now; it is not too much to say that the Bible has become a new book.

Most of the chapters in this volume were delivered as Sunday evening lectures to the Calvary congregation; a few did not seem to be sufficiently biblical and religious for that purpose. This use of the lectures will explain the blending of biblical exposition, geographical, historical, and experimental facts, with some elements of exhortation to practical duties in the Christian life. But, because of their primary use, these lectures are not robbed of whatever value they would have in any case as a help to one intending to make the journey or actually making it.

Many authorities have been consulted. Bædeker's "Palestine and Syria," and Cook's "Tourist's Handbook of Palestine and Syria," were, while on the journey, a daily and even hourly



"*vade mecum*." Among other authorities consulted are Smith's, McClintock and Strong's, Kitto's, and other Bible dictionaries; Stanley's "Syria and Palestine"; "Recent Discoveries on the Temple Hill," by Rev. James King, M. A.; "Cleopatra's Needle," by the same author; "The Diseases of the Bible," by Sir Risdon Bennett, M. D., LL. D., F. R. S.; "Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments," by A. H. Sayce, LL. D.; "Egypt and Syria," by Sir J. W. Dawson; Geikie's "Hours with the Bible"; "In the Levant," by Charles Dudley Warner; "Bible Lands Illustrated," by Rev. H. C. Fish, D. D.; "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land," by George Adam Smith, D. D.; "Handbook of the Holy Land," by Henry B. Waterman, D. D.; and "Galilee in the Time of Christ," by Selah Merrill, D. D. Where the writer's indebtedness is direct and conscious, he has striven to acknowledge it in the body of the text.

This hurried visit to the land of patriarchs and prophets, the land of evangelists and apostles, and above all the land of Jesus Christ, has given deepened love to Him who is the end of revelation, the ideal of character, the inspiration of life, and the glory of eternity. That this volume may honor the Bible and glorify Christ is the author's chief desire and prayer.

R. S. MACA.

CALVARY STUDY, NEW YORK, Jan., 1900.

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## SUNDAY NIGHT LECTURES

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### I

#### THE LAND OF THE BOOK

PALESTINE has been known at various periods by different names. Sometimes it has been called "The Land of Canaan," from the original settler, Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, who divided it among his eleven sons, each of whom became finally the head of a distinct people. The name Canaan applied especially to the country west of the Jordan, as opposed to "The Land of Gilead" on the east. It has also been called "The Land of Promise," because of the promise given to Abraham that it should be possessed by his posterity. It has also been known as "The Land of the Hebrew," as the descendants of Abraham were called Hebrews, the word "Hebrew" meaning "crossed over," and being applied by the Canaanites to Abraham upon his crossing the Euphrates; or, perhaps the word came from Eber, the last of the long-lived patriarchs. Sometimes it was named "The Land of Israel," from the Israelites, or posterity of Jacob, who there found a home. This name occurs frequently in the Old Test-

ment; it included at one time the tract of ground on both sides of the Jordan given by God to the Hebrews for an inheritance. Later, however, the term was often restricted to the territory occupied by the ten tribes. It is also called "The Land of Judah." This title was limited originally to the territory occupied by the tribe of Judah; but, after the separation of the ten tribes, "The Land of Judah" included the territories which belonged both to Judah and Benjamin; and the whole country, including that beyond Jordan, retained this name even under the dominion of the Romans.

"The Holy Land" is a name which seems to have been used by the Hebrews during and after their captivity in Babylon. This name, "*Terra Sancta*," or "Holy Land," was the most common one throughout the Middle Ages. The name "Palestine," or the land of the immigrant, was originally synonymous with Philistia; but later the term was applied to the whole land of the Israelites. The Philistines probably came from Caphtor—which is variously understood to mean Crete, Egypt, Cyprus, or Cappadocia—and expelled the aboriginal inhabitants, and then settled on the shores of the Mediterranean. The population increased so that probably it was not less than five million in the most prosperous times in the history of Israel; the population of Syria is now estimated to be two million seven hundred and fifty thousand.

Canaan was bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, on the north by the high ranges

of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, on the east by Arabia Deserta, and on the south by Edom and the desert of Zin and Paran. These boundaries may be differently described according to the nomenclature which may be chosen. The size of the country varied at different times; but its extreme length seems to have been from one hundred and forty to one hundred and eighty miles, and its average width from forty to sixty miles. It contained an area of nearly eleven thousand five hundred square miles, more or less, according to the changes in its boundaries.

The country lay on the extreme western edge of the East. Asia seemed to have rejected this strip of land, impassable deserts separating it from Mesopotamia and Arabia. It lies on the shore of the Mediterranean, as if waiting to send out its influence to the new world. It became the highway for communication between Egypt and Assyria. Like the Netherlands in Europe, it was the arena on which for successive ages hostile powers fought their battles and contended for the control of vast empires. It lay in the center of the great countries of antiquity, and yet was remarkably isolated. In area and conformation, the country has been frequently compared to the State of New Hampshire.

Few countries are more beautifully diversified than Canaan, with its mountains, plains, rivers, and valleys. It is essentially a mountainous country; its principal mountains are Lebanon, Carmel, Tabor, Gilead, Hermon, and the Mount of Olives. The plains of the Mediterranean, of

Esdraelon, and of Jericho are associated with historic events of the greatest importance. These and some other plains, together with some general features of the country, are worthy of additional comment. The plain of Lebanon is the valley enclosed between the mountain ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. Strictly speaking, this plain does not belong to Palestine proper, although the greater part of it was included in the extensive dominion of Solomon. It is a plain of about ninety miles long from north to south, and from ten to twelve miles in width, widening at the northern, and narrowing at the southern end. There is probably no plain in Palestine or Syria more rich and beautiful than this one. In it the soil is good, and the water is abundant; but at certain seasons of the year the heat is very great. The valley has been renowned in all ages for its fertility and beauty; but unfortunately only a small part of it is now cultivated.

By the plain of the Jordan we understand the shores of the lakes through which the river flows, as well as the valley which the river waters. In portions of this plain the heat is great and, as a consequence, the fruits and trees of more tropical climes than Palestine are here found. If only water were abundant, nearly all parts of the valley would be very fertile; but parts of the plain are barren and desolate, the great heat in the absence of water destroying rather than promoting vegetation. The plain of Jericho is a broader opening in the plain of

the Jordan near the Dead Sea. This plain includes the plain of Moab on the east as well as that of Jericho on the west side of the Jordan. The fertility of this plain, wherever water abounds therein, has long been celebrated. Josephus spoke of it as a "divine region." His description of its beautiful gardens, and its groves of palm trees, is corroborated by the references to it in various parts of the Bible. Jericho is distinctly called "The City of Palm Trees." These earlier features of this valley have altogether disappeared; for long periods one solitary palm tree lingered. The spices which in the early day gave great value to this neighborhood are now almost wholly unknown.

Of the plain of Esdraelon I shall speak at length. It is sufficient, however, at this point to say that it is the great battlefield of the nations. It is known as the valley of Megiddo and as the valley of Jezreei; and Josephus calls it the Great Plain. Its soil has been moistened with the blood of nearly all the nations under heaven. So important a feature is it in any historical or topographical account of Palestine that I have given up a chapter to its description. The plain of the Coast, or the Maritime Plain, is a tract of land extending along the shores of the Mediterranean and reaching to the mountains. Occasional promontories push out into the sea; but, speaking generally, the coast may be described as an extensive plain. The portion between Mount Carmel and Joppa is often called the valley of Sharon; and the portion extend-



ing from Joppa to Gaza is sometimes known simply as the Plain, to distinguish it from the hill-country of Judah.

The face of Palestine possesses marked features. It has often been described by saying that four belts run from north to south. The first of these is the Maritime Plain, on the seacoast; the second is the central belt of mountains; the third is the broad valley of the Jordan; and the fourth is the table-land east of the Jordan. The chief rivers are the Jordan, the Leontes, the Arnon, the Sihor, the Jabbok, and the Kishon.

The most remarkable feature of the country is the Jordan and its valley. It extends from the north to the south, dividing the country into two parts. This valley is really a deep chasm, being everywhere below the level of the sea. It produces a marked effect upon the regions which border it, and also upon the climatic conditions of the country. This chasm gives the appearance at times of rugged grandeur, and at other times of extreme desolation, to the receding or abrupt shores of the valley. The valley is about ten miles wide from brow to brow, increasing its width at the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. No one can study the topography of Palestine without giving attention to the striking peculiarities of the Jordan Valley. There is, perhaps, no country in which there is so marked a feature as this deep valley. The Jordan is the only important river of the country. Later in this volume, its rise on the western slopes of Mount Hermon, its various

features, its passage through Lake Huleh, its descent to, and passage through, the Sea of Galilee, and then its sinuous course until it finally empties into the Dead Sea at a depth of one thousand three hundred feet below the Mediterranean, are fully described.

The other rivers for the most part flow for only a part of the year. The Kishon is that "ancient river" by whose rapid waters the hosts of Sisera were carried away. It is in constant flow during only a few miles in the latter part of its course. The Jabbok, meaning "pouring out," is a perennial stream which intersects the mountain-range of Gilead, and which flows into the Jordan about midway between the sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. The eastern branch of this stream is dry in the summer. The Sihor, meaning "black, turbid," is a winter torrent now called "Wady el-Arish." Some think that this is the Hebrew proper name for the Nile, and doubtless it does sometimes mean the Nile. It flows northwest into the Mediterranean, about forty-five miles southwest of Gaza. The Arnon, meaning "roaring," rises in the mountains east of the Dead Sea into which it empties. It is now called "Wady el-Modjeb." Anciently it divided the territory of the Moabites from that of the Amorites, and later that of Moab from the Reubenites. It flows in the wild ravine bearing the same name. In the bottom of this ravine the heat in summer is very great and the river flows then in but a small stream; but during the rainy season it is an impetuous torrent. The

ancient river Leontes, the modern Litany, drains the valley of Cœle-Syria; it runs southwest in a straight line parallel to the coast, and falls into the Mediterranean five miles above Tyre. High up in Lebanon there are other streams of classic celebrity which rush through deep glens, "to stain with their ruddy waters the transparent bosom of the Mediterranean." There are rivers of biblical fame not mentioned in this list, but it is sufficiently complete in an outline statement of the characteristics of Palestine.

The lakes or seas are the Dead Sea, the Sea of Galilee, and Lake Merom. In the text of this volume full descriptions of these seas are given, so far as the facts can be learned by the most recent investigations. They are worthy of careful study in an examination of the topography of the Holy Land.

At the northern boundary are the lofty peaks of Lebanon and Hermon. Lebanon succeeds the high table-land of Galilee. It rises in a region whose height is shown by its gradual slope on all sides but the north; on the east it slopes toward the Jordan, on the west to the plain of Acre, and on the south to the plain of Esdraelon. The name Lebanon signifies "white"; the name came either from the snow which during the greater part of the year covers its summit, or from the white color of its limestone cliffs. Its name makes it the "Mont Blanc" of Palestine. Of Mount Hermon there will be occasion to speak frequently in the course of these lectures; but here it will be permitted to say a few words.

The word probably means "prominent, lofty." Of its other names and their meanings, mention will be made later. It is really the southern part and culminating point of the Anti-Lebanon range. It is about forty miles northeast of the Sea of Galilee, and thirty west by south of Damascus. It towers above the ancient city of Dan and the fountains of the Jordan. Its three peaks form a triangle enclosing a plain. It is crowned with snow in some of its parts throughout the year. The fresh snow begins to fall upon it as early as November, until finally it extends five thousand feet downward from its summit. But little snow remains upon it by September. The ice then is seen glittering in stripes, and has been compared to the snowy locks of an old man. It is by far the most conspicuous and beautiful mountain in Palestine or Syria. It is not necessary here to speak of the mountains of Samaria and of Judea, as they will be mentioned in connection with local descriptions.

The climate of Palestine varies, corresponding in some degree to the annual changes in other countries; but the variations are confined chiefly to the latter part of autumn and winter. During the rest of the year the sky is, for the most part, cloudless, and rain is very rare. It usually commences in the latter part of October or early November. The rains come mostly from the west and southwest, and fall especially in the night. They often are abundant in the latter part of November and throughout December. The cold of the winter is not great; but snow-

storms are known in Jerusalem, and snow falls more or less in many other parts of the land. The heat in summer is of course oppressive in the low-lying valleys; but the nights are generally cool, and the dew is always very heavy. The absence of rain in summer soon parches the verdure of the fields, so that in autumn the whole country is dry, and streams and cisterns are often empty. The climate is considered healthful, and the people are long-lived. Were it not for the fact that the people are poorly fed, and that many of them are most uncleanly in their habits, fevers and all kinds of sickness would be rare. If sanitary conditions were properly observed in Jerusalem, that city, because of its elevation, cloudless skies, and invigorating air, would be a remarkably healthful place; and, but for these favorable conditions, the filthy habits of the people would generate diseases which would be extremely destructive.

Although the country is so small, it has varieties of climate, of production, and of fauna and flora, characteristic of many other countries of much greater size. Lying as it does between great empires, it always has been the highway for the nations of the earth. These facts give it special interest to us as the birthplace of the Bible, intended to be the book of all climes and centuries. There are in the Bible evidences of the great varieties of climate and production characteristic of this remarkable country, and conducive to the value of the Bible as a universal book. There is not space here to enlarge

upon these details, nor upon the various religions found in Syria and Palestine. Full particulars regarding these matters are easily to be had in handbooks and histories on this historic land. The Holy Land is but a speck on the map of the world, and yet it is difficult to overestimate the importance of its place in the history of the race. It seems especially small when contrasted with the territories of Egypt and Assyria between which it lies. It has been said that the entire land can be seen from some of its lofty eminences; that Hermon is visible from the southern end of the Dead Sea, and that the eye can take in at a glance points as opposite as the Sea of Galilee and the bay of Akka. It is startling to reflect that so small a country has been the theater of events so far-reaching in their influence on the destiny of all nations and all centuries. Dean Stanley has well said that :

Above all other countries in the world, it is now a land of ruins. In Judea it is hardly an exaggeration to say that, while for miles and miles there is no appearance of present life or habitation, except the occasional goatherd on the hillside, or the gathering of women at the wells, there is hardly a hilltop of the many within sight which is not covered with the vestiges of some fortress or city of former ages. The ruins we now see are of the most distant ages : Saracenic, Crusading, Roman, Grecian, Jewish, extending perhaps even to the old Canaanitish remains before the arrival of Joshua.

The present inhabitants represent many nationalities and religious creeds. The most numerous sect are the Mohammedans; they consist of

official Turks, and of a mixture of the Arab, Greek, Assyrian, and other races. The native Christians are mostly descendants of the early Syrian Christians. Great changes have taken place as to population and industries during the last few years. Now, many thousand Jews from Spain, Poland, and Germany, have homes in various parts of the lands of their fathers. It would not be surprising if in a few years the Turkish power in Palestine were broken, and the land were completely divided, parts falling to Russia, Germany, France, and Great Britain. It has long been the dream of many nations that one of their number shall yet be crowned in the city of David. Those who hold that Queen Victoria is a lineal descendant of King David, naturally look forward to the British realization of this dream. At all events, it is certain that great changes must come to this ancient land before many years shall pass. If the misgovernment of "the unspeakable Turk" should cease, and the country should come under the wise rule of an intelligent European and Christian power, the country would again be "a land flowing with milk and honey." In these conditions it would be literally true that, "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

## II

### JOPPA—"BEAUTY"

WE sailed from Alexandria to Joppa, or Jaffa — Arabic, Yâfa; Hebrew, Japho. The sea was rough, and the trip was one of marked discomfort. The Austrian-Lloyd steamers are much preferable to the Egyptian steamers, on one of which this journey was made. Jaffa seems extremely beautiful as one approaches it by sea. Gazing upon this city rising from the sea, the traveler experiences strange emotions. As a rule, this is the first point of the Holy Land on which his eye rests. Can it be possible that he is looking upon a part of that land which is sacred above all the lands of the earth: the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the land of Rachel and Ruth; the land of Caleb and Joshua; the land of David and Solomon; the land of the evangelists and the apostles; the land of Jesus Christ, son of Mary and Son of God! Wonderful memories, tender associations, and glowing hopes, fill the soul with the first sight of this historic shore. Away yonder, among the hills, the prophets of Israel taught, and the Saviour of men lived and died; and in and about this town of Jaffa classical legends and biblical truths cluster. Out of this often stormy road-



stead Jonah sailed on his tempestuous and immortal voyage. The harbor of Jaffa is shoal and unprotected from the winds, although it is one of the chief seaports of the Holy Land. It was the only port of the Israelites until Herod formed the harbor at Cæsarea; thus it was here, as will be seen later, that the timber from Lebanon for the first and second temples was landed.

Jaffa is on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea about thirty miles south of Cæsarea and nearly forty miles northwest of Jerusalem. It was and still is one of the chief landing-places of pilgrims from all parts of the world. But it is and always has been naturally unfit for a harbor. Josephus speaks of it in this respect in language similar to that which we must still employ. There is really no harbor, and the coast is dangerous. When the sea is rough, pilgrims and tourists are obliged to go to Haifa, or to Beirut. The surf rolls in with such violence at times that deaths by drowning are not uncommon. As late as 1842, a lieutenant and some sailors were lost while trying to land from an English steamer. The boat which comes now to receive travelers, seems at times as if it were to dive under the ship, and at other times as if it would be thrown thereon. The boatmen of Jaffa are among the bravest and most skillful of their class in the world. The present town is situated on a promontory one hundred and fifty feet high. On all sides it offers varied and most picturesque prospects. On the west lies the open sea; toward the south are the fertile plains of Philistia;

toward the north, as far as Carmel, are the flowery meadows of Sharon; and to the east the towering hills of Ephraim and Judah rise in grandeur. Jaffa was the port of Jerusalem in the days of Solomon, and to a considerable degree, it has remained so ever since.

There is a classical Jaffa. Some affirm that the word *Yâfa* means beauty, but its etymology is variously explained. The origin of the name is involved in much doubt. Some suppose that it is derived from Japhet, the son of Noah, and it is claimed by some geographers that a city existed here before the flood; but others affirm that the name comes from Iopa, the daughter of Æolus, and wife of Cephæus, Andromeda's father. Those who give this derivation make Jaffa the scene of the legend of Andromeda, who was bound to the rocks in order that she might be devoured by the sea monster, but was delivered by Persæus, who slew the monster. The fact that it was a prominent seaport, gave it a classical as well as a biblical history. On the site of Jaffa the Phœnician mariners dwelt. Before Rome or Athens had a history, these hardy seamen sent their ships over the "Great Sea." They seem to have introduced science and civilization into the western world. It is said that in Pliny's time the chains were shown with which it was claimed Andromeda had been bound. Throughout the Roman period, and down to the sixteenth century, the place was shown on the rocks of the harbor where she had been exposed, and the chains and iron rings were preserved as

mementos of the myth. The bones of some marine monster were taken to Rome and long exhibited as an object of curiosity. It will be remembered that in the legend Perseus is represented as having plunged his dagger into the right shoulder of the monster. Perhaps the real monster was the stormy coast, which had swallowed up so many men and women during all the years that Jaffa was a seaport; and perhaps the slaying of the monster was the improvement of the harbor, the roar of whose waves as they dashed on the rocks was as loud as the barking of Scylla or Charybdis. The chains and rings shown were, perhaps, those used by the Romans for mooring their vessels to the rocks. Sir J. W. Dawson, in his volume entitled, "Egypt and Syria," tells us that "the rock on which Jaffa stands, and which extends under the whole of the Maritime Plain, is a soft sandstone," which "shelters it and gives it such apology for harbor as it possesses."

There is also a biblical Jaffa, or Joppa, as it is called in the Scripture narrative. We know that it became the port of Jerusalem when Jerusalem became the metropolis of the kingdom. This place thus occupies a large space in the Bible. In Joshua (19 : 46) it is called Japho, and is there described as in the boundaries of Dan. When we come to the time of Solomon, we have Hiram, king of Tyre, saying in his contract : "My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea ; and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt

appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there."<sup>1</sup> We see also that it was agreed that Solomon then assumed responsibility, "And thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem."<sup>2</sup> This material was for the erection of the first "house of habitation" ever made by man as the special residence of the invisible Jehovah. It will be noticed that the contract with King Hiram is very exactly drawn in all its details. The responsibility of Solomon began when the timber was landed in Jaffa. He was very careful on his part to oblige King Hiram to land the timber, because of the difficulties inseparable from this stormy sea and rocky coast. King Hiram on his part was careful that his responsibility should cease when the timber was thus landed, and that the responsibility of the enormous task of carrying it up to Jerusalem should devolve on Solomon himself. It was by way of Jaffa also that materials were brought from Lebanon, by permission of Cyrus, for the rebuilding of the second temple under Zerubbabel.<sup>3</sup> When we come to the time of Jonah,<sup>4</sup> we see that he, when fleeing from the presence of the Lord, went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. We have in Matt. 12 : 40 an allusion to this part of the history of Jonah as in some sense typical of a portion of that of our Lord's. Perhaps no historic event is more closely associated with Joppa than the fact that Jonah sailed from this port on his remarkable voyage. One still thinks

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 5 : 9. <sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. 2 : 16. <sup>3</sup> Ezra 3 : 7. <sup>4</sup> Jonah 1 : 3.

of him threading his way through these streets and hastening to get on board the ship which was waiting in the harbor. In Joppa the Apostle Peter raised Dorcas to life.<sup>1</sup> It is certain that at the time when this miracle was performed a considerable number of Jews dwelt in Joppa, and among them were some who had become disciples of Christ. Dorcas was one of these. It is said of her that she was "full of good works and almsdeeds"; but good and noble as she was, she died and, as was to be expected, she was beloved and lamented by all. The Apostle Peter was at Lydda, where he had just restored Eneas to health.<sup>2</sup> Thither messengers were sent beseeching him to come to the help of those in Joppa who sorrowed over the death of Dorcas. One may well turn to this account and read it as he visits the reputed places in this historic town. While the Apostle Peter was in Joppa, he lodged at the house of one Simon, the tanner.<sup>3</sup> This house is still shown. On the afternoon of my first day in Joppa I hastened to visit the house and to climb to its roof. It is now a sort of Mohammedan mosque. From its flat roof I gazed out on the sea and sky. These two elements of the view at least are the same as when the Apostle Peter gazed upon them from this or some other house in Joppa. This house will be forever memorable as the place where, in the wonderful vision, which has been called "vision of tolerance," the apostle learned that he was not

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 9 : 36-43.<sup>2</sup> Acts 9 : 32, 33.<sup>3</sup> Acts 9 : 43.

to call any class of persons unclean, and that God intended to include the Gentiles as truly as the Jews in the church of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Dean Stanley seems to think that this may be the very house, or at least the location of the house, on whose roof Peter had this remarkable vision. From its roof one still sees the long sweep of the Mediterranean Sea. Here are the boats, and here the boatmen standing on the shore, or wading among the waters, or rowing their boats over the stormy waves; and here is still the sky in its cloudless and Oriental beauty.

There is also a secular Joppa. The history of Joppa both previous to the Christian era and subsequent to that time, is deeply interesting. In the period between the last of the prophets and the birth of Christ it was a place of great importance. Having sided with Apollonius, it was captured by Jonathan Maccabæus and here he met Ptolemy. Joppa was re-established as the haven, and when peace was restored, fortifications were rebuilt. During the Maccabæan wars, Greeks, Syrians, and Egyptians cruelly ruled over the Jewish inhabitants of Joppa. One is not surprised that Judas Maccabæus took swift and terrible revenge when he attacked the town, and burned the shipping. Joppa was necessarily the key to an important district, and as such it had a great share in all the wars waged against Palestine and Syria. Pompey invaded Syria, B. C. 63, and included Joppa in that province; finally, after having

<sup>1</sup> Acts 10 : 9-23.

been in the possession of Herod the Great and Archelaus, it became a part of the world-embracing Roman Empire. Josephus tells us that in the last Jewish war eighty thousand of its inhabitants were slain by Cestius. Vespasian destroyed the town, which had been rebuilt and occupied by pirates, who ravaged the coast. In Strabo's time it was notorious as a den of robbers. During the early period of the Christian era Joppa became the seat of a bishop; in the time of the crusades heathen and Christian took and retook Joppa many times. It was in the possession of the forces of Godfrey of Bouillon previously to the capture of Jerusalem. The place was largely deserted, and soon fell practically into ruin, as the crusaders cared but little for the town, as a whole, limiting themselves to the citadel. For long years it remained in almost utter decay, there being no habitable house in this once prosperous city. It is not possible, however, in the limits of this lecture, to trace its history with fullness of detail. Finally it came into the possession of the Turks; since which time it has been three times sacked,—by the Arabs in 1722, by the Mamelukes in 1775, and by Napoleon in 1799. "The massacre of Jaffa" leaves an indelible stain on the career of Napoleon. Four thousand Albanians surrendered on the promise of protection, but with their hands tied behind them they were marched out and shot. A part of the present Armenian convent is shown as the place where Napoleon is said to have poisoned five hundred sick soldiers in the plague hospital.

The Joppa of to-day is also a singularly interesting place. As already stated, the town rises abruptly and beautifully from the sea, but a closer examination shows that it is crowded into as little space as possible. On entering it one finds that the streets, like those of most Oriental towns, are inconveniently narrow and exceedingly filthy. They are crowded with camels, donkeys, horses and dogs, and also with men less cleanly than the animals. In dry weather the streets are a desert of dust, and in wet weather they are seas of mud. The town was walled on the south and east, and also on the north and west, but these walls have been taken down and the stones have been sold by the government for various buildings. Away from the shore the environs are full of gardens of much beauty and fruitfulness. The population is probably about twenty-five thousand and it is constantly increasing. There are several thousand Christians, also a few Jews, and the rest of the population are Mohammedans. Joppa contains three convents, Latin, Greek, and Armenian, and many mosques and bazaars. The chief manufacture of the town is soap, not much of which, however, would seem to be used within its own limits. The orange groves are extensive and excellent. On some trees there are hundreds of ripe and luscious oranges, which are considered the finest in all Palestine and Syria. The aroma from these gardens, especially in the morning and the evening, fills all the atmosphere. Millions of oranges are annually exported from Joppa to London and to other markets. Lemons,



pomegranates, and watermelons abound. The gardens and orchards are admirably protected, as are many villages in Palestine, by hedges of the prickly cactus.

The school, under the direction of Miss Arnott, and the hospital for natives, under the care of Miss Newton, are institutions worthy of a visit and of generous support by all visitors. In 1866, outside the Jaffa gate, an American colony was organized; it was made up of Americans from Maine, New Hampshire, and other parts of New England. It was under the direction of a second adventist named Adams; but it is understood that he fell from grace; and when the "Quaker City" visited Jaffa it took many of the colonists to Egypt, whence many finally came back to America, having been assisted by their American friends. There are houses still standing in this part of Jaffa which were taken from different parts of New England, all ready to be erected when they should reach their destination. The ruins still remain of the New England meeting-house erected by these colonists, and it, as well as the little homes, bear the marks in their clapboards and blinds of New England taste and handicraft. A few of the colonists remained, marrying different nationalities, and they brought up their families in this far-off land with many New England peculiarities of speech and methods of living. The foreign colony is now largely German, there being perhaps a hundred German families in the part of the town once occupied by the Americans. They are known as the "Friends of Jerusalem."

There are colonists holding similar views in other parts of Palestine. Owing to its location, Jaffa is the home of fugitives and vagabonds from many countries.

One is deeply impressed, as he wanders through the streets of Jaffa, with its varied historic memories, its present peculiarities, and its great possibilities. He can but remember that near this sea wall many mighty men have landed, from the days of Solomon to the beginning of the Christian era, from the time of Tiglath-Pileser to Richard Cœur de Lion. Here the pilgrim to the Holy Land generally first touches that sacred soil. Unattractive as are the streets of Jaffa, the tourist begins to feel the strange charm of Oriental associations and especially of biblical memories. He knows that soon he will be able to say :

I tread in the paths where the patriarchs trod ;  
I visit the haunts of the prophets of God ;  
The foot of my Saviour hath hallowed this sod.

### III

#### "GOING UP TO JERUSALEM "

THERE is now a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem. Some tourists, however, prefer to go by carriage or on horseback. Either of these latter methods gives travelers a better opportunity to see the country as a whole, and to study any particular locality in which they are specially interested. Some go only as far as Ramleh during the first day, and complete the journey on the second day. ( ) by carriage or on horseback the road from Jaffa leads through gardens of oranges, lemons, and pomegranates. Soon the traveler comes to the so-called tomb of Dorcas, or at least to the place reputed to be that where she was raised to life; later, after leaving the gardens, the plain of Sharon is entered. This plain reaches from Jaffa to Cæsarea, and from the central hills to the Mediterranean. It has long been celebrated for its fruitfulness, and for its varied forms of beauty. It has a large place both in song and story, as well as in the figurative allusions contained in the Bible. It still produces grass and flowers in great abundance and variety; if properly cultivated, it would be one of the gardens of the world. This remark will apply, in part at least, to many other

portions of Palestine. This plain has been for thousands of years the great thoroughfare from Jaffa to Jerusalem for prophets and apostles, for crusaders, pilgrims, and for all kinds of tourists. If one will but stop to think of all that this plain represents in this regard, the scenes of the past will again live before the mind with great vividness and power.

LYDDA.—Lydda is the Greek form of the name, which appears in Hebrew as Lud or Lod. In the general change of names which marked the Roman dominion it became Diospolis, "City of Zeus"; and by this name it is often mentioned by Eusebius and Jerome. It is situated from nine to ten miles east of Jaffa, on the direct road to Jerusalem. It was originally occupied by the Benjamites. It was at this place that the Apostle Peter healed Eneas, the account of which healing we have in Acts 9 : 32-35. It is said that in the time of Cassius Longinus, after the death of Julius Cæsar, all of the inhabitants were sold into slavery. The town was burned by Cestius Gallus when on his way from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. When he entered the city most of the people were absent at the feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. About two weeks later he hastened past its ruins flying for his life before the infuriated Jews of the holy city. Later it was famous for its very learned rabbinical school under the second Gamaliel. The Christian church was organized here at a very early period in the Christian era. In 445 an ecclesiastical

council was held at Lydda, at which Pelagius defended himself. Soon after the founding of Ramleh, Lydda lost its importance. In 1191 it was destroyed by Saladin, but was soon rebuilt, only to be sacked by the Mongols in 1271. Although situated on the principal caravan road between Egypt and Syria, it has never gained its former importance.

We find frequent mention of Lydda in the history of the crusades. It is located in the midst of extensive plains composed of rich soil, capable of being extremely fruitful. Its chief attraction now is the church of St. George, whose stately ruins carry us back to the Middle Ages and perpetuate the name of the saint and martyr who, it is claimed, was burned and buried here. There is a tradition among the Mohammedans that on the last day Christ will slay Antichrist at the gate of Lydda; but this is supposed to be simply a distorted version of one of the legends of St. George and the Dragon. The English crusaders adopted St. George as their saint and even as the patron of England, and around his name many a remarkable legend has gathered. Churches were erected in Lydda in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by an English king, but the church of St. George is now in possession of the Greeks, who restored it a few years ago. Parts of this church can be distinguished which are, perhaps, as old as the twelfth century. Beneath is the crypt which it is said contained the tomb of St. George. Some traditions affirm that Justinian reared a church here to the memory of St.

George, but that the Saracens destroyed it in the eighth century; that it was completed by the crusaders, destroyed by Saladin, and finally rebuilt by Richard Cœur de Lion. It is easy to see that the present church was erected of various materials and at different periods.

One meets at Lydda a painfully large number of people who are afflicted with diseases of the eyes. Their appearance is often loathsome. There is in Lydda a proverb that every man has either but one eye or no eyes.

**RAMLEH.**—We are making our journey by railway and in a few minutes after leaving Lydda the train reaches Ramleh. This is really an interesting place. The town is supposed to have been founded as early as 716 by Khalif Suleiman. The name is of Arabic origin, and is supposed to mean "sand." In 870 the town was called Ramula. It is believed to have been at one time larger than Jerusalem. By many the town was thought to occupy the site of the ancient Arimathea, but this tradition cannot be traced beyond the thirteenth century; it was also believed that the Latin convent stood on the site of the house of Nicodemus; but all these traditions are now held in very little esteem. We know that before the time of the crusades Christian churches flourished at Ramleh. In 1099 a bishopric of Lydda and Ramleh was founded. Ramleh was twice captured by the Saracens during the war between the Franks and Saladin. In the truce between Richard of England and

Saladin, made in 1192, it was agreed that the plain from Joppa to Tyre, including part of Ramleh and Lydda, should be in the possession of the Christians. In 1202 Ramleh was wholly Christian; but after the fifteenth century the town fell into decay. We are told that in the Latin monastery Napoleon once had his headquarters.

There is to-day a population of about eight thousand, nearly one thousand of whom are Greek Christians. The orchards in the vicinity are numerous, fertile, and beautiful, and one is gratified with their fragrance; but the town itself is wretched and abominable. As usual in these Eastern cities, the streets are narrow and dirty. Ophthalmic diseases are very common here as at Lydda; their prevalence is attributed by some to the sand that often fills the air, and by others to the small thorns of the prickly pear which, when the fruit is ripe, are blown about in every breeze. The fields yield rich crops and are usually enclosed by hedges of cactus. The climate is unusually mild, but not very healthful. The chief object of interest is the tower of Ramleh; this is square and of great beauty. There are no fewer than one hundred and twenty steps which reach to its top. Some believe that this tower was part of a mosque erected by the early inhabitants of the town; but others, and it would seem with more correctness, affirm that it was a Christian church built by the crusaders. There is an inscription which assigns the origin of this tower to a Moslem chieftain, but it is well known that but little weight can be attached to such

an inscription. It is not uncommon to place inscriptions of a later date on buildings erected far earlier, and by those of a different faith. The view from the top of the tower is beautiful and diversified in the extreme. From this height the whole plain of Sharon, from the mountains of Judea and Samaria to the sea, can be readily seen. The eye is held by the magical charm, and the imagination is delighted. Dr. Thomson calls especial attention to the beauty of this view at the setting of the sun: "Beautiful as vast, and diversified as beautiful, the eye is fascinated, the imagination enchanted, especially when the last rays of the setting sun light up the white villages which sit or hang upon the many-shaped declivities of the mountains." One can well imagine that the view seen at that time is suggestive of fairyland. The eye takes in Ashdod, Askelon, Gath, and the country from Gaza in the south to Cæsarea in the north, from the Mediterranean on the west to the mountains of Samaria on the east.

The entire plain is worthy of most careful examination; references to it abound in the Bible. It is of this plain that Isaiah speaks (33 : 9) when he says: "The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness"; to it he also refers in chap. 35 : 1, 2, but in quite a different tone, when he says: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; . . the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord." In the Song of Solomon, reference



is made to the "Rose of Sharon," which is supposed to be a species of narcissus or mallow or asphodel. This latter is sometimes called "Christ's blood-drop." These and other flowers are found at the right season in great abundance in this plain. Doctor Thomson regards Solomon's rose as a species of mallow.

In journeying from Ramleh to Jerusalem one finds at every step on this plain suggestive illustrations of Scripture references. Here is a man plowing, and his plow is so constructed that he has but one hand upon it. In the other hand he holds the goad with which he prods the tired oxen. We are at once reminded of the words of our Lord when he said: "No man having put his hand to the plow"; and also of the words said to the Apostle Paul, regarding his kicking against the pricks, when he was smitten down on the Damascus highway. We also notice that on this field there is no hedge, no fence—fences are unnecessary, as the people fear to incur the curse which should fall on him who removed his neighbor's landmark. A careful study of the characteristics of the country throws wonderful light on the statements of the Bible. A visit to the land marvelously illumines and confirms the book, so that "land and book" must be studied together.

OTHER HISTORICAL PLACES.—Soon we come to the valley of Ajalon, where Joshua obtained the victory over the five kings of the Amorites. Once more we seem to hear Joshua's voice, say-

ing: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon."<sup>1</sup> Did space permit, it would be easy to show that there is nothing in the language of the narrative which obliges us to take the words literally. The language here employed is a quotation from the book of Jasher, a book of national songs illustrative of the exploits of national heroes. It is distinctly stated that this language is a quotation, and it seems clear that it is only a poetic way of saying that Joshua was victorious.

Here is Jimzu, or ancient Gimzo, which was captured from the Israelites by the Philistines, with Ajalon and other places, in the reign of Ahaz. It stands like a fortress above the lower hills, like a sentinel to defend the passes beyond. On our left, as we resume our journey by the railway, are the two Beth-horons, and Gezer,—meaning "a precipice,"—whose king was defeated by Joshua. Gezer was long a strong fortress of the Philistines; it was invaded by David, and finally was captured by Pharaoh, who gave it to his daughter, who is believed to have been the wife of Solomon, and the place was rebuilt by Solomon. The two Beth-horons occupy an important place in biblical history; they are the scene of one of Joshua's most famous battles. Joshua was summoned by the Gibeonites to come in great haste. They said: "Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us; for all the kings of the

<sup>1</sup> Josh. 10 : 12.

Amorites which dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us." They regarded their case as desperate. Joshua lost not a moment in hastening to their relief. As in many battles, ancient and modern, everything depended upon the suddenness and sharpness of the blow which Joshua might strike in order to break in pieces the hostile confederacy. Many military men of our own time, who have carefully studied this forced march by Joshua, give him the greatest praise for the vigor and courage which he manifested, and the success which he achieved. On a former occasion he took three days in going from Gilgal to Gibeon; but on this occasion he made the journey in a night. When the sun rose he was already at the foot of the heights of Gibeon where the kings were encamped. His presence filled his foes with alarm. The terrible shout and the sudden appearance of Israel were irresistible. The Canaanites fled down the western pass; a great storm from heaven, accompanied with lightning, thunder, and hail, broke over the alarmed soldiers as they fled in disordered ranks. There on the summit of the pass of upper Beth-horon stood Joshua. In the distance was the green valley of Ajalon, and the waters of the Mediterranean beyond; and below him the Amorite host rushing onward in wild confusion. Over the western valley of Ajalon was the form of the waning moon, perhaps visible above the hailstorm driven up from the sea. Must night come before the victory is complete? Can it be that the allies shall be rewarded with

victory before the day shall close? Behold the picture of Joshua standing on that lofty height with outstretched hand and uplifted spear. God graciously heard his prayer; the day did not close until the glorious victory was secured. There is not space here to enlarge upon these wonderfully interesting historic instances; they can be simply suggested as we hasten forward on our journey.

Yonder is Makkedah, where the five kings were found hid in a cave,<sup>1</sup> and here was enacted the last scene of an eventful day, for the five kings were brought out, slain, and hanged on five trees until the going down of the sun. Here is Latrun, meaning robber; this is the native place, according to tradition, of the penitent thief, who saved Mary and Joseph from intended robbery by the impenitent thief. Near Latrun is the village of Amwas, or Emmaus, but not the Emmaus mentioned in Luke's Gospel. Not far distant is Abou-gosch. This place was named after a famous robber who once was the terror of all travelers in this vicinity. Wonderful things come to one's mind as he remembers that in still more distant times this was Kirjath-jearim, the "City of the Woods." There is music in this name. The ark of God had been at Bethshemesh. To that place came the men of Kirjath-jearim and brought it into the house of Abinadab. For twenty years the ark abode there, during which time Israel was brought into

<sup>1</sup> Josh. 10 : 16, 17.

penitence for their sins, and led to long for the forgiveness of God.

We behold Gibeon, from which place went the cunning inhabitants who made a league with Joshua, leading him to suppose that they had come from a far country. Their garments were old, their shoes were patched, and their provisions were musty, so their story was accepted. Joshua soon discovered the imposition that had been practised upon him. These people were really his neighbors. He permitted them to live, but made them hewers of wood and drawers of water to the whole congregation. Later, Gibeon became a city of the Levites; it was here that God appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and that Solomon received the promise of riches and honor. Many other interesting biblical facts are associated with this historic name.

We have left behind us the country of Samson, in which he passed his playful boyhood. Yonder is Zorah, the home of Manoah and the birthplace of Samson. Nothing, however, is now left of it but a cistern, and only a wretched hamlet marks the site of Timnath, two miles west of Beth-shemesh, where Samson married his Philistine wife. The valley now called Sarar is probably the valley of Sorek, where the infamous Delilah dwelt. Somewhere in this vicinity Samson killed the young lion, and in the recesses of these mountains he caught the three hundred jackals which carried the torches among the standing corn of the Philistines.

NEARING JERUSALEM.—We hasten on our journey with all these suggestive places passing in rapid succession before our gaze. We are nearing Jerusalem. Other sites on the journey might be described, but we shall not pause to multiply the number of these historic places as we pursue our journey. We reach wonderful heights as we near Jerusalem. Perhaps Neby Samuil is the ancient Mizpeh; if so, what marvelous events have here occurred! We take a broad outlook of the country before us. Beyond Jerusalem are the hills of Moab, forming a striking picture in the landscape. One is impressed by the smallness of the country which has filled so large a place in sacred and secular history. It is only about the size of Wales, or the State of New Hampshire. Its estimated length is about one hundred and eighty miles, and its average breadth only about sixty miles. Its population is not one-half that of the State of New York. It is, as suggested in the introductory chapter, divided into four easily distinguished sections. There is first the Maritime Plain along the seacoast; then the central belt of mountains; next, the valley through which the Jordan flows; and, finally, the table-land on the east of the Jordan. From our point of view near Jerusalem, all these facts are readily suggested to the mind of the traveler; on one side is the Mediterranean, with its white sails; on the other side is the range of Moab, as the eastern boundary of the country. Almost the whole land, from Dan to Beer-sheba, can be taken in at a

single glance. The sun is nearing its setting; we are approaching the city of the great King. One's pulse beats fast. The railway station is reached, soon we are crossing the valley of Hinnom. Here is the pool of Gihon; yonder, rising in grim grandeur, is the tower of David; here is the Jaffa Gate,—this is Jerusalem.

We turn to the left to our hotel, outside of the walls. The dream of years is about to become a reality. The city, sacred in song and story, will be entered in the morning. Can one compose himself to sleep in the midst of such historic realities? Never before did the Bible story seem so real; never before was Jerusalem so near and yet, in one sense, so far distant. With the dawn of the morrow, our feet will pass through the Jaffa Gate; and now to-night, let us read with a meaning never before known, the words of the one hundred and twenty-second psalm. Thinking of the morrow, the second verse expresses our purpose as we compose ourselves to rest: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.'

#### IV

#### JERUSALEM—"HABITATION OF PEACE"

**M**OST travelers are disappointed with their first view of Jerusalem. Indeed, in the case of many persons, this remark will apply to the Holy Land as a whole. Those who visit Palestine expecting to have a great spiritual uplift from the places which they visit, because of their connection with sacred scenes in the life of our Lord and his apostles, will assuredly be disappointed. There are but few places in Palestine, drawing a circle around which, and walking within that circle, one can be sure that he is treading the soil once trodden by the feet of the Son of God. With the exception of the immediate vicinity of Jacob's Well, there are few places in Palestine which one can be sure that Christ trod. The grotto at Bethlehem does not give us the certainty that we had expected, nor the supposed site of the home and other sacred places in Nazareth. One cannot be sure of the exact locality in which our Lord's miracles were performed, and a vast amount of topographical obscurity hangs around all the places visited by our Lord. But perhaps this obscurity is greater at Jerusalem than at any other part of Palestine. The marked natural features, of course, still re-



main ; but all the details regarding definite localities are now in hopeless doubt. The effort to secure fixed and limited localities must end in failure. Perhaps it was the divine purpose that we should not know Christ unduly according to the flesh. We know that M. Renan has testified that : "All that history which at a distance seemed to float in the clouds of an unreal world took instantly a body, a solidity, which astonished me. The striking accord between the text and the places, the marvelous harmony of the evangelical picture, with the country which served as its frame, were to me as a revelation." The truth of Renan's words every intelligent visitor to the Holy Land can appreciate ; but those who go expecting that their visit will throw wonderful light on disputed localities, or will give them great spiritual exaltation, will be doomed to disappointment. The hand of time and the ruthless touch of the infidel have destroyed the definite marks of localities made sacred by the presence of Jesus. It is not too much to say that persons who visit Palestine with exaggerated notions of the vividness with which sacred places and events will be brought to their minds, may have their faith shaken, as they certainly will have their comfort for a time destroyed. But those who go with an intelligent appreciation of the condition of the country, of the discomforts and difficulties of travel, and of the lawlessness and filthiness of the people, and who at the same time have their minds well stored with biblical facts, will be greatly helped in their understand-

ing of the Bible and in their appreciation of the life and work of the divine Lord. Such persons will joyfully see how inseparably the Land and the Book are associated, and how each delightfully illustrates, emphasizes, and beautifies the other.

On entering the Jaffa Gate it is fitting that we look carefully at our environment and become familiar with the facts of history which stand intimately connected therewith. It is difficult to believe that this comparatively small town, around whose walls one may walk in an hour, is really the Holy City; that this comparatively insignificant city is associated with the grandest events in human history, and that it has been for centuries the city of song and story, and the most sacred place on this globe. As a matter of fact, it is not the city of prophets and apostles, of kings and saints, and of him who was the world's desire and the Father's beloved Son. The Jerusalem whose streets Jesus trod was very much larger than the Jerusalem of to-day. We know that in Christ's time Zion was covered with palaces; but now, in harmony with ancient prophecy, "Zion . . . shall be ploughed as a field,"<sup>1</sup> a part of it is a plowed field. Now, in other places in the vicinity of the Holy City the husbandman pursues his toil, and in still other places desolation reigns where once were the homes of wealth and splendor which formed a part of the great capital.

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<sup>1</sup> Micah 3 : 12.

We may not be able to decide with absolute certainty as to the origin of the word Jerusalem. Regarding its derivation and significance there will ever be much difference between the most learned authorities. Some say that the name Shalem was given it by Shem, and the name Jirah by Abraham, and that the two were afterward combined so as to form the present name. Others make the word mean, "Foundation of Peace," deriving it from two words, which in combination give this meaning. Still others give its termination the form of the Hebrew dual. It is said that as early as 1400 B. C. we hear of it as Uru-Salim, the residence of one of the Egyptian district governors who for a time ruled Palestine, and that the cuneiform tablets discovered at Tel el-Amarna, contain several letters from the governor of Uru-Salim to his sovereign, giving reports of the Hittite invasion of Palestine. This name is interpreted to mean "City of Peace." Perhaps Jerusalem is simply its Hebraized form.

Probably the better derivation is that which makes it mean, "Foundation or Habitation of Peace." But whatever derivation we give to the name, all will agree that this chief city of the Holy Land is to Christian believers the most interesting place in the whole world. Three cities are great centers of religious life and power, Jerusalem, Rome, Moscow; but of these three Jerusalem is incomparably the greatest. It is a center of religious life alike to the Jew and to the Christian; it is the source of the faith of Protestant and Romanist alike, and is deemed a sacred

city even by the Mohammedans, as the Arabic name, El Kuds, which they to-day give it, signifies. The name, it is said, is used eight hundred and thirteen times in the Old Testament and in the New.

Its history is long, sad, and yet fascinating and inspiring. Its situation and location indicated from the very first that there would always be a city on its important site or in its immediate vicinity. Topographical peculiarities mark the location of great cities. The presence of rivers and the bay say as clearly regarding New York as if God had spoken with an audible voice, Let there here be a city. With scarcely less distinctness did God speak regarding the location of Jerusalem. It is on the central tableland of Judea; it is on the watershed between the Mediterranean and the Jordan. Had there been reference merely to centrality of location, Jerusalem would not have been chosen as the capital. Indeed, Samaria and some other cities had strong claims to the honor of being the capital; but the well-nigh impregnable position of Jerusalem gave it remarkable advantages over all other claimants in the Holy Land. Jerusalem did not become the capital until a comparatively late date in the history of the nation; it was not even possessed by Israel until some time after the second period of their history, that of the monarchy, had been entered. It long resisted all the attempts of the Israelites to become its masters; and after the division of the tribes it long remained the capital of the kingdom of Judah. It

is first known to us as Salem (Gen. 14 : 18), then as Jebus (Judg. 19 : 10). When it was captured by David and his warriors it became "the City of David." Finally it was greatly beautified by Solomon, and when the temple was erected on Mt. Moriah and the ark was brought from Mt. Zion, it seemed as if the glory of Jerusalem was complete and would be permanent. But we know that it was plundered by Shishak and Pharaoh-Necho, kings of Egypt; that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, pillaged it three times, and that finally the temple and palaces were burned and the walls leveled to the ground, and that King Zedekiah and the remnant of the people were carried to Babylon.

After the return from the Babylonish captivity, the city and temple were slowly rebuilt. About the year 332, without a siege, Jerusalem passed into the hands of Alexander the Great. In 320 B. C., Ptolemy, King of Egypt, besieged it on the Sabbath, knowing that the Jews would not fight on that holy day, and he easily took it by assault. There is not space in this chapter to go into this remarkable history in detail; but it may be said that about 175 B. C. the city fell under the cruel power of the infamous Antiochus Epiphanes, who set up an image to Jupiter in the temple, and used every other means in his power to compel the people to become idolaters. He introduced Greek sports, dress, and names, and did all in his power to efface all the marks of Jewish faith and life.

Under the Maccabees, the Jews, in 163 B. C., re-

covered their power. Exactly one hundred years passed, and in 63 B. C. the Romans, under Pompey, conquered the Jews. Jerusalem was plundered by Crassus, B. C. 54, but was soon greatly embellished by Herod the Great. It was to Jerusalem thus beautified, and to the temple thus rebuilt, that the Messiah came, according to the ancient prophecies, and it was the crowning sin of this city that the Lord of life and glory was rejected by her people. In his rejection and crucifixion Jerusalem filled her cup of wrath. In 70 A. D., the utter destruction of Jerusalem was accomplished. On the thirteenth of April of that year, the city was crowded with worshipers. At the foot of the Mount of Olives Titus stationed the famous tenth legion; then, according to the remarkable prediction of our Lord, he cast a trench around the city. Soon the awful ravages of famine were experienced. The people were divided into two parties. It is said that between April and July of that year, one hundred and fifteen thousand died and were buried in the city. Near the end of July, Antonia was stormed; the Jews defended the holy places with fanatical and furious zeal, but on the tenth of August all was lost. A soldier, we are told, threw a firebrand into a doorway on the north side of one of the chambers of the temple and soon all the buildings were wrapped in flames. Wildly rose the terrible uproar; the darkness was illumined by the light of burning buildings; the shouts of the victors and the groans of the vanquished rent the air. Titus strove to save the temple; it was not his purpose

to destroy the beautiful city and temple ; but the wild fanaticism of the Jews and the reckless desires of his own soldiers thwarted his purpose. Many Jews, even then, in the midst of these awful experiences, expected the Messiah to come for their deliverance. Six thousand men, women, and children were burned in a portion of the sacred buildings. As Jesus had predicted, not one stone was left upon another. Zion, however, still existed ; but on September the seventh, the Romans burst, with triumphant shouts, into this last stronghold of their fierce foes. The streets were, for the most part, silent ; houses were filled with dead bodies, as were also the sewers. It is said that more than a million thus terribly perished. One's heart aches as he studies these sad details. One sees, as never before, the folly and wickedness of the Jews in denying their Messiah. No words can adequately describe the horrors connected with the capture of Jerusalem.

Finally, a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus was erected on Mount Moriah, and the name of the city was changed to *Ælia Capitolina*, and it was consecrated to heathen deities. The purpose was to defile the city as much as possible, and blot out all traces alike of Judaism and Christianity ; and also to make the city the home of the heathenism which the Jews so terribly detested. The name of Jerusalem almost perished from among men, *Ælia* becoming the name by which the city was known to all the heathen nations. In the time of Constantine, however, the ancient name was

resumed. Helena, the mother of Constantine, built a church in Bethlehem and one on the Mount of Olives in 326. She made the city once more a Christian city. Julian gave permission to the Jews to rebuild the temple; but as the superstitious men of the time believed, this purpose was frustrated by earthquakes and by the explosion of balls of fire among the workmen. In 614 the city was taken by the king of Persia, who slew, it is said, nearly one hundred thousand men. He aimed to destroy everything which the Christians venerated, and he encouraged the Jews to return to their ancient city. In 637 it surrendered to the Caliph Omar and became a Mohammedan city; the Mosque of Omar taking the place of the temple on Mount Moriah. In 1076 it fell into the hands of the Turks, when awful barbarities were inflicted on Christians; but in 1099 the crusaders, under Godfrey of Bouillon, took Jerusalem and elected Godfrey their king. In 1187 the city again fell into the hands of the Moslems, having been captured by Saladin, Sultan of the East, who was assisted, it is supposed, by the treachery of Raymond, Count of Tripoli, who was found dead in his bed on the day agreed upon for giving the city into the hands of the Moslems. In 1229 the city was again in the hands of Christians; but ten years later it was once more Mohammedan; and four years later the Christians were in authority. In 1244 it was taken by storm by a Tartar horde. Finally in 1517 it was taken by Ottoman Sultan Selim, who also became the master of Egypt and Syria.



In 1542 his son Solyman reconstructed the present wall. In 1800 Napoleon planned to storm it, but he finally gave up the idea. It was bombarded by the Turks in 1825. In 1831 it submitted to the pasha of Egypt, Mohammed Ali, but in 1840 it again owned Turkish sway. In the probable fall of the Turkish power Jerusalem may come into the hands of France, Russia, Germany, or Great Britain; or it may be divided among these various nations. France, Russia, and Germany now own considerable parts of the city of Jerusalem and vicinity. Great changes in the near future are inevitable, but what the final result will be no prophet may affirm.

MODERN JERUSALEM.—Comparatively little of the ancient city remains. We have already seen that the present walls were built in 1542. There are in them courses of stone which belong to the ancient walls, and these may be readily distinguished. On Mount Zion, and at the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and elsewhere in the city, the ancient rock is readily seen; but the glorious city of Solomon lies under the *débris* of not fewer than seventeen captures and spoliations. This fact throws great doubt on all the sacred places in Jerusalem. If the city of New York should in the future be captured seventeen times, and its great buildings thrown in promiscuous heaps on the streets, no topographer could with certainty identify our present localities. The real locations of ancient places and events in Jerusalem are buried far beneath the present level

of the city. The mountains round about the city still remain, but many of the valleys have been partly filled; the streets that were trodden by kings and prophets, and by Jesus Christ and his apostles, are buried many feet below the streets of the Jerusalem of to-day. The thought is most impressive that on some streets of that city Christ bore his cross, and somewhere in that city he died thereon, but we may never discover with absolute certainty his Via Dolorosa or his Calvary.

We can all sympathize with Robert Bruce, king of Scotland, in his vow to set off on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem when freed from wars at home, and who, when death was overtaking him and he had not fulfilled his vow, said: "I cannot go to Palestine in person; I send my heart; carry it thither when I am dead." Jerusalem will ever be sacred as the place in which the greatest scenes on earth were enacted; it will ever be sacred as the symbol of heaven. Heaven is "Jerusalem the golden; heaven is the city whose walls are jubilant with song; heaven is the Jerusalem whose maker and builder is God."

There are great difficulties connected with the excavations now going forward in Jerusalem. Sometimes the funds secured in England and America for this purpose have been insufficient, sometimes the narrow and bigoted Turkish government has objected to the work, and always the work itself is most difficult, as it is unclean, unhealthful, and disagreeable. We owe much to Captains Wilson and Warren, to Lieutenant

Condor, to Dr. Edward Robinson, and to many others, for their self-sacrificing toils. At this moment many young Americans, Frenchmen, Germans, Britons, and others, are engaged in similar services, living often in tombs, sewers, and other utterly abominable places, and doing a heroic work in the interest of science and religion. I never before so thoroughly learned to appreciate the value of the services which excavators are rendering to the cause of biblical interpretation. These explorers suffer much from the impure condition of the soil, saturated as it is with the sewage of ages, and much from the opposition of the government and from the difficulties inseparable from the nature of the work. These excavators have dug down literally through several Jerusalems. We have here one city piled on another. The Jerusalem of to-day is, perhaps, the seventh or eighth city built on this site.

Did space permit, it would be interesting to trace the origin, growth, and destruction of these various cities. Every foot of the ground is covered by the wreck of cities that once were the symbols of marvelous power and of wonderful beauty. Great thoughts fill the soul as one wanders over these ruins and through the narrow and filthy streets of modern Jerusalem.

It is said that the Jerusalem of to-day covers an area of more than two hundred and nine acres, of which thirty-five are occupied by the level on which the Mosque of Omar stands. It consists of the Christian quarter, the Moham-

medan quarter, and the Jewish quarter. It is difficult to decide as to the size of the population, but it is probably between forty and fifty thousand. The circumference of the city is about three miles. The enclosing walls average thirty-five feet in height. They are massive in appearance, but are not of great strength. Around the walls are thirty-four towers, and the walls are pierced by eight gates, two of which are closed. The open gates are the Jaffa Gate, on the west; New Gate, opened in 1889, in the northwest part of the city; the Damascus Gate, which leads to Samaria and Damascus; the Gate of the Tribes, or St. Stephen's Gate; the Dung Gate, leading to Siloam; and Zion Gate, on the ridge of Zion. The closed gates are the Golden Gate, and the Gate of Herod, or the Gate of Flowers, which is opened occasionally. The leading streets are the Street of David, which leads from the Jaffa Gate to the Mosque of Omar; the Street of the Gate of the Column; Christian Street, which leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Via Dolorosa, although modern, still, from its traditional location, will always exercise a peculiar power over every Christian heart; it begins at the Latin Convent and ends at St. Stephen's Gate.

PEOPLES AND FAITHS.—As we might expect, there are now a goodly number of Jews in Jerusalem. Some claim that one-half the population is Jewish. They are of two sorts: the Sephardim, or Spanish Jews; and the Ashkenazim, or

Jews of German and Polish origin. They are sustained largely by charity. Many Jews, like many Christians, go to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage of piety. The Rothschild Hospital was founded in 1855. Sir Moses Montefiore has done much to encourage the Jews in Palestine to become self-supporting. In January, 1875, he desired that a proposed testimonial to him might take the form of a fund to help Jews in Palestine, and nearly sixty thousand dollars was contributed in this way. Although he was ninety-two years old, he visited Jerusalem and brought back an encouraging report regarding his people. The patriarch of the Greek Church resides in Jerusalem, in a convent beside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Armenians number nearly five hundred in the Holy City, and the Copts own two monasteries. The Latins number, perhaps, two thousand followers. The Church of England has a small school and church. Lay German missionaries have branches of their mission work in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Jaffa. There is a Good Samaritan Home under the direction of the Deaconesses of Kaiserwerth. There are now ophthalmic and other hospitals, some of which are under the control of the Knights of St. John. There are services under the direction of several of the Christian denominations, and a converted Jew, who has recently become a Baptist.

We have thus had a glimpse of Jerusalem, its history, its characteristics, its peoples, and their faiths. The day is now dawning; we have fa-

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miliarized ourselves with these ancient facts and present conditions; we pass through the Jaffa Gate and learn that "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together." A chastened but constant enthusiasm has been experienced since first touching the soil of

The holy fields,  
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,  
Which, eighteen hundred years ago, were nailed  
For our advantage to the bitter cross.

## V

### CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

WE pass through the Jaffa Gate, and following an impulse common to nearly all pilgrims and tourists, we direct our steps to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In the minds of most Christian visitors to the Holy City this is the most sacred spot within its walls. A volume might be written regarding the architecture, location, and history of this famous building. It is situated in the Christian quarter of Jerusalem, and in a street which not infrequently is called Palmer Street. The street is largely given up to the traffic in beads, or in wood and ivory carving, and a thousand cheap and inartistic trinkets. Even in midsummer one will find there a horde of clamorous and impudent peddlers. At the Eastertide this crowd is much larger and still more clamorous, and through it then the traveler can scarcely force his way in order to approach the portal of the historic church. On the pavement, beside the traders who are watching for customers, are heaps of beads, shells, and many kinds of fancy work. One sees among the peddlers Greeks, Jews, Armenians, and Syrians. Here and there may be seen women engaged in beseeching tourists to buy their wares ;

especially do the fair-faced women from Bethlehem thrust their beads and crosses into the face of travelers and urge them to buy. Now and then one of these pavement merchants looks as if he would assault you if you did not make a purchase. The presence of this crowd, as one approaches the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, disturbs all his tenderer emotions and utterly dissipates the spirit of devotion. One is constantly reminded, as he looks upon this motley group of traders, of those whom Christ drove out of the temple because they desecrated its holy precincts; and these merchants are their legitimate descendants. There are the usual number of deformed creatures and beggars parading their deformities as an additional appeal to the charity of visitors. Such is the sight that greets the traveler as he approaches this sacred place.

It is easy to see, even at a glance, that parts of the present structure are quite modern; but the south portal and portions of the old towers and walls are said to be from eight hundred to a thousand years old. Some sort of church has, doubtless, been on this site or its vicinity ever since the time of Constantine, or since the third century after Christ. A temple of Venus was erected at one time by the heathen, in order to show their contempt of Christianity, over the reputed site of the crucifixion; but the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, built on the site selected, as the result of a divine vision, a group of sacred edifices. It would seem that at first there was a small chapel over each sacred



place; but now all these sacred places are included within the walls of this heterogeneous building known as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and also the Anastasis, because here Christ rose from the dead. It consists of different styles of architecture, of many roofs, chapels, shrines, tombs, and altars. Some of these belong to one sect and some to another. It is said by some writers that there are now no fewer than thirty-seven sacred sites within this historic enclosure, while others make the number much greater.

The buildings erected by Constantine in 326 were destroyed by the Persians when they took the city of Jerusalem in 614. Their king, Chosroes II., did all in his power to destroy every vestige of Christianity; but in 627 Heraclius defeated him, and Jerusalem was recovered by the Greeks. In 936 fire partly destroyed the church, and in 1010 the Moslems inflicted great damage upon it; but in 1055 a church again arose to commemorate the sacred sites. In 1099 the crusaders entered this church barefooted and singing songs of praise. At the beginning of the twelfth century they erected the present building; but it has undergone so many changes as to make it almost another building. Great damage was inflicted upon it by the Arabs in 1187, and in 1244 the sepulchre was destroyed by the Kharezmians. Writers on the history of the church call attention to the fact that the dome of the sepulchre became insecure, and in 1719 it was restored and a great part of the

church rebuilt. In 1808 it was almost entirely burned; the dome at that time fell in and crushed the chapel of the sepulchre, and large quantities of molten lead flowed into the interior. The Greeks now secured the principal right to the buildings, and with the aid of the Armenians contributed most largely to the erection of the restored church in 1810. An architect of Constantinople designed the restored church, although traces of the original design and structure still remain.

Is this really the place of our Lord's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection? That question has been earnestly discussed by the most accomplished and devout biblical scholars, and by the keenest antiquarians of different ages. The ordinary tourist cannot enter upon an exhaustive discussion of the subject; the most that he can do is to avail himself of the processes and conclusions of those who are qualified to give authoritative opinions. But whatever one may think as to the site of Calvary, no one can approach a spot which millions claim to be Calvary, and which has been the object of pilgrimage and worship for hundreds of years, and is now at certain seasons of the year thronged by believing pilgrims, without profound emotions, tender associations, and reverential desires. Here millions have worshiped in simple faith and with fervent zeal. They believed that here our Lord was crucified, that here he was buried, and that here he revealed himself after his resurrection. We know that the place of the crucifixion was "without the

gate"; on that point the statements of Scripture are clear; and the reputed sites of Calvary and of the sepulchre now stand in the heart of the city. The question is, could this site ever have been outside the walls? Has the location of the walls been changed since the time of our Lord's crucifixion? If we can answer that question in the affirmative, then this may be the very spot where the cross stood on Calvary, and this the veritable "new tomb" of Joseph, "wherein never man lay" until it was sanctified by the presence of the body of Jesus Christ. How one longs to be absolutely sure that this is the actual place of the crucifixion, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ! Very eminent modern authorities, among them Bovet, Ganneau, and Warren, have argued on topographical grounds for the genuineness of the traditional site. In doing this they limit unduly, in the opinion of other eminent authorities, the size of the north wall for the population which the city contained in our Lord's time. Fergusson makes the Dome of the Rock the sepulchre of Christ. Sir J. W. Dawson and others claim that the knoll of rock outside the north wall of the city, and covered with shallow soil and coarse grass, conforms to the description given by the evangelists who speak of Golgotha or the skull-like place. It is doubtless true as, with many others who have visited this place, I can testify that this knoll suggests the idea of a skull. I visited it several times in different lights in order to get definite impressions of the place. There are on it old

tombs which certainly are not unlike eyes in the skull. I can appreciate what many observers have instantly said, on seeing this knoll, "That is Calvary." It is also affirmed that Jewish traditions show that this hill was used as a place of execution; and it is now used chiefly as the place of Moslem graves. It admittedly conforms to some of the conditions given by the evangelists, as it is near the city, is between ancient roads, and was in the vicinity of certain gardens and tombs. Dr. Selah Merrill and Doctor Chaplin, who had rare opportunities of becoming familiar with the topography of Jerusalem, and the late General Gordon, who had carefully examined every inch of the ground, favor this knoll as the genuine Calvary.

On so difficult a subject as this it is not becoming the vacation tourist to speak except with great modesty; but, contrary to my usual habit, I find myself altogether disposed to favor the traditional site. There are many facts in favor of this ancient locality as the place of the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Christ. We know that Constantine, soon after his conversion, was anxious to beautify the Holy City, and his mother, the aged and pious Helena, desired to honor the tomb of Christ. She visited Jerusalem and located the site which is still pointed out as probably the true Calvary. We may discard all the fables connected with her adoption of this site; it is certain that many of the traditions related, as to the manner of the discovery of the sacred sites, are unworthy of a moment's

consideration. But we may still cling to the spot selected by her as the probable site. When Constantine removed the temple of Venus, he found a tomblike cavern, and on the site, it is said, he erected a church. It is positively affirmed that Eusebius, the great church historian, and many bishops were present at the dedication of this church in A. D. 335. They all agreed in regarding this as the true site of the crucifixion and resurrection. I find myself in sympathy with the late Dr. H. C. Fish, in his "Bible Lands Illustrated," in inclining to believe that this is the true site of Calvary and of the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. We know that but a short time elapsed after the death of the men and women who saw Christ crucified before the selection of this site, perhaps not more than one hundred and seventy-five to two hundred years. We may well believe that the place of such august events would remain for that length of time definitely fixed. One certainly would like to believe that this is the very spot where the sublimest events of the world's history were enacted. But even if we were sure that this is the place, it is so changed, so built over, and so associated with the ignorant and superstitious devotion of pilgrims, as to rob it of many of the tender thoughts which one would like to feel while gazing on a spot so unspeakably sacred.

Several times I visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The morning light is the best in which to see this ancient and many-roofed struc-

ture. At the entrance are seen sneering Turks as the official wardens of this holy house. Their presence, however, is often necessary to preserve peace among the so-called Christian pilgrims who visit the church. The first object which arrests the attention on entering is the Stone of Unction. On this stone, it is said, the body of Christ was laid for anointing when taken down from the cross. It is a long marble slab resting on the pavement and surrounded by burning candles. It is not the actual stone; it is claimed that this is buried beneath the present slab, which was placed here in 1810. The lamps and candelabra which surround the stone belong to Armenians, Latins, Greeks, and Copts. All devout pilgrims kneel and kiss this stone, and at certain places on its surface grooves are seen which have been made by the lips of devout pilgrims who, during the ages, have been coming and kneeling here. This part of the church is the property of the Armenians.

We next enter the rotunda. The dome is sixty-five feet in diameter and is open at the top, reminding one of the magnificent Pantheon at Rome. In the center of this rotunda is the Holy Sepulchre. It is really a chapel in itself, being twenty-six feet long and eighteen feet broad, and is built of marble, with a long, low doorway leading to the sepulchre. This doorway opens into what might be called another chapel, but which is only six by seven feet. The guide books state that the area of this chapel is but forty-two square feet, and that of

this space nineteen square feet are taken up by the marble slab shown as the tomb of Christ. This slab is cracked in the center; it is also worn by the lips of adoring pilgrims. Here forty-three lamps are always burning; four of these lamps belong to the Copts, and thirteen each to the Christians, Latins, and Armenians. This little chapel is cased with marble throughout, and thus the original rock is nowhere visible. This is in many ways the most remarkable and altogether the place of most tender memories in the world. No man can indifferently enter this sacred place nor witness the passionate devotion of the pilgrims whom he here sees. He must be more or less than man if some degree of tenderness be not in his heart as he stands beside the reputed tomb of the Lord. Becomingly do all pass out with their faces toward the tomb.

North of the sepulchre we see the stone where it is claimed that Jesus stood when he said, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Then comes the Chapel of the Apparition where our Lord appeared to Mary; there is also the Chapel of the Division of the Vestments. We then descend twenty-nine steps and reach the Chapel of Helena; then we visit the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross, the Chapel of the Crown of Thorns, the column marking, as it is affirmed, the center of the earth, from which spot, according to tradition, came the earth from which Adam was made. Going up eighteen steps, we reach Calvary; a long rent is here shown in the

rock, which is said to have been made at the time of the crucifixion. But one cannot suppress the feelings of doubt which obtrude themselves regarding all these reputed sites.

Worthless traditions blend with the holiest emotions and the sublimest facts at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but probably there is no imposition so utterly abominable as that connected with the so-called "Holy Fire." In one of the walls of the Holy Sepulchre there is a hole through which it is said the holy fire comes. On Easter Eve, thousands of Greek worshipers assemble from all parts of the world to witness this gross imposition, certainly one of the grossest which ever disgraced the Christian name. In earlier centuries the Roman Church participated in this imposture, but since the sixteenth century it has been too great an imposture even for superstitious Romanists. The patriarch of the Greek Church alone enters the sepulchre; the people stand outside, waiting with bated breath for the advent of the holy fire. All for a time is hushed in the sacred building. Many pilgrims wait for weary hours near the hole so as to be among the first to receive the sacred fire. Sometimes they even have themselves tied to stationary objects in the vicinity that they may not be pushed away when the hour for the exhibition shall arrive. It is a thrilling moment for the ignorant and superstitious pilgrims. The patriarch claims that the fire descends from heaven. The excitement reaches its highest pitch when the patriarch passes the fire through



the hole; burning tapers are then handed the priest, and the pilgrims rush to have their tapers kindled at the sacred flame. Large sums of money, it is said, are paid to the priests that they may light the candles of pilgrims first after the sacred fire has appeared. Soon the whole church is illumined as the lighted tapers multiply and are borne away from the sacred spot. Fierce fights often occur here. In 1834 the seething crowd fought with one another in the utmost desperation and fanaticism. They trampled over one another until finally the guards interfered, and soon the dead and dying were lying in heaps, even on the stone of unction. This abominable practice ought to be suppressed by the authorities of the Greek Church.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the joint property of the Greeks, the Latins, the Armenians, and the Copts, but the Greeks have the largest share of its space and in its services. As already intimated, the church is really a group of heterogeneous buildings. It occupies between two and three acres; and, according to some classifications, includes seventy sacred places; others make the number but thirty-seven, as already stated. All depends upon the principle of classification which the enumerator observes. Each one of the sects named takes its turn in visiting the sacred shrines and in conducting services. The Church of England has made various efforts to secure an altar, but no very satisfactory arrangements have yet been made.

A few lessons suggest themselves as one turns

away from this remarkable church. The visitor is grieved at the pitiable superstitions of many of the Greek, Roman, Armenian, and other pilgrims. The heathenism of distinctively heathen countries could scarcely be more heathenish than are the practices of many pilgrims in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. One's heart aches as he gazes upon their acts so marked by ignorance and dotard superstitions. But through all these offensive sights the devout and intelligent visitor lays hold of the tremendous realities which occurred here, or elsewhere in the neighborhood. What marvelous thoughts fill the mind as one thinks of the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God! Properly distinguishing between history and tradition, it is easy to see how the Holy Land confirms the holy book and how real the earthly life of Jesus Christ was, and may still become, to the intelligent and devout pilgrim to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

## VI

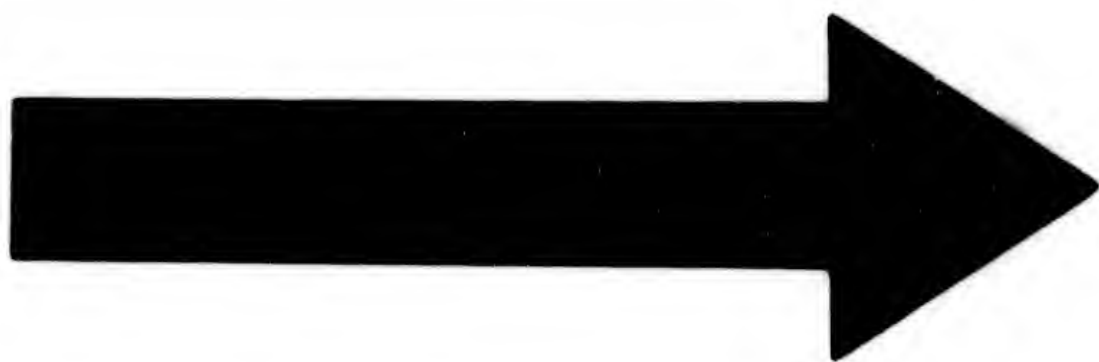
### THE MOSQUE OF OMAR

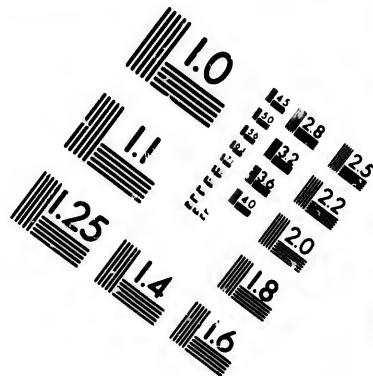
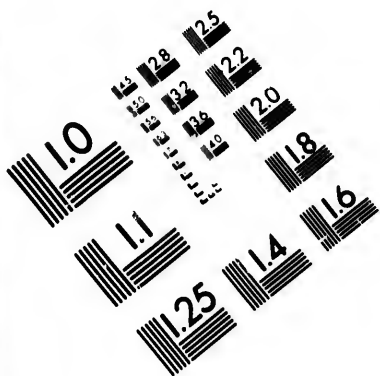
WE hasten at this time to the Great Altar Mountain, Mount Moriah, to the site of Solomon's Temple; the Haram Area, the Mosque of Omar, the Dome of the Rock, or Kubbet es-Sukhrah. Perhaps there is no spot on this globe which appeals more powerfully to the historic imagination than does this altar mountain, as it has been called. It is the symbol of faith in one God as against the many lords of heathen religions. On the brow of this rocky summit, Jew, Christian, and Moslem alike may honestly and devoutly worship. All of them believe that here the veil which shrouds the invisible world has been drawn aside and the glory of the invisible God has often been sublimely revealed. Here now stands the Mosque of Omar, probably upon the summit of Mount Moriah, perhaps on the very spot where Ornan had his threshing-floor. It was here, according to the oral tradition of centuries, that Abraham laid the wood in order for the contemplated sacrifice of his son Isaac.

Attention has often been called to the fact that Abraham was the common ancestor of all the Arabian tribes. He is still held in high honor

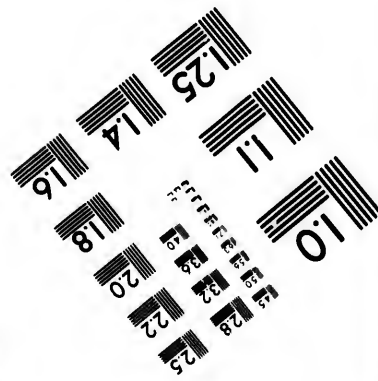
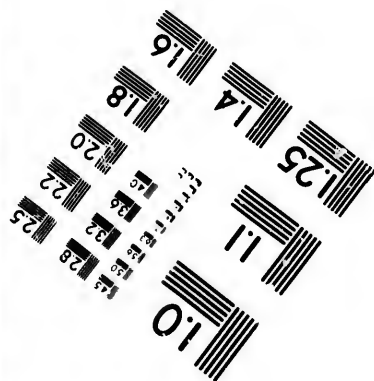
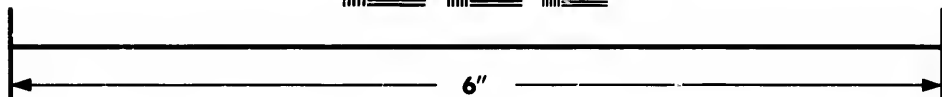
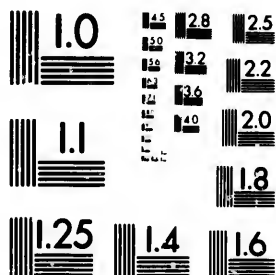
by these tribes, however bitter their hatreds in other respects may be. It was here that David saw the angel standing between earth and heaven with a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Here it was that David interceded for the plague-stricken people. Here it was that later the glorious temple of Solomon stood; here it was believed dwelt, at least for the four hundred and twenty-eight years of the first temple, the shadow of the cloud and the glory of the Shekinah; and here came the tribes in a grateful celebration of God's wonderful blessings to Israel. To this spot the hearts of Jews oppressed in every land turned with hope, joy, and supplication.

One cannot stand before the Mosque of Omar, with its many colored marbles glistening in the sunlight, as once "the goodly stones of the temple" shone before the eyes of the disciples, without emotions of wonder and tenderness. One's thoughts rush back to the time when the temple here stood in all its dazzling splendor; back to the times of the patriarchs, back to the very dawn of human history. One sees again the tribes going up from all parts of the land; again their "songs of degrees" are heard as they rejoice in God and glorify Israel. This was the very heart of the religious life of the Hebrew people; it was the inspiration of prophecy, the theme of poetry, and the center of national hope and joy. Memories of Israel's disobedience, defeats, and manifold disasters crowd the mind. Visions of God's ancient people imprisoned and





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exiled among their heathen captors, who desolated and destroyed the holy places, pass vividly before the mind. Other pictures, also, are present; we see God's people turning away from their sins, coming back to God with breaking hearts, and turning their tearful eyes once more to this sacred place. It was here too, that to the priest Zacharias, at what was called the Feast of Lights, in the thirty-fifth year of Herod the Great, the angel of the Lord appeared, standing on the right side of the altar of incense, and to this priest came the promise of the birth of John the Baptist. Here too, the babe Jesus was presented at the appropriate time, and Simeon uttered his *Nunc Dimittis*. Here later, within one of the many chambers of the great building, sat the marvelous child in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking questions. Here, as Dr. Fish has reminded us, twenty years later, the Son of God walked under the royal porches in the winter at the feast of the dedication; here he lifted up his voice in warning, instruction, and benediction; and from these sacred precincts, during the last days of his earthly life, he drove out the traders who desecrated his Father's house. And here, in the opinion of the Moslems, who are the present guardians of this sanctuary, the great Arabian prophet Mohammed, took his flight from the earth to the flowery paradise so vividly described by the teachers of the Mohammedan faith. There is little doubt that Mount Moriah is identical with this present temple area, now known as



the Haram esh-Sherif, or the Noble Sanctuary. Almost every inch of ground in this sacred enclosure has been the subject of earnest topographical scrutiny, historic research, and vigorous controversy. The Exploration Fund has given earnest students the opportunity of clearing up many disputed points, and has opened the way for the removal, in the near future, of many present difficulties. Biblical and scientific students now in larger numbers than ever before, visit the Holy Land. The government is disposed to be somewhat more liberal in removing obstructions than was formerly the case, and we may well expect that before many decades shall pass, still greater liberty will be given to scientific exploration, until finally all that scholarship can do to identify ancient sites will have been accomplished.

The temple area is quadrangular in shape ; it occupies thirty-five acres, or nearly one-quarter of the whole city of Jerusalem. It is two hundred feet above the valley of the Kedron. We know that Solomon leveled the space for his great temple and its other buildings ; and this work he performed at enormous cost in labor and money. On the west, the wall which surrounds this space is one thousand six hundred and one feet long ; on the east, one thousand five hundred and thirty feet ; on the north, one thousand and twenty-four feet ; and on the south, nine hundred and twenty-two feet. This sacred enclosure is entered by eight gates on the west, the principal one being known as the Gate of the Chain.

Entering by this gate we have on the right the building known as the Mosque el 'ksa, in the enclosure of which there is much green grass, while olive and cypress trees are also found. There are likewise marble fountains and the broad platform is surrounded by arches, by pulpits, prayer niches, and cupolas, and there before us rises the great mosque, glittering in the flood of sunshine which bathes the summit of this historic mountain in heavenly splendor. A truly glorious picture is before us. Its chief attraction is its great central figure, the magnificent Kubbet es-Sukhrāh, or Dome of the Rock. This building is generally supposed to have been erected by Omar, and so is called by his name; but some authorities believe that the title belongs to a much smaller and less important building which contains the Mihrab, or prayer niche, of the celebrated Caliph. But perhaps Omar did really erect this magnificent structure. Tradition tells us that when he took Jerusalem his first inquiry was for the site of the temple, that he was guided to the traditional spot which was then covered by mounds of rubbish, and that he there built the Mosque which bears his name. Some, however, affirm that it was built by Abdel-Melek, in the year of our Lord 696. Perhaps no amount of historic investigation will be able, for many years at least, to settle these disputed affirmations with any certainty. The time, however, will come, we may assume, when the efforts of all these students will be rewarded with substantial agreement regarding historic facts.

It is necessary to secure permits before one can enter this sacred building. At one time no Christian was allowed within its walls; but now, except on the occasion of great festivals, access can be readily obtained. The consul of the country to which the traveler belongs, he being properly provided with a passport, will send his Kawass. The admission fee is small and the tourist's dragoman will attend to all details, as well as pointing out, perhaps with the help of a local guide, all the places of interest. Before entering the building one can study with profit its superb dome, which seems to float in the heavens, above the building and above the city. It is one of the most notable objects in Jerusalem, as one looks out upon the city from the Mount of Olives. As the dome of St. Peter's seems to hang in the heavens over the great church, and to some degree over Rome, so the dome of the Mosque of Omar seems to hang in the sky over the mosque and over Jerusalem. This interesting effect is produced by a slight drawing in of the dome at its base, which the architect has managed with remarkable skill. If the drawing-in had been too great, the effect of insecurity would have been produced; if not great enough, the appearance of the dome as floating in the air could not have been attained. The building is eight-sided and each side measures sixty-seven feet. The dome is surmounted by a gilt crescent, and the lower part of the wall is of various colored marbles arranged in curious patterns. The upper part is pierced with fifty-six

pointed windows. The piers which separate the windows are covered with tiles of bright colors, and the glass in the windows is unusually rich and brilliant. The diameter of the interior is one hundred and forty-eight feet, while it is encircled with Arabic inscriptions. There are sixteen marble Corinthian columns, connected above by a horizontal architrave under pointed arches. The walls are ornamented in gilt stucco in the Arabesque style, and the pavement is of marble mosaic. The Sacred Rock, immediately beneath the great dome, is of irregular shape, and about sixty feet long and fifty feet wide. Captain Wilson is quoted as saying that it "stands about four feet nine and a half inches above the marble pavement at its highest point and one foot at its lowest." The surface bears the marks of rough chiseling; on the west side it is cut down in three steps, the object of which is still a matter of doubt. Beneath the rock is a vast tank which, perhaps, was used as the cesspool of the great altar of the early time, if, as is supposed, it was intended that the blood of the victims should be carried off through the drain connected with this pool.

Many legends hang about this rock, legends Jewish, Christian, and Moslem. According to the Jews, Melchisedec here offered sacrifices; here Abraham contemplated offering Isaac, and here the Ark of the Covenant stood; and here it is said the unutterable name of God was written. Moslem traditions rival the Jewish as connected with this historic rock. The legend is that

when Mohammed ascended to heaven on his horse El-Burak, the rock wanted to follow him. It started to ascend with its master, but the angel Gabriel rushed in, seized the rock and restored it to its place. Surely no one can doubt the truth of this legend, for there on the rock still are shown the prints of Gabriel's fingers when he seized it in its ambitious flight! What evidence stronger than this can be desired as to the truth of this legend? Since that day the rock has been suspended in the air; it is true that you cannot see it so suspended, but it is to be borne in mind that its suspension, according to the legend of the local guides, gave such alarm to visitors, especially to women, that an appearance of solidity had to be given it by the erection of a wall. But that it is still suspended is evident from the hollow sounds which come from the wall placed there to quiet the fears of the pilgrims!

In the cave below the rock are seen the praying places of Abraham, David, Mohammed, and others. Here in the floor is the slab which covers the Well of Spirits; here the spirits are confined, and thence they will be brought up by the hair of their heads when the day of judgment comes. Many other places the guide points out as sacred in the mosque. Here is the shield of Mohammed's uncle; here the footprint of Mohammed himself; here are hairs from his beard; and here especially is the slab with three and a half nails still remaining in it. The guide devoutly tells you that once there were nineteen nails, but the devil knocked all of them but three

and a half into the stone, and when these disappear the end of the world will certainly come. After imparting this interesting piece of information, and giving this exhibition of hopelessly blind superstition, the guide expects the tourist to place a generous amount of coin on the slab. The guide takes the coin and rewards the tourist by assuring him that his chances now are much better when the devil knocks in the remaining nails, because of the generous gift laid upon the stone. Beneath the temple platform are great substructures, arches, and pillars. These are truly wonderful. This part is called Solomon's Stables, and of these fuller mention will be made later. It will be remembered that the temple was built by Solomon, next by Zerubbabel, and extensively repaired by Herod the Great. The entire space covered by Herod's Temple was about nineteen acres, or a little more than one half of the present temple area.

The structure near the entrance of the mosque is said to be the model of the Mosque of Omar. It was called the Tribunal of David, the Dome of the Chain, or Kubbet es-Silsileh. The tradition is that a chain which was suspended from heaven hung over this spot, and when two disputants could not settle a quarrel, the chain moved to the one who had right on his side. If a witness in a trial could grasp the chain his testimony was true, but if a link broke off it was certain that the witness was a perjurer. These legends are believed without question by many Mohammedans to this hour.

MOSQUE EL-AKSA.—This building is generally believed to be identical with the church erected by the Emperor Justinian, and converted from a church into a mosque. Others, however, claim that its structure is entirely Arabic, a claim which does not seem to be well founded. It certainly seems to have been erected as a church and to have been changed to suit its present use as a mosque. Here are shown the so-called tombs of the sons of Aaron, but it is much more likely that the stone slab pointed out on the pavement marks the grave of some conspicuous Knights Templar. The fine pulpit, so exquisitely carved and inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, will at once attract attention. It was made at Damascus, from cedar of Lebanon. Here is pointed out the praying-place of Moses; here also are two pillars very close together, between which formerly tourists were permitted to pass, if their size did not prevent. Those who squeezed through were sure of a place in the Mohammedan paradise, but those who failed could only look forward with great doubt to that possibility. Now, however, iron spikes and bands have been so arranged that the infidel Christian cannot even make the attempt to pass between the pillars.

In this mosque also is the Well of the Leaf, with its strange legend. To it a worshiper went to draw water, his bucket slipped from his hands, and he went into the well after the bucket. To his great surprise he reached a door which opened and admitted him into a perfect paradise. There

he wandered for some time and plucked a leaf which he carried back with him to the world. This leaf never withered, but no one has since been able to find the door leading to this matchless garden. This door the Moslems believe leads into paradise.

**THE CRADLE OF CHRIST.**—We leave the mosque by the eastern door, where we lay aside our slippers. We proceed to the southeast corner of the Haram, and descend thirty-two steps to the so-called cradle of Christ. This is a small chamber to which many legends are attached. Here, it is claimed that Simeon and the Virgin dwelt for a time, and that to this chamber Christ was brought for the rite of circumcision.

We next descend to Solomon's Stables. This is a vast succession of pillared and vaulted vistas. All guides call attention to the beveled stones, which are supposed to be characteristic of the builders of the first temple. It is true that others think they may be but an imitation of the earlier stones. Very much has been written on these stables. The recent volume, entitled "Recent Discoveries on the Temple Hill," by Rev. James King, M. A., is worthy of careful study. He has given us the very latest results of the most careful investigation connected with this interesting structure. It was especially interesting to me as showing how the valleys were raised so as to form the vast temple platform. That fact had never before been made plain to my mind. It is a matter of comparatively little importance



whether these were really Solomon's stables or not. We are told in 1 Kings 4 : 26, that "Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots." His palace may have been somewhere in this vicinity, and grottoes, or artificial structures somewhat similar to these now shown, may have been used by him as stables. It is certain, however, that the Knights Templar used these great colonnades as stables, and the rings to which their horses were attached are still shown.

As we emerge from the stables of Solomon there opens before us a view of the valley of Jehoshaphat. It is a mass of graves, containing the dead of many generations. All devout Jews desire to be buried in this valley. They believe that the Messiah will come here, in harmony with the prophecy of Joel 3 : 2. Here also a view is obtained of Absalom's Pillar, the Mount of Olives, the garden of Gethsemane, and other interesting places in the vicinity. Moslem tradition affirms that Mohammed, when he comes to judge the world, will sit on the wall beside the spot on which we stand, that a wire fine as a hair will be attached to this broken column protruding from the wall near by, and will be stretched across to the Mount of Olives. All men must attempt to pass over this cord; those who have sins will fall into perdition; but angels will carry the just in safety to the Mount of Olives on the opposite side of the valley. Near here is seen the so-called throne of Solomon; here also are many prayer niches, and a famous marble fountain called El Kas, or the Cup. Beneath

this fountain, it is said there are vast reservoirs into which the water from the distant pools of Solomon once flowed. Perhaps it was here that the brazen laver of Solomon was placed.

Wonderful thoughts crowd the mind in the midst of these historic scenes. One is impressed with the fact that legend and truth are intermingled. They must be sharply separated in order that one's visit may be made profitable. A further impression is that the statements of the Bible are constantly confirmed by the remains of the ancient time which mark this temple area. God's word is constantly corroborated by the monuments of the ancient day which still remain. The church of Jesus Christ must stand when every vestige of tradition shall have passed away. From hoary rock and crumbling ruin witnesses are constantly rising to prove the truth of our Lord's words in Matt. 5 : 18 : "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

## VII

### VARIOUS INTERESTING PLACES—JAFFA GATE

FREQUENT reference has been made in these lectures to the Jaffa Gate. It is close to the tower, or castle, of David. It is the gate through which those who come to Jerusalem from Jaffa naturally first enter. In this gate there is an illustration of Matt. 19 : 24 : "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." It is believed by many that the reference to the greater ease with which a camel could go through the eye of a needle than a rich man, who trusts in his riches, should enter heaven, is because of the small gate which one finds in the large gate known as the Jaffa Gate. It is certain that this small opening is still called the "Needle's Eye." This form of structure is common both in Palestine and in Egypt. At nightfall the Jaffa Gate, like the other gates in Jerusalem, and in many other Oriental cities, is closed. Laden animals must, therefore, remain outside the gate until morning ; but often small camels and donkeys, lest they should be stolen by the Arabs, are passed through the small gate, or Needle's Eye, after their loads are removed. A large animal, or even a comparatively small

one, laden as these animals often are, could not pass through the gate; but a small animal stripped and crouching can squeeze through. So while the rich man laden with his wealth, and the hypocrite inflated with pride and self-righteousness cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, the man who humbles himself, stripping himself of the world and of self-righteousness, and becoming as a little child, can enter the kingdom of heaven. There is, of course, some doubt as to whether the language used by our Lord in the passage quoted was suggested by the name then given to the smaller gate in the larger gate, or whether the name now given to the smaller gate was suggested by the language of the Lord in the passage to which reference has been made. Different writers, travelers, and commentators will take different views as to the origin of the name. Some will claim the one, others the other. But whichever position we may take regarding the origin of the name, it is deeply interesting that the gates of Oriental cities in these modern days should give so striking an illustration of the truth taught by Christ regarding entrance into the kingdom of God.

THE TOWER OF DAVID.<sup>1</sup>—We enter Jerusalem again at the Jaffa Gate, and immediately before us there is an open space in which a fair is always in progress. On our left is a line of shops in which the chaffering usual among all

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. 5 : 6, 7.

Oriental peoples is vigorously carried on. Time is an element of comparatively little importance either for seller or buyer. Over an article costing but a few cents there will be more loud and meaningless talk than a visitor from the Occident can well conceive. The intending purchaser turns away in disgust at the price asked; but the intending seller is not alarmed. Each knows that the other is not in earnest; neither deceives the other. But they will keep up the farce often for hours before a purchase is made. A self-respecting purchaser from other lands will often go without what he wants rather than chaffer in this way. On our right is the tower of David, on Mount Zion. This was called by Josephus the tower of Hippicus; it formed part of the citadel, and has always been a conspicuous and substantial structure. Parts of this tower may rightly lay claim to great antiquity. The tower at the northeast is built at its lowest part of beveled stones from nine to thirteen feet in length, and some of them more than four feet high. Recent excavations show that for some distance above the foundation it is formed of the natural rock. When David came up from Hebron, it will be remembered that the Jebusites exulted in the strength of their fortress, impregnable as they supposed. They looked down proudly from their secure heights, and taunted David with his relative weakness. They believed that even lame and blind men were able to hold a fortress which naturally was so strong. They did not, however, reckon on the bravery of their foes. Soon Joab

climbed the steep ascent, gained a signal victory, and won the chieftaincy of David's hosts. Soon the ancient, and seemingly everlasting gates, "lifted up their heads," and David entered in triumph, dwelt in the stronghold of Zion, and called it the City of David.

Let us approach nearer to one place of marvelous interest. The spirit of the ancient time surrounds this neighborhood and fills our minds as we meditate on these historic facts. The Bible narrative becomes marvelously real in the presence of these enduring monuments of the past, and of the heroic achievements of David and his men. Here are still the thirty steps cut into the rock by the old Jebusites more than three thousand years ago. These steps were used as a means of climbing into the fortress. Doctor Fish rightly suggests that David probably had these cuttings in mind when he said: "Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, shall be chief." How many feet have trodden these ancient steps! How voiceful they are even to this hour! They are witnesses to the heroic deeds of friends and foes "in the brave days of old." The fortress which David erected here was the stronghold of Zion in all after ages. Attention has been frequently called to the fact that if what we now see be really the tower of David, or that built by Herod, it was standing here when Christ visited Jerusalem, and his eyes frequently rested on this tower and his shadow fell upon parts of it while he walked in Zion. Josephus tells us that when Titus de-

stroyed Jerusalem, he left standing the three towers built by Herod; two of these three, left untouched by Titus, have been destroyed since, but the tower of David, or of Hippicus, still remains. With many other travelers, I regard this as one of the most interesting sites in Jerusalem. It has been well said that probably there is not in Jerusalem a single building on which Jesus looked standing now, with the exception of this old tower lifting itself in its strength, its hoary age, and its historic testimony, near the Jaffa Gate.

THE ROYAL QUARRIES.<sup>1</sup>—We pass on to visit other parts of Jerusalem; we are not now taking streets or historic places in their geographical order. Near the Damascus Gate, the finest in Jerusalem, is the entrance to the Royal Quarries. They are vast caverns reaching beneath Bezetha, the northern hill, on which the Holy City is built. This part of underground Jerusalem was discovered in an apparently accidental, but altogether interesting, manner. Doctor Barclay, to whom all visitors to Jerusalem to-day are indebted for his careful investigations and his eloquent descriptions, discovered this entrance in 1852 by seeing his dog disappear therein. The hint thus given he promptly followed, and his labors, and those of many other investigators in exploring underground Jerusalem, have been richly rewarded. Let us enter this dark realm.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 6 : 7.

Leaving the bright light which gilds the ancient city with heavenly splendor, we pass into the darkness of these quarries. Almost immediately we descend a few feet, and then light our torches and descend still farther. We soon discover that the quarries are not only vast caverns, but a succession of chambers in great disorder. Here and there enormous and shapeless pillars are left standing to support the roof. It is almost startling to remember that nearly all that part of Jerusalem which lies east of the street of the Damascus Gate stands over these quarries. There is thus a great underground Jerusalem; a succession of mighty aisles and mammoth chambers. We soon discover that the floor of these quarries is very irregular, and the visitor must be extremely careful lest he fall into one of the many deep pits. The descent at the deepest part is said to be not less than one hundred and fifty feet. At the bottom of some of the deep excavations the bones of human skeletons have been found. The walls are covered in places with crystalline encrustations caused by the water as it has trickled down. In other cases stalactites hang from the ceiling and stalagmites rise from the floor. Here are unfinished stones looking as if the workmen had just ceased their labors for the noonday meal and had forgotten to return to resume their work. Here are the marks of the saws where the stones were removed from the rock, and here are vast blocks cut from the rock but not carried out from the quarry. Here is a hole cut by the workmen,



and once filled with water which they used at their meals or while they pursued their toils. Here are the slight depressions made in the stone where the oil was placed, which, when illuminated, became a lamp furnishing them light as they continued their labors. Here are the discolorations caused by the flame of this rude lamp, which still remain upon the rocks. It is said that not less than four acres are made up of these quarries. Doubtless Solomon's men here quarried the stones for the temple. Somehow many persons suppose that the stone, like the wood of the temple, was brought to Jerusalem by King Hiram from Tyre, or by some other great contractor from some other place. Indeed, the fact that the stones for Solomon's temple were quarried under this part of Jerusalem will spoil many an eloquent sermon on the temple, or on some part of the description of its erection; but even at the risk of spoiling sermons, historic truth must be told. Here is even now a great monolith which split in the process of removal, and, as I have said, the smoke-marks of the Phœnician workmen are still seen, and one of their lamps has actually been found in the position in which it was left thousands of years ago. Doubtless it was from this quarry that both Zerubbabel and Herod got the stone with which they rebuilt the temple. It is deeply interesting to re-people these dark and silent realms with the busy workmen of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod. When Solomon's Temple was built it was in these under-

ground regions that the sound of the hammer and chisel was heard, so that after the stone was brought out, and when the temple was in process of erection, it could be truly said :

No workman's steel, no ponderous axes rung ;  
Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung.

It is quite certain that into these quarries numbers of Jews went for refuge when Titus took the city. We know that many found a hiding place in sewers and aqueducts in and near the city ; many thousands would hasten to these great quarries as their last hope when the capture of the city was certain. It is affirmed that the whole population of Jerusalem to-day could be stowed away in these quarries. The visitor to Jerusalem will never forget the feeling of awe that comes over him as he walks through these subterranean caverns. For ages and ages darkness and silence have reigned in their dreary abodes. The streets overhead have been deluged with blood ; through them has rushed the fierce populace, making them echo with the cry : "Crucify him ! Crucify him !" And, as Doctor Fish has suggested, perhaps a shudder rang through these gloomy depths when Jesus gave up the ghost, and when the earth shook as if it shuddered at the cruelties which it witnessed.

THE JEWS' WAILING PLACE.—All visitors to Jerusalem will readily agree that this is one of the most interesting, affecting, and often pathetic

places in the Holy City. Here, on the evening of Friday, the Jews assemble for humiliation and supplication. All travelers who can possibly be in Jerusalem on that evening visit this place. It is near the sacred spot on which the old temple stood. The stones in the wall are of immense size, and doubtless some of them were once a part of the temple, or of some of the walls of its various courts. They are beveled at their edges with much care; this fact is usually considered as evidence of their great age and of their former position as parts of the ancient temple. The area itself is about one hundred feet long and fifteen wide. The temple wall above the ground at this spot is sixty feet high. The place is reached by passing through a succession of narrow, winding, and most filthy streets, and often no small degree of filth is found in the area itself. The Jews believe that their prayers will find special acceptance with God when offered through crevices of the walls composed of stones which formed part of the building, regarding which God had said, "Mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually." The result is that the Jews who come here to pray put their lips between the stones, and in that attitude offer their prayer that they may claim the promise just quoted. Here I found rows of Jews—men, women, and children—sitting in the dust in front of the wall or standing against it, some reading or reciting, others praying. They reverently touched the stones of the temple; they caressed them lovingly; they kissed them ten-

derly, passionately. Tears literally streamed down their cheeks; they were genuine tears. No one can doubt, however he may explain, the fact that the sorrow is sincere and the tears are genuine. Their lamentations touch the heart of the visitor; no thoughts of levity intrude upon the reality of the sorrow which the visitor everywhere sees. I really pitied these Jews who were here from many parts of the world, Jews wearing different garments and speaking various languages. They meet usually from three to five o'clock in the afternoon, and after wailing out their lamentations and offering their supplications, they go to various synagogues. They rock to and fro, as their lips mutter their wails and lamentations. Jerome makes a touching allusion to the Jewish mourners of his day who paid the Roman soldiers for allowing them to go and weep over the ruins of the Holy City. A firman from the sultan, for which they pay a small tax, gives them a perpetual right to the wailing-place. With equal fervor they pray and with equal sorrow they weep to-day. Readers will be glad to see an example of the beautiful litany, parts of which they still chant over their house defiled by infidels:

## THE RABBIN READS ALOUD:

For the place that lies desolate:  
For the place that is destroyed:  
For the walls that are over-  
thrown:  
For our majesty that is de-  
parted:  
For our great men who lie dead:

## ALL THE PEOPLE RESPOND:

We sit in solitude and mourn.  
We sit in solitude and mourn.  
We sit in solitude and mourn.  
We sit in solitude and mourn.  
We sit in solitude and mourn.  
We sit in solitude and mourn.

For the precious stones that are buried :	We sit in solitude and mourn.
For the priests who have stumbled :	We sit in solitude and mourn.
For our kings who have despised him :	We sit in solitude and mourn.

Another litany, consisting of five petitions and five responses, is frequently repeated. It will be observed that this litany is written after the manner of an antiphonal psalm :

THE RABBIN PRAYS THUS :	THE PEOPLE ANSWER :
We pray thee have mercy on Zion :	Gather the children of Jerusalem.
Haste ! haste ! Redeemer of Zion :	Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.
May beauty and majesty surround Zion :	Ah ! turn thyself mercifully to Jerusalem.
May the kingdom soon return to Zion :	Comfort those who mourn over Jerusalem.
May peace and joy abide with Zion :	And the Branch of Jesse spring up at Jerusalem.

The Jews in Jerusalem are mostly very poor ; they live chiefly on the charity of their countrymen in other lands ; and they spend much of their time visiting holy places, studying ancient Scriptures, and many of them are looking forward to a grave in the valley of Jehoshaphat as the greatest boon they can desire at the close of this life.

THE VIA DOLOROSA.—Few streets in Jerusalem deserve or receive so much attention as the Via Dolorosa, or "Way of Sorrow." If the Church of the Holy Sepulchre really stands on Calvary, perhaps this street is rightly designated.

It is a narrow street and roughly paved, but is in some places truly picturesque with its quaint arches, strangely constructed houses, and very ancient styles of masonry. No one can look with indifference, however much unbelief he may express, on its so-called "holy places." Considering the many sieges which Jerusalem has experienced, one cannot be sure of any of its localities, but even though this may not be the very street trodden by Christ on his way to Calvary, it has at least been hallowed by the tears and prayers of millions of pilgrims during the Christian centuries. They have come from many lands; they have had many superstitions; they showed much ignorance, but many of them had a desire to follow the footsteps of Christ, according to their light, as their Lord and Master. I must admit that there was to me no satisfactory historic evidence of the genuineness of these sacred sites; the street was not even known in connection with these sacred associations until the fourteenth century. But we have at last the Pretorium, where Christ was arrayed in purple and crowned with thorns. This place I visited with the deepest interest. Here is shown the entrance to the Hall of Judgment, where Pilate declared Christ was innocent; the spot where Peter stood when he denied his Lord; the Ecce Homo Arch, where Pilate exhibited him to the people; the place of the binding of the cross on the shoulder of Christ; the place where he sank under it and where Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry it; and the im-

pression of Christ's shoulder as he leaned on the wall for support; also the house of Veronica, who wiped his brow and on whose handkerchief his features were forever imprinted; and the place where Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me." Here also are shown the house of Lazarus and the house of Dives. One cannot have confidence in the authenticity of any of these sacred places, but they recall the historic facts as presented by the evangelists.

THE TOMB OF DAVID.—This is close to the Lepers' Quarters; it is by far the most remarkable of all the tombs in or near Jerusalem, except, of course, the tomb of our Lord. It is quite certain that David was buried in Zion, and the Apostle Peter tells us that "his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Adjoining the tomb is the building or mosque known as the Cœnaculum, the place where the Lord's Supper was instituted. In 1839 Sir Moses Montefiore and his party were admitted to the mosque. Through the trellised doorway they saw the tomb, but they were not permitted to enter it. Miss Barclay, the daughter of Dr. Barclay, the American missionary of whom I have already spoken, was later permitted, through the influence of a Mohammedan lady, to enter the tomb and to make a sketch of its salient features. The room is not large, but is richly furnished. The sarcophagus is of rough stone and is covered with green satin tapestry richly embroidered with gold. The real tomb is possibly in a cave below, the door to

which is covered with black velvet tapestry embroidered in silver. Near this door hangs an ever-burning lamp; in the southwest corner a staircase descends to the lower room, and in the middle of it is shown the place where, it is said, our Lord celebrated his last Passover, and instituted his Supper with his disciples. The place where it is claimed the table stood is pointed out, and a stone in the wall marks the place where the Lord sat or reclined. If this really is "the upper room" of Scripture, what wonderful events have happened here! The preparation for the last supper, the washing of the disciples' feet, the institution of the supper itself, the ten days' prayer meeting while waiting for the fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit's descent, and the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost! Marvels upon marvels! what histories concerning time and eternity are suggested to us by this place! If only one could be sure that it is the real place, how his soul would glow with holy emotion, with lofty aspiration, and with divine inspiration. The tombs of the Kings and the tombs of the Judges, on the north of Jerusalem, are also objects of great interest.

Many lessons are suggested by the places we have visited. Whatever the historic facts regarding the strait gate may be, there is, as taught us in Matt. 7 : 13, 14, a strait gate for every human soul. This truth it is well for us constantly to appreciate and daily to emphasize. We also may learn that the whole world is a quarry in which God is getting material for the spiritual temple.



Again, did time permit us to enlarge upon the thought, it would be profitable to emphasize the fact that all of us, like Christ, must carry our cross to our Calvary; and, finally, we may learn that we daily may hold communion with Christ as truly as did the disciples in that upper room, and that we daily may be under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for since his descent on the day of Pentecost every believer has become his sacred and august temple.

## VIII

### "ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM"

WE cannot do better than start again at the Jaffa Gate. Directly before us, as we begin our tour outside the walls, is the valley of Gihon into which we descend. This valley is memorable as the place where Solomon was crowned and proclaimed king. Here are the upper and lower pools of Gihon. The lower pool is six hundred feet long and two hundred and fifty feet wide, and its depth is from thirty-five to forty feet. It is believed by those competent to express an opinion that this great reservoir dates from the time of Hezekiah. Tradition says it was here that David saw Bathsheba bathing, when the thoughts of evil entered into his mind, which resulted in his act of perfidious murder.

The valley of Gihon is changed to the valley of Hinnom as it turns eastward. It also grows narrower until it becomes a ravine with steep and rocky sides. It separates Mount Zion on the north from the hill of Evil Counsel and the plain of Rephaim on the south. On the southern border overlooking the eastern end of this valley, Solomon built the high places to Moloch.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 11 : 7.

Usually kings followed the practice begun by Solomon, so that Ahaz and Manasseh did not spare their own sons, but made them pass through the fire to Moloch. This false and cruel God was set up in the very face of the true God. It is quite probable that Baal and Moloch were different names for the same abominable deity. There was in this valley a great iron image of this idol, and little children were placed on the red-hot hands of the image, their agonizing shrieks being drowned by the clattering cymbals in the hands of the worshipers and by the wild shouts which accompanied the beating of the cymbals. Milton thus describes these abominations :

Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood  
Of human sacrifice and parents' tears,  
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud  
Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire  
To his grim idol—in the pleasant vale of Hinnom, To-  
phet thence,  
And black gehenna called, the type of Hell.

The good Josiah with a strong hand put a stop to the Satanic practice of infant sacrifice. He made the place a place of refuse and a charnel house; and it became so odious that later the Jews called it "Ge-Hinnom," or, as the word has become in later usage, "Gehenna," making this place symbolical of the fire of eternal torment.

Within this valley is the traditional Field of Blood, or Aeldema of the traitor Judas. This place is on the southern face of the valley at the eastern end. Tombs abound in the vicinity;

tombs of hermits, Crusaders, and pilgrims, some of the latter being of recent date. In some of these tombs lepers and other outcasts now find a home. The hill is called the "Hill of Evil Counsel" from the tradition that here was the country house of Caiaphas in which he met the Jews to form a conspiracy as to how they might best put Jesus to death. Near here is En-Rogel, a word which means the "Fuller's Fountain"; some believe it to be the "well of Nehemiah." It will be remembered that at this fountain Jonathan and Ahimaaz waited for news from David in his time of trouble; "for they might not be seen to come into the city."<sup>1</sup> When Adonijah "exalted himself, saying, I will be king," it was at this fountain that he celebrated his coronation feast.<sup>2</sup> This well is in one of the most fertile spots around Jerusalem. It is walled up with large squared stones, is one hundred and twenty-five feet deep, and at times is full to overflowing.

POOL OF SILOAM.—This is an object of very great interest. Around few places in or near Jerusalem do so many tender, beautiful, and poetic memories gather as about the pool of Siloam. This pool is supplied by a fountain of the same name, and around it are ancient stones and masonry. There are some broken pillars in the pool, and in certain places it is lined with very old stone work. In Isa. 8 : 6, we read of "the waters of Shiloah that go softly." This beautiful

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. 17 : 17.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings 1 : 9.

imagery of the old prophet has given its poetic suggestion to all writers since his day. All our thoughts of this pool are colored by the descriptions given in Scripture and by the later writers in prose and poetry. Perhaps Isaiah's imagery led Milton to describe this rill as,

Siloa's brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God.

If we follow the stream for a little distance we shall come to the pool of Siloam. It is fifty-three feet long, eighteen feet broad, and nineteen feet deep. The broken columns of which I have spoken probably indicate that a church was once built over this historic pool. Is this really the pool to which Christ sent the blind man, saying to him after he had anointed his eyes with clay: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam"? The question immediately suggests itself to the traveler who is familiar with this incident in the life of our Lord; for these waters thus formed a part of the wonder-working power of Jesus Christ. Were they the first thing which this man saw after he had washed therein? Standing beside these waters, his eyes now opened, did he look up and for the first time behold the light, and gaze on the city and on the valley? What thoughts must have filled his soul, and what thoughts fill our souls as we now recall these wonderful events! At certain seasons of the year red anemones bloom in the crevices and around the edges of the old pool; they also fringe the rivulet as it flows from under the brow of the hill.

These facts were doubtless in the mind of Bishop Heber when he wrote the lines which we often sing in our public services, lines which seem still to reproduce the imagery of Isaiah and the suggestion of Milton, and lines which bring their benediction of peace to their readers or singers:

By cool Siloam's shady rill  
How fair the lily grows !

Probably it was from Siloam that the water was drawn to pour on the sacrifices on the last great day of the feast. It was this fact that suggested our Lord's words on a memorable occasion: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." The gardens below Siloam form certainly one of the greenest and most attractive spots in the vicinity of Jerusalem. There is a zigzag passage nearly two thousand feet long cut through the rock which connects Siloam with the Fountain of the Virgin on the opposite side of Ophel. The water of this fountain often bursts out in a great stream, and then as suddenly subsides. The common people believe that a dragon dwells in the fountain, and that when he wakes he stops the flowing of the water, but when he sleeps it resumes its flowing as before. Tradition points out in connection with this fountain the spot where the Virgin Mary washed the swaddling clothes of the infant Saviour. Some have supposed that the fountain of the Virgin is the Bethesda of the New Testament, where our Lord cured the impotent man; but others place the pool of Bethesda within the

walls and near St. Stephen's Gate. Perhaps the consensus of opinion in our day is toward this latter place as the true pool of Bethesda.

The modern Arab village called Silwan is a miserable place, some of the huts being old sepulchres hewn in the rock. Near here was the tower of Siloam which fell and slew eighteen persons.<sup>1</sup>

The King's Gardens are at the point of junction of Hinnom and Kedron. The name comes from the opinion that David and Solomon had splendid gardens here, the spot being even now most attractive. On either side are fig, olive, and pomegranate trees, while gardens of melons and cucumbers at certain seasons of the year give an idea of remarkable freshness and equal fruitfulness. The hills on either side are terraced and were once beautifully cultivated. Nehemiah tells us that the King's Gardens were opposite the pool of Siloam, and were watered by that pool. A venerable mulberry tree is shown in this vicinity, supported by a pillar of loose stones; this tree is said to mark the spot where the cruel Manasseh put the prophet Isaiah to death, causing him to be sawn asunder. The tree is therefore called "Isaiah's Tree." One of the most attractive spots in this neighborhood is still called, as it was believed to have been called of old, "The King's Dale."

The so-called tombs of Zechariah, Saint James, Jehoshaphat, and Absalom are in the valley of

<sup>1</sup> Luke 13 : 4.

Jehoshaphat. To this valley, or this part of the general valley, we now come. We are continuing our course around the southern portion of the city—let us keep our geographical relations clearly in mind. We cannot, however, be sure of the identity of any of these tombs. The style of the architecture clearly shows that the so-called tomb of Absalom is not the pillar which he reared for himself during his lifetime in the King's Dale. There is so much of doubt regarding all these tombs that one cannot speak of their identity with any degree of certainty.

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.—We continue our journey until we have reached the eastern side of Jerusalem. We are now about to approach one of the most sacred, and, in the thought of many Christian believers, *the* most sacred place in the vicinity of Jerusalem,—or even in the whole world,—the garden of Gethsemane. This garden is from a quarter to half a mile east of the wall of the city. The tradition which places the betrayal of Christ here is much supported. Doctor Fish, in his excellent volume to which I have already referred, quotes Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, who lived almost early enough to have known some who had seen the companions of the apostles, as speaking of the garden as a well-known place. Jerome, a half-century later, describes the situation of the place as in harmony with the present locality. Probably the garden originally covered considerably more space than is now occupied by what is



known as Gethsemane. It now embraces about one-third of an acre; to be more exact, it measures one hundred and sixty feet by one hundred and fifty feet. It is surrounded by a reasonably high wall, perhaps about six feet in height, covered with white stucco. This wall was erected in 1847 by the Franciscans. A rock to the east of the door marks the spot where the Apostles Peter and John slept. There is also outside the wall a fragment of a column which indicates the traditional spot where Judas betrayed his Lord with a kiss. Passing through the gate in this wall, we find a space of perhaps five feet between this wall and an iron fence which surrounds the garden. In none of the descriptions which I have seen of this garden, is there an allusion to this iron fence. The space which it encloses is laid out in walks and flower beds interspersed with a few shrubs and trees of smaller growth. There are eight olive trees of large size and of great age; they were not there in the time of our Lord, for we know that Titus, in preparation for the siege of Jerusalem, cut down all the trees in the vicinity of the city. But there is almost no doubt that the trees which are there now grew from the stumps and roots of the trees which were there in Christ's time, and which were the witnesses of his unspeakable agony. These trees are shored up with heaps of stones lest the wind should blow them down. They are also supported, in part, by bars of iron. There are also six cypress trees in the garden; these latter trees, for some reason, are generally

omitted in the descriptions which travelers give of this sacred place. The garden is carefully kept by the Latin monks, and all forms of desecration are prevented. Here and there fences shut off particular spots, but on the inner side of the outer wall very poor pictures dishonor the place, and disturb one's desire to reproduce the wondrous past. I visited the garden for the second time at sundown on Sunday evening. I left at a little distance my dragoman and two others, dwellers in Jerusalem, who chanced to be with us that day, that I might be alone with my thoughts, that I might read again the Scripture narrative of our Lord's agony in the garden, and that I might make the scene of his sufferings real and personal. Some have said that the present garden is not sufficiently lonely and secluded to harmonize with the descriptions given by the evangelists, and that possibly the agony of our Lord occurred in the larger garden which existed, as it is supposed, in that day, and not in the portion of the garden now shown. But it seemed to me to be a place of peculiar loneliness and seclusion. The Mount of Olives overhangs it on the one side and the embattled walls of Jerusalem on the other. It is a fitting spot for one desiring to be alone with God at evening's holy hour, or under the shadows cast by the olive trees under the light of the Passover moon. An American woman has furnished a sufficient amount of money to maintain a tank of water in the garden. This provision enables the guardians to keep the flowers constantly in

bloom and the grass perpetually fresh and green. It was an admirable gift; it symbolizes the place which the garden and its sacred scenes must ever have in the minds of Christians throughout the whole world. Thoughts of wonderful tenderness came into my mind on that Sunday evening, amid the fading light of day and the gathering shadows of evening. Perhaps near the spot where I stood did Christ endure the bloody sweat of agony untold; perhaps it was here that the angel came and ministered unto him when he was exhausted with "strong crying and tears."

Under the olive boughs,  
Falling like ruby beads,  
The blood drops from his brows;  
He bleeds! My Saviour bleeds!

Josephus tells us that the suburbs of Jerusalem abound with gardens and pleasure grounds. The word "garden," it ought to be borne in mind, was then used with a somewhat different meaning from that which we now give to the name. The garden of Gethsemane is now more truly a garden, in our use of the word, than it was in Christ's day. Then the word garden meant substantially what we mean by the word orchard. This garden, however, will ever be associated with but a single event, the agony of the Son of God on the evening preceding his death on the cross. Here was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah regarding the Christ: "I have trodden the wine-press alone." The word

Gethsemane means an olive press. The garden is but a few paces to the south from the so-called tomb of the Virgin. The entrance is from the Mount of Olives toward the southeast. The olive oil yielded by the trees in the garden is still sold for a high price, and many rosaries are still made from the olive stones.

This garden was to me holy ground ; here, if ever, I felt like taking my shoes from off my feet. Yonder on Calvary Christ's body was crucified ; but here in Gethsemane was the crucifixion of his soul. Yonder he gave up his life ; here he yielded his soul in sweet obedience to the Father's will. There the letter of the law was satisfied ; here the weight of the law, in its spiritual import, fell on the soul of Christ. In this garden his "own familiar friend betrayed him." Here the Captain of our salvation experienced the truth that the soul of his sufferings was the suffering of his soul. And here in the quiet of my own heart, at evening's holy hour, I strove to dedicate myself afresh in unswerving loyalty to my crucified Lord, and in unceasing love for the souls of men for whom he died.

## IX

### BETHLEHEM—"HOUSE OF BREAD"

THERE is no sweeter name in Palestine, and but few sweeter names in any land or tongue, than Bethlehem. In it are ten thousand memories of joy and tenderness. There is no pleasanter ride in Palestine than that between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The distance is only about six miles; the road is practically level, and it is marked by more evidences of industry and prosperity than are usual in Palestine. All the historical allusions connected with the journey to Bethlehem, and with the place itself, are interesting and instructive to an unusual degree. Once more we start from the Jaffa Gate; we descend into the valley of Gihon, crossing it at the upper end of the lower pool, we go over the hill of Evil Counsel, and soon are on the broad plain of the Giants. In, or near, the valley of the Giants, valley of Rephaim, David fought many a hard fight, twice defeating the Philistines here.<sup>1</sup> Over this plain Solomon often drove in splendor to his pools and gardens. The valley is a broad, cultivated upland, and is between four and five miles long. On our left hand, shortly after leaving the city, we have the tradi-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. 5 : 17-25; 23 : 13; 1 Chron. 11 : 15, 16; 14 : 9-16.

tional tree on which Judas hanged himself ; and also the country house of Caiaphas, the high priest. The boundary between Judah and Benjamin is here crossed. As we journeyed toward Bethlehem, it was interesting to remember that probably along this very road the wise men from the East journeyed when they left Herod in Jerusalem to worship the true King in the manger at Bethlehem. Shortly before reaching the top of the long rise of ground, forming part of the low ridge between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, we see the well of the Magi, as it is called. Tradition informs us that the wise men, after leaving Herod, were in doubt as to the direction which they should take, and, being weary with their journey, they stopped to draw water. At that moment, to their equal surprise and joy, they saw the star reflected in the well. With fresh courage and complete assurance, they followed the star "until it stood over where the young child was." Reaching the top of the long hill, we are at the convent known as Mar-Elyas ; this is a large building and is the property of the Greek Church. There is a legend that here Elijah was helped by the angels in his flight from Jezebel. Opposite the convent is a rock in which there are certain depressions made, according to the tradition, by the body of Elijah when he lay on the rock during his flight from the wrath of Jezebel. These statements are pure traditions, and without any basis in historic fact. It is much more probable that the convent is named from a certain Bishop Elias, who was its

founder, and that the Prophet Elijah has no real connection whatever with the name. At this point the view is remarkably interesting. We were glad here to dismount and take a little time in looking backward to Jerusalem and forward to Bethlehem. From this ridge both places are visible,—the one the place in which Christ was born, the other that in which he died. The peculiar transparency of the atmosphere in Palestine makes distance very deceptive. Places three to five miles distant seem to be not more than half a mile. From the same cause voices can easily be heard at distances so great as to astonish those accustomed to live in the cloudy atmosphere of most countries.

Descending the hill we soon reach the tomb of Rachel. The building over the tomb is modern, and is crowned with a dome; beneath this dome rest the ashes of Jacob's beloved Rachel. It is one of the few shrines which Moslems, Jews, and Christians agree in honoring. The story in Gen. 35 : 16-20, giving an account of Rachel's death, is one of the most touching in any history. After the lapse of thousands of years, years of sorrow and joy, defeat and triumph, the story is not effaced from the memory of Rachel's posterity. Week by week women come to wail with wild expressions of grief at this ancient tomb. Nothing can be more touching than the account of Rachel's death. We are distinctly informed that as her soul was departing, she called the name of her new-born son, Benoni, son of my sorrow; but his father called him

Benjamin, the son of my right hand. Then Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem; and Jacob set a pillar upon her grave. For fourteen long years he served Laban in order to win Rachel as his bride; and these years seemed to him but a few days because of the tender love which he cherished toward her. After long and weary years had passed, and the old man was nearing his end, he repeats with touching particularity and the tenderest pathos the details of her death and burial.<sup>1</sup>

A short distance west of Rachel's tomb is a village named Beit Jala; it has a population of about three thousand, mostly Greek Christians. It is also the residence of the Latin and Greek patriarchs. It has been supposed by many that this is the ancient Zelzah. If so, it was here that Saul was met by the messengers of Samuel, who said: "The asses which thou wentest to seek are found; and lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for thee, saying, What shall I do for my son?"<sup>2</sup> Soon we reach a point where there were two roads; the one going to Bethlehem and the other to Solomon's Pools. The name is taken from the passage in Eccl. 2 : 6, "I made me pools of water." We rode to the pools, and they are worthy of a visit. Without doubt before long the old channels between these pools and the city will be repaired so that water may again flow as in the early day. Perhaps it was here that the "sealed fountain"

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 48 : 7.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. 10 : 2.



of Solomon's Song was located. These pools consist of three large cisterns of marble masonry; the basins are still in an excellent state of preservation. Parts of the pools doubtless date from Solomon's time, although restored by Pontius Pilate and others. These pools formerly furnished a supply of water for Jerusalem; now, however, it is conveyed only to Bethlehem. But efforts are making to trace the course of the original aqueduct, and it is not too much to say that water will again flow along this ancient duct to Jerusalem. The pools are an interesting object for all tourists and should be visited by them if possible. Not far from the pools of Solomon is the valley of Etham, the modern Urtas. Doctor Fish, Doctor Bonar, and others, among them being Mr. Meshullam, a Christian Jew, who has lived for more than thirty years in the village, believe that this is the true Emmaus to which the two disciples were retiring when Jesus overtook them. The Arabs call the place El-Hammour, meaning "baths"; the meaning of Emmaus is "warm spring," and it is just about the right distance from Jerusalem as described by Luke. Josephus mentions a village just about this distance. Jerome and Eusebius, making it identical with the Emmaus on the border of the plain of Philistia, afterward called Nicopolis, would place it there. Doctor Robinson gives the weight of his name to the old theory, but the distance from Jerusalem, twenty miles, is fatal to it. The latest theory, if that of Doctor Fish be not accepted, places it at the

present El-Kubeibeh, about nine miles northwest of Jerusalem. Rector Zschokka, of the Austrian pilgrim-house at Jerusalem, takes this view in an able monograph on this subject.

We shortly went to Bethlehem. The views of Bethlehem, as the ancient town is approached, are picturesque in the extreme. It is seen to be an irregular village on a broken and rugged hill. The composite character of the church of the Nativity and the convent, leaves one for a time in doubt whether he is approaching a castle or a church. Undulating hills stand around the ancient town; fig and olive trees and vines are seen on the terraced hills. The houses are of whitish limestone. The roofs of some of them are flat, while others have domes. It is said there are but about three hundred to four hundred houses and the population is about five thousand. The people are usually called Christians; but the name is simply a general term to indicate that they are neither Jews nor Mohammedans. The manufacture of rosaries, trinkets, and souvenirs of various kinds, is the chief means of support. We can readily believe that this is the most Christian town in Palestine. The people have the reputation of being turbulent as well as handsome; the women certainly are among the finest-looking in the whole land. They seem to be more European than Asiatic. Perhaps, indeed, they are European rather than Oriental. Doubtless some of them are the remote descendants of the crusaders who married native women and remained in the vicinity.

As we approach the city let us refresh our memories with Bible references to Bethlehem. It is first alluded to in Scriptures as Ephrath. This is the Hebrew term expressive of the fruitfulness of the locality; it is so named in connection with the death of Rachel. On yonder plain is laid the pastoral story of Ruth, who gleaned behind the reapers in the fields of Boaz. Perhaps near yonder city gate occurred the quaint procedure, in fulfillment of the Mosaic law, when Ruth became the wife of Boaz, and so finally the mother of kings and of the Saviour of the world. Here David was anointed by Samuel to be king of Israel. On yonder hills he had spent his youth tending sheep, and these glens and valleys echoed those glorious songs, which have since sounded through the world. It has been supposed that the family of David kept possession of their ancestral lands on the hills of Bethlehem until the birth of Christ. If so, Joseph, in going with Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem, was literally going to his own house, because he was of the house and lineage of David. It has been conjectured that the habitation or house of Chinham<sup>1</sup> was originally the dwelling-place of Boaz, then of Jesse, and so of the family and descendants of David. It may thus have been the khan or inn to which Joseph and Mary came. The birth of great David's greater Son has given Bethlehem its glory and immortality. Because

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<sup>1</sup> Jer. 41 : 17.

here the Christ was born the name of Bethlehem is sung at the Christmas-tide by thousands of children round the globe, and will be sung so long as time shall last.<sup>1</sup>

Yonder, a mile east of the town, is the plain of the shepherds. From this spot the heavenly minstrelsies broke forth; here the stars looked down on the scene of the wondrous birth, and if they sang at the world's creation, might they not sing at its redemption? What prophecies were here fulfilled! What hopes were here born; what glories illumined the night with their heavenly splendors; what influences have gone hence to save this sinful world! One might fill a volume with the thoughts suggested by the name of Bethlehem. Most fitting was it that he who was the Bread of heaven should be born in the town Bethlehem—house of bread.

THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY.—This church stands on the traditional spot of the illustrious birth. There are ancient traditions that Christ was born in a cave or grotto near which was the inn of Bethlehem, in which there was no room for the weary travelers on this eventful occasion. Justin Martyr places the scene of the nativity in a cave. The church erected over the alleged place of the birth is a fortress-like pile of buildings, including three convents; one belonging to the Latin, one to the Greek, and one to the Armenian Church. It

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<sup>1</sup> Micah 5 : 2.

stands at the eastern extremity of the village. The building is one hundred and twenty by one hundred and ten feet. It was erected by Helena, the mother of Constantine, in the year 327. The nave of the church is the common property of Christians of every name. It is said to be "the oldest monument of Christian architecture in the world." It is probably all that now remains of the Basilica erected by Helena. As the property of all Christians in general, it is that of no sect in particular, and this fact may account for its neglected appearance. In this ancient edifice, once brilliant with colored marbles and fine gold, Baldwin was crowned as king of Jerusalem. He was the youngest brother of Godfrey of Bouillon; but while Godfrey was a disinterested enthusiast, Baldwin was worldly and ambitious. It is said that "the last repairs on the building were executed by Edward IV. of England." The church contains five rows of marble columns, each column being a monolith, and some of them probably once belonging to Solomon's temple. The roof is of cedar taken from Lebanon. We descend a spiral staircase a distance of perhaps twenty feet below the floor of the church, and reach the chapel or grotto of the nativity, which is a cave in the rock over which the church was erected. We enter a vault thirty-three feet by eleven, encased with Italian marbles and decorated with embroidery and ornaments of many kinds. We now approach a spot of peculiar sacredness. In the pavement is a marble slab in which is set a

silver star, as indicating the exact place of our Lord's birth. It is not surprising that pilgrims kneel in reverence on or beside this star, and kiss the star and the marble in which it is set. Around the star is this inscription: "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.*" Above this star sixteen silver lamps continually burn. Of these, six belong to the Greek Church, five to the Latin, and five to the Armenian. Fierce fights have often taken place at the very spot where the Prince of Peace was born. Not long ago a representative of the Greek Church came into savage conflict with a priest of the Roman Church at this place. Firearms were immediately drawn, and the Roman priest was shot. The case became a somewhat celebrated one, but the prisoner mysteriously escaped and was never brought to trial. Such conduct is a sad commentary on human nature as manifested at the place of our Lord's birth.

The incarnation of Christ is the greatest mystery in human history. If we grant the manger at Bethlehem, all else in the life of our Lord was to be expected. Here it was that the Word became flesh; here it was that divinity was humanized in order that humanity might be divinized; here it was that the Son of God became a Son of man that the sons of men might become sons of God. There is no more impressive and suggestive place beneath the heavens than this star which indicates the alleged place of Christ's birth. Perhaps there is no good reason for our doubting that this is the exact spot of the mighti-

est event of which our sinful world has been the theatre.

OTHER INTERESTING SITES.—Not far distant from the spot we have been considering is the chapel of the Manger. Here, according to tradition, the wooden manger is said to have been discovered. This manger is now in the church of St. Maria Maggiore at Rome. Near this is the altar of the Magi, which marks the spot where the wise men presented their gifts. Here are the chapel of Joseph, indicating where he retired at the time of the holy birth, and where the angel appeared commanding the flight into Egypt; and the altar of the Innocents. Tradition tells us that thousands of the children slain by Herod were buried here; but there never was a greater error than to suppose that thousands, or hundreds, or even scores of children were slain by Herod. A careful interpretation of all the facts will probably show that there could not have been more than ten or twelve children of the age described in the neighborhood. There is not space here to go into details, but one hazards no risk in affirming that probably at the outside, not more than ten or a dozen children were slain by Herod. Infidels have savagely criticised the Bible narrative, as if it were responsible for the enormous exaggerations of irresponsible medieval monks and saints.

Not far distant is the so-called tomb of Eusebius, but much doubt must always be associated with its authenticity. Near to the birth-

place of our Lord is the chapel and tomb of St. Jerome. Here he spent thirty of his declining years, believing that all the while the peals of the last judgment trump were sounding in his ears. Dean Stanley in his "Sinai and Palestine" gives a thrilling description of these long years of toils and tears, of prayers and penances. Here Jerome wrote his books and spent his time in the greatest austerities. He was the only one of the many monks sheltered in this grotto since the time of Constantine, as Dean Stanley reminds us, whose name has traveled through the world. Here he dreamed, studied, prayed, and fasted; here he gathered round him, in small communities, devoted followers who became the centers of conventual life in Palestine. Here the fiery spirit of his Dalmatian birthplace found expression in translations, commentaries, and letters. From this lonely cave he sent forth influences which to some degree have shaped the religious and philosophical thinking of the world. His great work, however, was his famous translation of the Scriptures, which is still the "*Biblia Vulgata*" of the Latin Church. Dean Stanley calls special attention to that most pathetic scene, his last communion and death, at which all the world has been in a sense present through the wonderful painting of Domenichino. The great painter has given us a vivid representation of the exhausted frame and sinking flesh and consecrated spirit of Jerome pluming itself for its flight to the skies.

Leaving Bethlehem, we visit on the way back



to Jerusalem the well of Bethlehem, or David's Well. It is the place referred to in 2 Sam. 23 : 13-17. It will be remembered that when David and his men were in the cave of Adullam, David longed for a drink from this well, saying : "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which is by the gate." But Bethlehem was garrisoned by the Philistines. Three brave men heard David's wish, and with great heroism dashed through the Philistine ranks and soon returned, bringing David the water for which he had longed. With a chivalry worthy of all praise, David would not drink the water, to procure which his followers had risked their lives, but he poured it out as an offering unto the Lord. Not far distant is the Milk Grotto, with its legends of the infant Jesus and his mother. Yonder is a shepherd going before his sheep, calling them by name and leading them out, perhaps from the very spot where shepherds heard the notes of angelic song on the night that Christ was born.

We hasten back to Jerusalem. The sun is nearing its setting. Lepers with their wild tones and shriveled forms meet us asking alms. This has been a wonderful afternoon ; never, never shall I forget the afternoon of the twenty-eighth of September, 1895, when I stood over the silver star which marks the place of the birth of Jesus Christ, Son of man, Son of God, Child of the manger, and Ancient of days.

## X

### FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICHO

WE now pass out of Jerusalem through St. Stephen's Gate and descend into the valley of Kedron; and passing the garden of Gethsemane, we soon bear upward over a depression of the Mount of Olives. This mountain is now called Jebel-et-Tur. It is a ridge two miles long, running north on the east side of Jerusalem, from which it is separated by the Kedron Valley. It rises two thousand six hundred and sixty-five feet above the Mediterranean, and about three thousand five hundred feet above the Jordan Valley, only fifteen miles distant. There are many tombs cut in the rocks on the side of the mountain. Perhaps there is no spot on the whole globe which unites so glorious a view with so many solemn and sublime memories. Up this mountain David climbed when fleeing from Absalom, and over it he, who was David's son and David's Lord, often passed going to and from Jerusalem.

The spot is finally reached where Christ, on the day of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, wept over the doomed city. Passing toward Bethany we soon arrive at the place pointed out as that where the fig tree stood on which Jesus

pronounced his anathema because of its fruitlessness. Like the Jewish nation, it was guilty of hypocrisy; it flaunted its foliage, but was entirely without fruit. With certain varieties of fig trees the new leaf never appears until the fruit is at least partly ripened. This leafy tree, therefore, gave promise of an abundance of fruit which it did not possess. Yonder is the place where it is supposed that Bethphage, "house of figs," was located. It will be remembered that this was the hamlet to which Jesus sent his disciples to "find an ass tied." This place is now practically a houseless ruin.

We now press forward to Bethany. This town is beautifully situated on the eastern slope of Mount Olivet, about two miles southeast of Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho. We see first a rocky knoll where are several ancient graves, and where probably was the grave of Lazarus; that grave was not in the village of Bethany. The Scripture narrative clearly points to this place; we are told that it was a cave, and a stone lay upon it; by this language we are to understand that a stone lay over its mouth. The dragoman or a local guide will point out a grave which is said to be that of Lazarus. Was it really to this grave that Christ pointed when he said, "Take ye away the stone"? Was it here that Christ stood in the hushed silence, raising his eyes to heaven and then saying, with sublime authority, "Lazarus, come forth"? Was it on this soil that Lazarus stood when he came forth from his grave bound hand and foot? Did

he live, as tradition affirms, thirty years afterward in yonder Bethany home? Questions like these force themselves upon us as we tread this soil or stand amid the hallowed scenes of this historic village. Bethany is now a town of thirty or forty families; it is a place without thrift, without industry, without intelligence, and so without prosperity. Its villagers are almost all Moslems, and Moslems of a peculiarly bitter and bigoted type. A few of the houses are certainly old, as is shown by the large and beveled stones built into their walls. All travelers and writers are agreed that these stones clearly belong to some ancient edifice, and have probably been used many times in the construction of successive buildings. The tower on the hill is particularly noticeable. The present name of the place is El-Azariyeh; this name is a corruption of the name Lazarus. Some, however, claim that the true form of the word is Lazariel; if this is the true form, the connection with Lazarus is very marked. The meaning of the word Bethany, as is generally supposed, is "house of dates"; but some derive it from a word meaning "house of sorrow." It is admitted that the etymology of the word is still an unsettled question. The present name is a memorial of the miracle wrought by Christ in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Even to this hour, amid the ruins of this ancient village, there is still a suggestion of the calmness and restfulness which we have long associated with the place. Few places in the New Testament

history are more suggestive of tender memories than is Bethany. Groups of people may still be seen at the eventide returning to this quiet village from the busier scenes of the neighboring city. Bethany is,

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite  
Beyond it.

One can readily imagine that here our Lord found the restful seclusion which made Bethany a place of frequent resort. Mary's act in anointing the precious body of Jesus with the contents of her alabaster box, makes the place fragrant to this hour with the memory of her loving act. The odor of that ointment has filled the world. Vases of alabaster are still made for holding perfumes. It is said that the mouth is filled with cotton and then melted wax is poured over the cotton to exclude the air. It was this stopple which Mary broke, as Dr. Fish reminds us, and not the vase itself. Lazarus is now dead, Martha is no more "cumbered with much serving," and Mary no longer sits here at the Master's feet; but Christ still lives, and Mary's act in anointing him beforehand for his burial still sweetens the whole atmosphere of this dilapidated village, even as it adds a new charm to her character and to the beautiful Scripture narrative.

Another event makes this vicinity famous forever. We shall not forget that on this desolate upland, and perhaps at a point immediately overlooking the village, Jesus took his departure

from the earth on his return to heaven. The place pointed out by tradition on the Mount of Olives as that of the ascension, no one considers to be the true location of this great event ; and probably it was not intended at first that any one should so consider it. It was selected, not because it was supposed to be the actual place, but simply that it might commemorate the actual occurrence. Here on the eastern declivity of the Mount of Olives, sheltered by gently swelling hills and apart from other sights and sounds, our Lord had his last interview with his disciples. We are distinctly told that "he led them out as far as to Bethany." Then he delivered to them his final commission, and as they stood about him "while he blest them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." All the laws of gravitation yielded him homage as their creator and preserver. He began to rise—he rose higher and higher ; and the disciples watched him with strange wonder and great reverence until the cloud received him out of their sight. How wonderfully real was the story of the ascension as we stood on this memorable spot ! It is most unfortunate that the peak of the Mount of Olives should ever have been chosen as the site of the ascension ; if only we bear in mind the words already quoted regarding Bethany, we can readily see that the ascension could not have taken place from the top of Olivet. Once more the sight of the disciples as "they looked steadfastly toward heaven," and once more the sight of the heavenly messengers in white apparel,

assuring the disciples that Jesus would come again "in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven," was present to our thought as we turned away from this sacred spot to continue our journey.

DOWN TO JERICHO.—Our Lord was wonderfully exact in all his uses of speech. He conformed to the usages of his time so far as they were in harmony with truth. When in his familiar parable he tells us that "a certain man went *down* from Jerusalem to Jericho,"<sup>1</sup> he speaks with absolute accuracy. Between these two places there is a literal descent of nearly four thousand feet. Leaving Bethany the country slopes in a succession of naked hills of white limestone and dreary glens for about ten miles. Then what is properly called the valley of the Jordan is reached. Desolation here reigns; all about us is a wilderness stern and dreary; all about us are barren rocks and numerous hills. It is common for us to associate the idea of abundant vegetation with the word wilderness, but according to the Jewish idea, a wilderness was largely a place of desolation. Here we have a jumble of villages, hills, and ragged ravines. For weary miles there is little except ledges of limestone rocks, glaring in the sun and seldom relieved by a tree or by even a single blade of grass. There is little to support wild beasts or even birds in this desolate region;

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 10 : 30.

indeed, it has been said that birds could scarcely find here material enough with which to build their nests. Vividly comes to the thought the picture of John the Baptist, clothed with camel's hair and a girdle of skins about his loins and "as the voice of one crying in the wilderness." Travelers have often likened this region to what the ocean would become if, when its waves were rolling mountains high and in wildest confusion, it should be suddenly congealed and finally petrified.

Through this desolate region the road to Jericho passes. Remains of Roman times are seen where the roads were cut through the barriers of lofty rocks. We are now passing the spot where our Lord locates the scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan and of the man who fell among thieves. Here again we see how fully Jesus appreciated the fitness of things, and how skillfully he harmonized the physical peculiarities of places with the spiritual purposes which he desired to accomplish in his parables. It would be difficult to find in Palestine a worse place than this in which to meet a robber; in order to find a worse place it would be necessary to go beyond the Jordan. Even to this hour skulking Arabs have their homes in the caves and on the cliffs in this vicinity. Doctor Fish, to whom I have already referred, tells us that while he was passing through this wild region, he was met by seven or eight Bedonins, all armed with matchlocks, and presenting a ferocious appearance. One of them seized his horse by the



bit, but they offered him no further harm than arousing him to the fact that danger was near if he fell behind his company while passing through these wild gorges. Here is a khan, pointed out as the inn in which the wounded man of our Lord's parable found needed care. Soon the traveler reaches the probable "brook Cherith, that is before Jordan." Here, as we know, Elijah was concealed from the wrath of Ahab, and here the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening; probably securing both, as has been suggested, from the neighboring idol altars. Here "he drank of this brook" until it dried up.<sup>1</sup> Here too is the valley Achor, where the Israelites stoned the guilty Achan. This valley extends from Gilgal toward Bethel. And through this gorge the Israelites entered Canaan. Almost every spot in this rugged defile is voiceful with historic facts regarding the history of the Israelites in the earlier or the later day.

We now reach the Jordan Plain. The air is burning hot, and the quivering haze makes all about us somewhat dreamy and indistinct. We are far below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. Neither the Jericho of Joshua's day nor that of Christ's day is now here; these two Jerichos were more than a mile apart, but both have now disappeared. Elisha's Fountain marks the site of the first Jericho. This fountain is an immense reservoir, being six hundred and fifty-seven feet by four hundred and ninety feet. A

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 17 : 6.

copious spring bursts from the base of the mound, around which are scattered bits of pottery and foundations of former buildings. The water is cool and sweet. In this neighborhood once stood a great city; hither came the spies from the plains of Moab. Yonder is the mountain where on the advice of Rahab they hid themselves for three days. Around the city which then stood here marched the Israelites for seven days in obedience to the divine command. There stood the walls which fell down flat before the shout of the people of God. Here once was the school of the prophets to which Elijah and Elisha came from Bethel. Once more we see our Lord coming to the new Jericho, and lodging with Zaccheus the publican; once more we see him accompanied by the pilgrims to the Passover as he stops and heals the blind man. How these historic scenes again live and move in our thought; how real all these events become as we associate them with the places in which they occurred. Truly the land illustrates the Book, and truly the Book conveys the exact facts inseparably associated with the land.

From Cleopatra, the wily tyrant Herod the Great rented the revenues of this region, then beautiful with palm groves and balsam gardens. Indeed, one meaning of the word Jericho is "Place of fragrance," although some of the older commentators derive it from a word meaning the moon. Antony gave this region and its valuable products to Cleopatra, thus indicating the potent charm which this beautiful woman

exercised over the brave but weak Roman. Herod the Great made Jericho a magnificent city, and here it was that this monster of iniquity died.

To-day the modern name of Jericho is Riha. It is a wretched village of about two hundred miserable people. The village has been called "the meanest and foulest of Palestine." It consists of dilapidated mud huts, which are covered with thorn bushes, though lately the place has been somewhat improved. Its people are the mongrel race hated by all classes of Arabians; they are given over, it is said, to vices of the most degrading character. The women of the village go to the camps of travelers and give a rude entertainment accompanied by music and dancing. They are hideous-looking creatures; their leader waves a naked short sword, and they all join in a sort of Indian war-whoop. The purpose of the entertainment is to secure *back-sheesh*. These shameless women and worthless men and this group of mud huts are all that remain of the city which Joshua conquered, the city where Cleopatra reveled, the city where Herod riotously reigned, and the city where our Lord performed his deeds of mercy. His miracles of love are the only memory which makes this vicinity still the "place of fragrance."

Somewhere in this neighborhood was the ancient Gilgal; this, it will be remembered, was the site of the first camp of the Israelites after they crossed the Jordan. Here they passed their first night on the west side of the river; here the

twelve stones were set up, which had been taken from the bed of the stream; and here they kept their first Passover in the land of Canaan. The name means "the rolling," because of the observance of the rite of circumcision which had been neglected so far as concerned the Israelites who had been born during the wilderness journey. It is supposed that the name has reference to this passage: "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you";<sup>1</sup> but it is difficult to see how this derivation will apply to the other Gilgals, and it is possible that the name is the adaptation of an earlier word of another language to a Hebrew form. A ride of an hour and a half takes the traveler from Jericho to the Jordan. The Latin bathing-place is seven miles from the Dead Sea; that of the Greeks is two miles farther north. The Latin bathing-place is generally exhibited as the place of Christ's baptism, the place where the Israelites crossed the river, and also the place of other great events in the history of this ancient people. Thrilling emotions sweep the soul as one stands for the first time on the banks of the veritable Jordan, the sacred river of the Holy Land. What stupendous events have occurred, we may believe, on this very spot! From this point the swollen waters at the springtime rolled back to permit Israel to cross over dry-shod. Here Elijah smote the waters with his mantle, and they parted to permit him and Elisha to pass while

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<sup>1</sup> Josh. 5 : 9.

the former was on his way to glory and to God. Here the waters parted again when Elisha smote them with the mantle of Elijah. Somewhere in this vicinity the borrowed axe, used and lost by a stalwart theological student, rose and floated on the stream when touched by the wood at the command of Elisha. Here the waters were consecrated by the most glorious event the Jordan had ever witnessed—the baptism of the Son of God. On this august occasion all the Persons of the blessed Trinity were either audibly or visibly present. The Father was present by an audible voice, the Son was present in human form, and the Spirit in the form of a dove. This is the one instance in the Bible when all the Persons of the Trinity are described as thus audibly or visibly present, although their presence is implied in several passages. The dove still abounds in this region, and the willows fringing the sacred stream are still its favorite haunts. No more beautiful place for the baptism of Jesus could be selected; and here thousands of pilgrims still come during passion week to be baptized in the Jordan, confessing their sins. May we be ready in all things to obey the commands and to follow the example of our divine Lord and Redeemer.

## XI

### THE DEAD SEA

THE Dead Sea is the largest lake in Palestine, and it is, historically and physically, one of the most remarkable sheets of water in the world. In going from Jerusalem to Jericho one may pass in a few hours from winter into summer, from a temperate to a tropical climate. In January, 1884, as Sir J. W. Dawson informs us, there were snowdrifts five feet deep at the Jaffa Gate, and at the same time the Jordan Valley was enjoying a mild temperature. This is one of the features of Palestine to which it owes the variety of its animals and plants. The diversity of climate, soils, and aspects in the hills and valleys produced a corresponding diversity in the habits of the people. In this way Palestine, though so small, represented the whole world, and was the better fitted to be the cradle of Christianity and the birthplace of the Bible.

The Dead Sea has never been navigated to any extent ; but perhaps the Moabites crossed it in boats to invade Judah. We know that the Romans used boats against the fugitive Jews. Costigan, who went from the mouth of the Jordan to the peninsula of Lisan, was the first in modern times to navigate it, and he died of exhaustion.

In 1837 Moore and Beck sailed on part of it, and in 1847 Lieutenant Molynieux sacrificed his life in exploring it. The expedition of Lieutenant Lynch was the most successful, but several of his party died. The water is gradually decreasing. The few tribes who pitch their tents in the vicinity are sickly. They are thoroughly degraded and are charged with the vices of their Sodomite progenitors in "the cities of the plain."

#### ITS NAME AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

—It is called in Scripture the Salt Sea, the sea of the Plain, the East or Former Sea, and once simply the Sea. The Talmudic books call it the sea of Salt and the sea of Sodom. Josephus named it the Asphaltic Lake; the Greeks and Romans used the same name, given it because of the asphaltum or bitumen found on or by it. It was called the Dead Sea because of the absence of living creatures in its waters. The Arabs call it Bahr Lut, the sea of Lot.

It is in the lowest part of the crevasse which extends from the foot of Mount Hermon to the gulf of Akaba, for a distance of about two hundred and fifty miles. The sea is forty-seven miles long from north to south, and at the widest part ten miles in width. It is about the size of Lake Geneva. It can be very clearly seen from the Mount of Olives, being but sixteen miles distant. The Jordan enters it on the north, on the east several streams, among them the Arnon, the Zerka, and the Zerad; and it receives also several winter torrents.

Bare mountain ranges flank the Dead Sea, rising in cliffs on the west fifteen hundred feet, and on the east two thousand feet. At the southwest is a range of hills of rock-salt, seven miles long and three hundred feet high; this range, called Jebel Usdum, or Mount Sodom, runs from north to south. In some cases these mountain ranges jut out into the waters in bold headlands. Besides bitumen and sulphur, there is on the beach a substance called musca, a carbonate of lime which is black and which takes a fine polish. Souvenirs of the Dead Sea are made from it and are sold in Jerusalem. When rubbed it has an intolerable odor, and when placed on hot coals it blazes with a sulphurous smell.

On the east about seven miles from the southern shore, a low promontory, called el-Lisan, the tongue, projects westward and northward into the sea. It is ten miles long and five wide. North of this tongue the sea is an elongated oval in shape. The surface of the Dead Sea is one thousand three hundred and ninety-two feet below the Mediterranean, and three thousand seven hundred and fifty feet below Jerusalem. The level varies ten to fifteen feet according to the season. A series of shore lines shows that it has sunk by degrees hundreds of feet; and the bottom is still subsiding. Twenty years ago the channel between the tongue and the west shore was crossed by two fords; now it is impassable.

The waters are clear and limpid, but exceedingly salt and bitter. A gallon weighs twelve and a quarter pounds, two and a quarter pounds



more than distilled water. There is no hostility to life in the neighborhood but the want of water. If some company would draw off the waters of Jordan thirty miles above and turn them by irrigation into the plain the whole valley would be a garden. Fruits, sugar cane, and cotton would abound. Once sugar cane grew here; traces of sugar mills are still found. Great hotels may some day be built on the shores of the Dead Sea. Boats may float over its surface, gay bathers disport in its waters, pleasure parties go to the mountains, while other groups amuse themselves under the shade trees or on the verandas of their hotels. Health-seekers may yet crowd these shores. This is a sweet picture. Christianity may yet adorn the historic places, cursed by abominable sin, making them blossom as the rose.

HISTORY OF THE DEAD SEA.—We learn from Gen. 13 : 12 that Lot chose for himself a home on the borders of the Dead Sea. It was here that the important battle of four kings against five took place; we learn also that the vale of Siddim, which is the Salt Sea, was full of slime pits, and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell there, and Lot was taken prisoner. In this vicinity were those cities of the plain, cities so full of wickedness that the Lord rained upon them brimstone and fire out of heaven. Thus Sodom has been for thousands of years a symbol of the grossest wickedness. Here Lot's wife, looking backward, became a "pillar,"

rather, a mound, of salt. Travelers can still see at Jebel Usdum salt hills which may well be called pillars of salt to this day.

Sir J. W. Dawson, to whom I am indebted for many facts and some of the language used in these two chapters on the Dead Sea, tells us that the Dead Sea, whether seen in calm or storm, is an impressive sheet of water. Its waters are clear and inodorous; they are also free from pollution and garbage. The mineral springs of the vicinity, the mild winter climate, and the density of its air might well make it in the future what it was in the past, a favorite resort for invalids and pleasure seekers. The name Dead Sea is comparatively modern, and entirely unknown to the writers of the Bible. They associated with it no ideas of horror and desolation; certainly not previous to the destruction of the wicked cities of the plain. They spoke of the region as resembling the garden of the Lord, and its western side was famous for its vineyards.

**BATHING IN THE SEA.**—Most travelers try the curious effect of bathing in the Dead Sea. If one is suffering from any abrasion of the skin, which is not unlikely to be the case where is so much cause for irritation, a bath will cause much suffering. The specific gravity of the water is lightest at the mouth of the Jordan, as there so much fresh water enters. It is therefore well not to bathe too near the entrance of that river. The water is buoyant enough to permit one to stand in it with head and shoulders above the

surface. One floats at ease ; indeed, it is difficult for one to submerge his body. Doctor Robinson tells us that he " could never swim before either in fresh or salt water," but here he " could sit, stand, lie, or swim without difficulty." Its buoyancy has not been exaggerated. The temperature is pleasing, and if one is careful not to get any of the water into the eyes, a bath produces, when there are no abrasions of the skin, a pleasing, though somewhat oily sensation. If fresh water had its buoyancy no one would be drowned. Floating is no effort ; sinking is laborious. The chief annoyance is the tendency of the feet to go out of the water, and then the swimmer's head is in danger of going under. Lieutenant Lynch says : " With great difficulty I kept my feet down, and when I lay on my back and drawing up my knees, placed my hands on them, I rolled immediately over." The differences on account of its buoyancy are due to the difference in its specific gravity. One can curve his body and so lie on the surface almost as one on a couch. Even then one feels almost as if he were a cork, and he is in constant danger of turning over. If one experiences any unpleasant sensations because of irritation of the skin, he can hasten to the Jordan and have a fresh water bath. Many amuse themselves by gathering sea-drift on the beach and taking away water in bottles. There is no living thing in the sea. Fish brought down by the Jordan die almost immediately upon being introduced into the sea ; even salt sea fish soon die. It has sometimes

been asserted that some of the lower forms of life are found, but the statement is open to doubt.

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS.—Most exaggerated and superstitious views were once held regarding this mysterious sea. It was said that no bird could fly over its deadly waters; that no person could breathe its poisonous exhalations, and that in its center there was an abyss into which the Jordan poured its full tide of waters. Among modern explorers, whose careful investigations have done much to explode these superstitions, is Lieutenant Lynch, of the United States Navy, who in 1848 passed down the Jordan from the Sea of Galilee in two metallic boats, and who made a careful survey of the Dead Sea. The density of the water is such that when these metallic boats of Lieutenant Lynch met with a gale on entering the sea from the Jordan, "it seemed as if the bows were encountering the sledge hammers of the Titans instead of the opposing waves of an angry sea." English and French investigators have confirmed his conclusions. One looks in vain for the awful gloom and deathliness which the medieval monks had described. One sees a lovely blue lake, changing into green in the shifting light; at places one finds a sloping sandy beach, up which the waves come with a pleasant murmur. The sea does not destroy vegetable or animal life in its vicinity. The song of birds is heard; birds are seen flitting about the shore; a rabbit runs into his

hole close by the beach. But still, branches and trunks of trees, gnarled and bleached, the driftwood of the Jordan, impart a dreary aspect to the shore. As one remains longer by the shore he is solemnly impressed by its awful stillness. He feels the strange effect, perhaps partly from the law of association, of the general absence of life and the presence of death. Just as in Norway there is an awful stillness and solemnity in the shining of the noonday sun at midnight, so here there is a deadness, a weirdness, and solemnity which one feels though he cannot explain their essential elements. The basin is a bowl which the full tide of the waters of the Jordan can never fill; and the exhalations caused by the great heat give the whole neighborhood the strange and mysterious appearance which all travelers have observed. It seems as if the smoke of the buried cities was forever ascending to heaven.

NAUSEOUS CHARACTER.—Its nauseous character is caused by the extraordinary amount of mineral salts which it holds in solution. The analyses of chemists differ according to different seasons of the year and different distances from the mouth of the Jordan. It has been calculated that six million tons of water fall into the Dead Sea daily. The whole of this amount is carried off by evaporation. The lake has no visible outlet; it is impossible to believe that so low a lake can have an outlet, visible or invisible. But it is not difficult to see how the hot, dry air can

absorb this enormous degree of moisture. It is easy to see how the water which is left behind is impregnated to an unusual extent with mineral substances. Salt also comes from the banks. The water contains twenty-four to twenty-six per cent. of solid substances, seven per cent. of which is chloride of sodium, or common salt. The chloride of magnesium is also largely held in solution, and it is this ingredient which gives the water much of its nauseous and bitter taste. The chloride of calcium makes it feel smooth and oily to the touch. There are also many other ingredients. The water boils at  $221^{\circ}$  Fahr. The salt of the Dead Sea has long been brought to the Jerusalem market.

SCIENTIFIC RESULTS.—Lieutenant Lynch and the American Expedition secured very valuable scientific results. Soundings were taken all over the lake; its geographical position was determined; its depths sounded; its temperature, width, and velocity ascertained; winds, currents, changes of weather, and atmospheric phenomena—these were all discovered and recorded. Lieutenant Lynch in his narrative uses these words:

Everything said in the Bible about the Dead Sea and the Jordan, we believe to be fully verified by our observations. The inference from the Bible that this entire chasm was a plain sunk and overwhelmed by the wrath of God, seems to be sustained by the extraordinary character of our soundings. The bottom of the sea consists of two submerged plains, an elevated and a depressed one, the former averaging thirteen feet, the latter about one thousand three hundred feet below the surface. Through the northern and

largest and deepest one, in a line corresponding with the bed of the Jordan, is a ravine. There can scarcely be a doubt that the whole ghor has sunk from some extraordinary convulsion, preceded probably by an eruption of fire, and a general conflagration of the bitumen which abounded in the plain.

Men without much scientific knowledge can easily see how it comes to pass that there is so much salt in this sea. There is some salt in all rivers; fresh water rivers and lakes are not really fresh. But an unusual quantity of salt is in the rivers which flow into the Dead Sea. Nitrous soil and sulphurous springs supply the saline matter to these rivers. It is also possible that there are hot springs in the sea itself.

Beautiful as is the sea in itself, as beautiful as any lake in England, Scotland, Ireland, Switzerland, or Italy, there is still a fearful suggestiveness in its position, history, and characteristics. Dr. George Adam Smith, speaking of its vicinity, says:

You could not imagine a more proper crown for death. . . . In this awful hollow, this bit of the infernal regions come up to the surface, this hell with the sun shining into it, primitive man laid the scene of God's most terrible judgment on human sin. The glare of Sodom and Gomorrah is flung down the whole length of Scripture history. It is the popular and standard judgment of sin. The story is told in Genesis; it is applied in Deuteronomy, by Amos, by Isaiah, by Jeremiah, by Zephaniah, in Lamentations, and by Ezekiel. Our Lord himself employs it more than once as the figure of the judgment he threatens upon cities where the word is preached in vain, and there we feel the flame scorch our own cheeks. Paul, Peter, Jude, all make mention of it. In the Apocalypse, the great city of sin, *which spiritually is called Sodom* (Rev. 11:8).

These are very strong words, and they are wise and true as strong. Every reader of Scripture recognizes this truth, and every visitor to the Dead Sea feels that it in some weird but real way emphasizes all these solemn Scripture teachings.

There are, probably, stored up in the earth to-day all forces necessary for its destruction. Men sneer at the prophecies contained in the word of God concerning the destruction of the world, but their sneer is not indicative of breadth of knowledge, but rather of narrowness of vision. We are distinctly informed that, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." All the discoveries of modern science are making it easier to believe in the promises and prophecies of the Bible. Christian interpretation has made hopeful progress when it recognizes the unity of God's universe. Science has greatly helped religion in teaching us the universality and the uniformity of law. Once it was thought that this was a doctrine that would be injurious to revealed religion, but that fear has forever passed away. Let no man undertake to limit the power of the Almighty. The most advanced science knows yet but little of the possibilities of God as they are concealed in the heavens above and the earth beneath. Science more and more is laying its tribute of honor on the Bible. One day it will give its proudest crown to Jesus Christ as King in



truth's vast realm. Recognizing these great truths we are able more fully to appreciate these words of Holy Scripture: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

## XII

### THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN

SOME hold that the cities of the plain, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, and Bela or Zoar, were not at the southern end but at the northern end of the Dead Sea. One reason for this opinion is that it is stated that Abraham and Lot could see the plain from the high ground between Bethel and Ai, from which point only the northern end of the Dead Sea is visible. Other reasons are given, such as that these were the cities of the Kikkar, or circle of Jordan, and that this name of circle is not applicable to the south end of the sea. Another argument is that the expedition of the four kings as it swept north from Kadesh-Barnea attacked Hazezon Tamar, which was probably Engedi, before it reached the vale of Siddim, where the king of Sodom and his allies were met. There are still other arguments. But after fairly weighing them, I still hold to the traditional opinion, for reasons which I give in a few sentences. Lot's view, it is implied, took in only a section of the valley, or the name Kikkar may have been extended to the southern end. The argument assumes that there has been no essential change in the locality since that day, but a

marked change because of the eruption is certainly suggested by the narrative. The site of Zoar is a strong argument. It must have been near the southern end of the sea and on its eastern shore. It could not have been among the mountains, for Lot feared he could not get so far, and so begged to stop here. The names suggestive of identity with the original sites still adhere to the places at the southern end of the sea. This argument has never been satisfactorily met; no one has really refuted it. The testimony of unbroken tradition, ancient and modern, Strabo, Josephus, Tacitus, Galen, Jerome, Eusebius, is in favor of the traditional view. Jebel Usdum must be recognized as the representative of Sodom. All the natural conditions of the southern end seem to me far more in harmony with the records of Scripture than those at the northern end. This I instinctively feel. Moses, four and a half centuries later, warns the Israelites against apostasy, telling them (Deut. 29 : 23) that God would overthrow them as he had those cities of the plain. He gives a picture of the site of Sodom and Gomorrah as it appeared in his day; so do Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others, of its appearance in their day. It was then as now a blasted region, an utter desolation.

DESTRUCTION OF THE CITIES.—We are dependent on the Scripture narrative for our knowledge of the facts, so far as any contemporary account of this great event is concerned.

We are told in Gen. 14 : 10 that there were "slimepits" in the vicinity of the cities, which were destroyed. What are these slimepits? Let us use a modern equivalent for that term. What is it? This: petroleum wells. The neighborhood of the Dead Sea was a region of bitumen; it was a region liable to eruptions of the most destructive character. Sir J. W. Dawson, to whom I have already referred with appreciation of his contribution to the literature of this subject and with acknowledgment of my indebtedness to his brief but excellent statements, discussing this point in his book entitled "Egypt and Syria," calls attention to the fact that we have had somewhat similar eruptions in the United States and in Canada. A few years ago, as he reminds us, in the oil district of Petrolia, Canada, a bore-hole struck a reservoir of gas, which rushed out with explosive force, carrying before it a large quantity of petroleum. As was to be expected, the gas took fire, forming a tall column of flame, and soon the burning petroleum spread over the ground and ignited tank after tank of the substance in the neighborhood. Soon a space of about fifteen acres was enveloped in flame, an entire village was burned, and a number of persons lost their lives. The air poured toward the eruption, causing a whirlwind, which carried the dense smoke high into the air, and threw down burning bitumen all around.

Here we have substantially the conditions of the destruction of the cities of the plain. If

we suppose—a very natural supposition—that, at the time described in the Bible, accumulations of inflammable gas and petroleum existed below the plain of Siddim, the escape of these through the opening of a fissure might produce all the effects described. What were these effects? Take the Bible narrative in its essence for the answer. As Doctor Dawson suggests, we have a pillar of smoke rising to heaven, burning bitumen and sulphur raining on the doomed cities, and fire spreading over the vicinity. We have, in a word, what they had in Petrolia, Canada, on the occasion of the eruption which took place there. There was also an explosion near the Dead Sea, an evolution of saline waters, as is implied in the destruction of Lot's wife, and this evolution is the natural accompaniment of the phenomena described, as water is always present in such eruptions. In this case, because of the condensation named, the water would be a brine thick with mud, and so exactly fitted to encrust and cover any object on which it might come. Thus Lot's wife in the most natural way conceivable became a mound of salt.

Doctor Dawson says that no geologist on comparing the narrative in Gen. 19 with the structure of the district can hesitate as to the nature of the phenomena which were presented to the observation of the narrator. Glance again at the narrative in Genesis. The destruction was sudden and unexpected. It was caused by "brimstone and fire," and that is just the Bible's way of saying by burning brimstone. These were

rained down from the sky, and a dense column of smoke ascended to a great height, like the smoke of a furnace or a limekiln, and along with this there was an emission of brine, or saline mud, capable of encrusting any substances.

The volcanoes of 1834 and 1837 brought up from the bottom of the Dead Sea great masses of bitumen, thus confirming the record of Gen. 14 : 10, that here were slime-pits, or bitumen pits. God seems to have used these naturally inflammable materials with which to burn up the cities of the plain. This whole neighborhood seems to have been the "petroleum oil region" of Palestine. It has also been suggested that the inhabitants may have used bitumen in the construction of their houses; they would thus be the more inflammable. Herodotus speaks of the use of bitumen in mortar, and recent explorations in Nineveh show that it was there extensively used for building purposes, the bricks being cemented with bitumen. It is very easy to see how God could, by the use of materials at hand, have exploded the whole region about the Dead Sea, the bitumen and gas taking fire from the burning volcanoes, the flying flames and cinders filling the heavens, to be rained back in "fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest," as is stated in Ps. 11 : 6.

The only point of doubt in the description in Genesis is as to what is meant by "brimstone." Following the explanations given by Doctor Dawson, we say that it might mean sulphur,

large quantities of which there are in some of the Dead Sea deposits. Probably it means here *pitch*; it is derived from the same root as *gopher*, the Hebrew name of the cypress and other resinous woods. The word used here by the Hebrew writer is *gaphrith*. *Zapheth* is the natural word for petroleum or rock oil in its liquid state; *chemar* denotes asphalt or mineral pitch, and *copher* is asphaltic or resinous varnish used for covering and protecting wood and other materials. Noah used *copher* for the ark; the builders of Babel used *chemar* or asphalt as a cement, and the careful mother of Moses used both *chemar* and *zapheth* to make her baby boy's cradle water-tight. The writer here uses the more undecided term *gaphrith*. Why did he employ this term? Probably he did not wish to commit himself to any particular kind of inflammable material, but preferred to use a broad term, which his readers would understand to mean any or all of these materials, and possibly, also, sulphur. The writer of Genesis was a wise man. Some day the "cocksure" critics will speak with vastly more appreciation of his wisdom and of their own ignorance than they do to-day.

RECAPITULATION.—From the beds of bituminous limestone in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, and which, no doubt, underlie its bed, bituminous and gaseous substances must have been constantly exuding; when these regions were shaken by an earthquake special facility

was given for the escape of these inflammable products. We have only to suppose, with Doctor Dawson, that at the time in question reservoirs of condensed gas and petroleum existed under the plain of Siddim, and that these were suddenly discharged, either by their own accumulated pressure or by an earthquake shock fracturing the overlying beds, then all the phenomena described in the book of Genesis would naturally, I may say inevitably, occur. After the eruption the site would be covered with saline and sulphurous deposit. The reservoirs which previously existed under the ground would be exhausted, permanently dried up; then there would be a subsidence of the ground where the reservoirs had been, and this subsidence would account for the idea of the submerged cities. From a purely scientific point of view the Scripture narrative is a unique, superb, and sublime description of a natural phenomenon as rare as it is wonderful and sublime. Scientific explorations have shown that the inspired narrative is in perfect harmony with the scientific possibilities of this remarkable region. The carping critics who have opposed this narrative show their lack of scientific knowledge quite as much as their want of religious faith. God is making modern science his handmaid, to lead scholarly as well as unscholarly but devout students to bow in reverence at the feet of Jesus Christ as the world's greatest teacher. The Bible is proving itself to be an "up-to-date" book for the close of the nineteenth century. It



is the book for all times and for all lands. It is scientifically up to the date of the most recent discoveries.

The narrative in Genesis suggests that Lot's wife remained behind, looking back in guilty longing to go back, until she was overtaken by the fire and saline ejections, and that when the survivors sought her they found only "a heap of saline incrustation marking the place where she perished." The word in the original is not a "pillar," but rather a mound. The idea of the pillar was probably suggested to the translators by the fables which connect her with the pillar-like masses of salt on the salt cliff of Jebel Usdum, but these fables have no warrant in the Bible.

The physical phenomena named as used by God in the destruction of the cities of the plain in no way detract from the providential character of that event. God knows how to use all the tremendous agencies of nature in the infliction of his righteous judgments. We do not eliminate God because we put him farther back in the line of causes. There is a truly Christian evolution. Properly understood, God's power and wisdom may be more fully illustrated when he is thus placed. He is not less the Creator because the creation is not immediate. Perhaps Christian teachers have been unfortunately timid in admitting these truths. The word of God nowhere hesitates to honor all the laws of nature. The laws of nature are the laws of God. Science and revelation cannot conflict; science is revela-

tion, within its range and for its own special truths. Nature and revelation are different chapters in the one volume. God as truly manifested the providential character of the destruction of the cities of the plain as if the fire had come directly from the clouds of heaven. All the elements and forces stored up in nature are revelations of the will and purpose of God. Let us lay hold of this truth ; let us rejoice in seeing God in the affairs of to-day as truly as in any period in history. He is as much with his people now as he was in the days of Abraham and Isaac, in the days of David and Solomon, in the days of Isaiah and Daniel, in the days of Peter and Paul. We have lost much power by forgetting this truth. Let us emphasize the presence and power of God in all the natural phenomena described in the Bible and in all the providential events of to-day.

He would be a rash man who should affirm that God is not now holding back judgments from our cities because of the prayers of his people. It is a most suggestive thing that Abraham prayed for Sodom and that God listened to his prayers. One's heart is moved as he sees the servant of God holding converse with him and appealing to God's glory as a motive for God's manifestation of power. We see Abraham coming down from the fifty for whose sake, should they be found in Sodom, God had promised to save the city, to ten. God promised not to destroy the city for the tens' sake. Perhaps if Abraham had dared reduce the number to five

God might have promised to save the city for their sake. Why did not Abraham so pray? Who can answer these questions? Perhaps the richest blessings which come to our modern life come in answer to the prayers of God's people. We never know through what channels many of our choicest blessings are brought. God has ten thousand ministries through which he can give his benediction to his people.

It is beautiful to see how God perfected the way of escape from these doomed cities. All the directions given were very exact. All the promises which God made were literally fulfilled. The heathen give us the proverb, "The feet of the avenging deities are shod with wool." But God gives warning upon warning, line upon line, precept upon precept. He showed how the godly in Sodom might escape. Those who obeyed his command received his protection; only those who were guilty of disobedience suffered the punishment threatened. God has provided a way of escape for us to-day. He has sent his only begotten Son. Christ died that we might live. He has sent his preachers warning us to flee to the mountain. May we listen to the words of the great teacher and preacher when he said, "Remember Lot's wife." And may we not stop until we have gone to his cross and have found safety there for time and for eternity.

### XIII

#### JERUSALEM TO BETHEL

WE turn now northward in our journeyings in Palestine. We mount our horses and start from this historic city before daylight. The air was fresh on the first day of October. Indeed, the motion of the horses was very necessary to keep us warm. Strangely contradictory emotions are in our minds as we ride from the city in the gray dawn of the morning. Never shall I forget the occasion.

Roads become thoroughfares because they are the natural courses of travel; and as a result, they are not subject to many changes. We may, therefore, be sure that the road which we are taking to the north is the old road to and from Jerusalem. Along this road Abraham journeyed from Bethel to Hebron; over this track passed Jacob in his lonely exile going from Beer-sheba to Bethel; Joshua in his hasty march from Jericho to meet the kings in battle at Gibeon passed over part of this track; and the Philistines went over this road when they came up from the Maritime Plain and pitched in Michmash.

The years pass. Great changes have taken place. Pompey comes up from the valley of the Jordan and travels this rough path. Again

great changes have come; the years have passed. Kingdoms have risen and fallen. The crusaders have come to rescue the Holy City from the infidel. They are marching from Tyre to Jerusalem, and they pass over this very road. Wonderful memories crowded my mind as with the dawning day I left Jerusalem and began my ride of at least seven days over this historic road. Already groups of country people were hastening, with loads of vegetables and wood and many other things piled on the backs of camels and donkeys, to the early morning market in Jerusalem. Some caravans had been traveling for more than a week with wheat from the Hauran; others, and many of them barefooted women, had traveled a day and a night to reach the market. With the opening day they would be seated outside the Jaffa Gate, or within the walls of Jerusalem, offering their various products to the chafing purchasers.

Leaving the city we passed by the Russian quarter, then by the tombs of the kings, and soon we climbed the hill Scopus. The day was breaking. The eastern sky was colored with crimson and gold. The gleaming light was falling on hills and valleys, and on the towers and pinnacles of hoary, holy, and desecrated Jerusalem, city of song and story, city of ancient splendor and of present squalor. Soon after I had my last view of the Holy City. The impression made on my mind will never be effaced. From this neighborhood the traveler's last view of Jerusalem is generally taken, and nearly every

traveler experiences emotions deeper than he can well describe. Here crusaders, pilgrims of all ages, devotees of many faiths, Bible students from many lands, and vacation tourists of many kinds, have felt the spell of a marvelous past and the strange charm of a sad present. It has been well suggested that if possible every traveler should get his first view of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, and his last view from this hill of Scopus.

The road we are traveling is very rough. The horses have to pick their steps with great care. Frequently we have to turn out to let the caravans pass. Once this was a region of thrift and prosperity; now the contrast is very marked. Isaiah's words are sadly true: "The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth. . . The earth mourneth and languisheth" (33 : 8, 9). Passing over the plain and then taking a northerly direction, we see on our left the village of Shafat. It is on the site of the ancient Nob. Here may be seen the ruins of a church or tower and of cisterns hewn in the rock. Nob was a priestly city in the tribe of Benjamin. Here in the time of Saul the tabernacle and ark were stationed, and to this place David fled. It will be remembered that Ahimelech the high priest received David as a refugee from the court of the jealous Saul. He gave shewbread from the golden table and the sword of Goliath. Doeg, the Edomite, informed Saul of what had occurred, and Saul ordered that Nob should be smitten with the edge of the sword. The king's exe-

cutioners refused to perform the bloody deed. Doeg therefore obeyed the king and slew the priests and people. It was a horrible day. Here the men of Israel vowed not to return to their homes until they had punished the men of Gibeah for their abominable crime (Judg. 21 : 20, 21). At Saul's call the people rallied here to fight the Philistines. If this is the Mizpeh of Benjamin, it was here that Saul was chosen king, when for the first time in the history of Israel, was heard the shout, "God save the king."

GIBEAH OF SAUL.—A mile or so from Nob rises the hill of Tel el-Ful, meaning "the little hill of beans." Here are the ruins of a large building, perhaps a fort erected by the crusaders, the view from which is very extensive. Perhaps this Gibeah is identical with that of Benjamin. If so, then it was here that David permitted the murder of the seven sons of Saul. This was the native place of Saul, the first king of Israel. It was also the seat of government during the greater part of his reign. It was near here that the horrid story of the Levite's fate, as recorded in Judg. 19-21 was enacted. But the most touching incident was the murder of the descendants of Saul of which I have spoken.<sup>1</sup> This story gives us one of the most remarkable illustrations of motherly love ever recorded in any history. Two of the sons of Rizpah were among the victims slain; they "were put to

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. 21 : 10.

death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest. And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night." We thus see that for six of the hottest months of the year the sorrowing woman watched the bodies of her sons, showing that "love is stronger than death." Wonderful picture this of maternal love, this lone watcher by day and night upon the rock under the scorching sun of a Syrian summer!

BEEROTH.—Passing near Geba, which was taken by Jonathan from the Philistines, Anathoth, the birthplace of Jeremiah, and now a poor village of some twenty houses, and Ramah, to which figurative reference is made in Matt. 2: 17, 18, where it was said, "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping," we come at a distance of nine to ten miles from Jerusalem to the modern El-Bireh, the ancient Beeroth. It owes its name to its abundant supply of water. The village contains about eight hundred inhabitants and is located in a poor district. Near the excellent spring we find a Moslem place of prayer, and also the remains of ancient reservoirs. There are, also, the ruins of a tower, and on the highest ground in the village the ruins of a Christian church. Since the fourteenth century there has been a tradition that it



was here that Mary and Joseph first discovered the absence of the child Jesus from the caravan when returning from the temple at the close of the first day's journey. Travelers going north usually stop here for a night, if they leave Jerusalem in the afternoon. No great historic value can be attached to the tradition, but in all probability this has been the stopping-place of travelers, for the night, since time immemorial, and it may well be that the parents of our Lord halted here. Beeroth, the ancient name, means wells. This was one of the four Hivite or Gibeonite cities that made the league with Joshua.

Leaving Beeroth, we journey about half an hour and come to a region of deepest interest. Near us is Ai, where Israel was at first repulsed and then became victorious. Memories of Achan, who took the Babylonish garment, the silver, and the gold, and who suffered so fearfully for his sin, fill the mind. The victories of Joshua live again before us. He made this place a heap of ruins; he hanged its king on a tree. And now we are at Bethel. This is a dear household name. How the past comes upon one at such a place. Dreams of heaven suggest themselves. The stairway of the excellent glory, venerable patriarchs, stone altars, earth and heaven, visits of angels—these and other memories make this a hallowed spot. Here was laid the foundation stone of lowly chapels and lofty cathedrals all over the world.

Who would not sleep on such a bed,  
With a stony pillow for his head?

This ride carried us over rough roads and through a truly historic region. Many of the memories of the places passed were sad in the extreme. God's people were often guilty of great cruelty, according to the standards of our day. We must not, however, judge them by those standards. Too many critics forget that Christ had not then come and that the Sermon on the Mount had not then been preached. They carry the standards of the New Testament to the conduct of God's children as recorded in the Old Testament. This is not fair historical criticism. We do not judge the men of even a few hundred years ago by the standards according to which we estimate men at the closing years of the nineteenth century. It is manifestly unjust to use the teachings of one part of the Bible to condemn the children of God who did not have those teachings, and whose acts are recorded in another part of the Bible. The light of Christianity is like the natural light of the day—it has its dawn, its progress, and finally its meridian splendor. Many immature Christians are startled by the conduct of God's followers and the world's best men of the early day, but they ought not to allow these imperfect characters to disturb their faith in God nor their judgment of his divine revelation. We might as well reject all the conclusions of modern science because of the imperfect science and scientists of the Middle Ages, as to reject the Bible because God's representatives in the early day fell far short of the standard placed *before* us by Christ.

There is a growth, a development, an evolution in all these matters. We must judge men by the best standards of their time; and their perfection or imperfection must be determined according to their realization of or departure from those standards.

These desolate hills over which we have been passing are remarkable illustrations of the fulfillment of prophecy. Bethel is voiceful for God. These ruins, on the tops of the hills over which we have passed, are mighty preachers, telling us of the fulfillment of prophecy. The Holy Land is an unimpeachable witness to the Holy Book. All these neighborhoods also illustrate the providence of God in watching over his people in all ages and among all nations. He was the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Every hill and valley illustrates his providential care over his people.

The Bible is an honest book. It does not hesitate to declare the vices as well as the virtues of God's people. Had it been written by uninspired men it would have minimized or denied the vices of its heroes, and it would have created or magnified their virtues. It does neither. It does not exaggerate nor does it extenuate; it sets down naught in malice; it dares to tell the truth. In this respect it is a unique book in literature. It shows us that when God's children are loyal and obedient they are prosperous, but when they oppose or forget, God misfortunes come to them thick and fast. This lesson is taught us by all the towns we

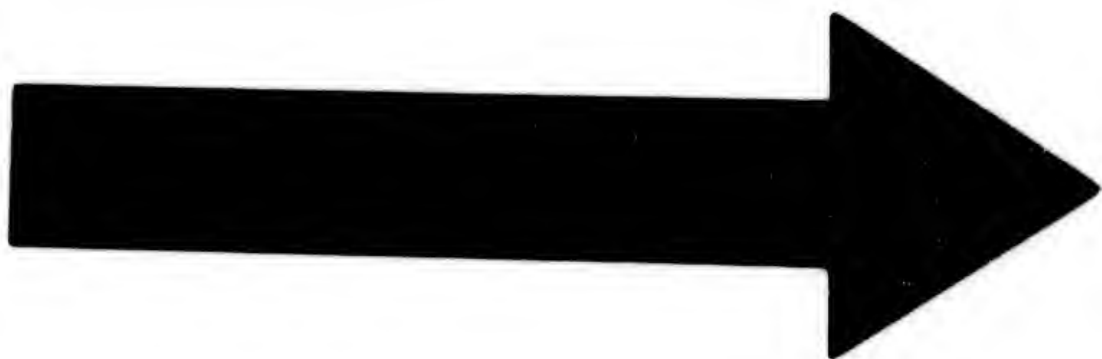
have passed and by all the historic characters connected with these towns. At Ai Israel was repulsed because of sin; at Ai Israel finally was victorious because of repentance, reparation, and chastisement. At Bethel there is a mingling of lessons growing out of the contradictory elements in Jacob's character. The Bible is not responsible for his sin. It nowhere justifies his act nor that of his mother in cheating the brother and the aged husband and father. Jacob sinned and Jacob suffered. We ought not to undertake to palliate wrong when it is committed by those who call themselves God's people. The great act, which we call conversion, had not yet taken place in the experience of Jacob. Not until years afterward, when on the banks of the brook Jabbok he wrestled with the unknown Stranger, did he pass over from Jacob to Israel, from being the "supplanter" to becoming the "prevailer with God." As we remount our horses and resume our journey, all these lessons impress themselves deeply on the mind. Let us rejoice in the God of Jacob and the God of Bethel, and let us pray that every church and every home may be a true Bethel—"house of God."

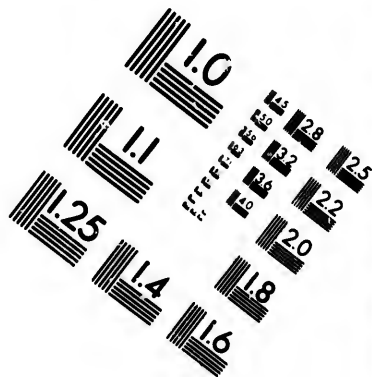
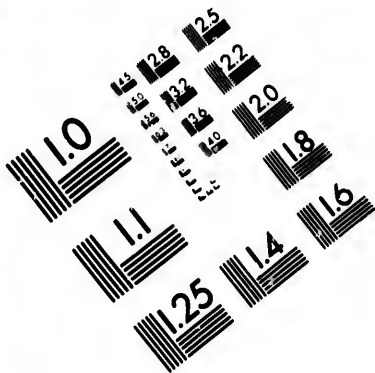
## XIV

### BETHEL TO SHILOH

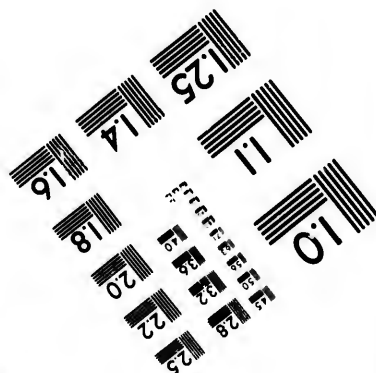
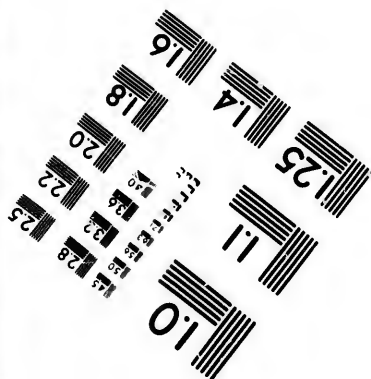
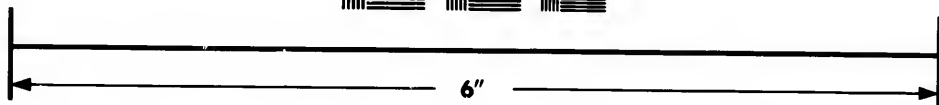
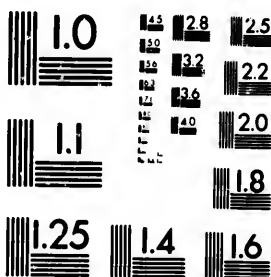
LEAVING Jerusalem about five o'clock in the morning, we reached Bethel about eight the same morning. The distance is about nine to ten miles, and the rate of progress over these rough roads is only about three miles an hour.

The modern name of the place is Betin, but although some have supposed that the ancient Bethel lay a little farther north, it is almost certain that Betin is identical with it. To-day it is a poor village on a hill, with wretched huts and about five hundred inhabitants. It is on a hill with higher hills around it, and on every side are stretches of rocks, some of which may have served Jacob for a pillow, pillar, and altar. In the highest part of the village there are the remains of a tower, and near-by are the walls of a church. There is also an old stone cistern, made of solid masonry; it is fed by two living fountains, and herds of cattle may often be seen there drinking, and Arab maidens filling their pitchers. This tank, three hundred feet long by two hundred feet wide, is in a grass-grown field. Wells in the East are always associated with historic facts and many legends. It is almost





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certain that it was to this well the maidens of Sarah came to get water, and that it was here the cattle of Abraham often drank. Standing beside this well it is easy to picture the scenes of Bethel's ancient glory. A little to the north of the village there is a remarkable circle of stones, which it is well-nigh certain must have had a religious significance. Some of the stones stand up like columns or tombstones or some sort of monuments. They remind one of the Druidical circles of stones in England and Scotland. One cannot resist the spell of time, locality, and association here.

Let us dismount from our horses. As has already been said, while the distance from Jerusalem is comparatively short, yet we need a little change after three hours of rough riding. Let us now take our Bibles and give ourselves up to the charm of the place while we refresh our minds with the biblical incidents. Up the valley yonder came Abraham and Lot from the Jordan, when on their way from the far East they first pitched their tents in Palestine. Perhaps their tents were just where we stand. On this hill near us it may be they parted, Lot choosing the rich plain of the Jordan, which plain we now clearly see as we stand on this knoll. Lot showed his selfishness and Abraham his great magnanimity in this transaction. Here at Bethel Abraham reared an altar and called upon the name of the Lord, who had promised this land to him and his seed forever. From Bethel Abraham went into Egypt, fell into temptation,

and dishonored God before the heathen king, who sent him away out of the land. One hundred and fifty years pass. Jacob is now here on his way from the south to rest at night while fleeing from his justly angered brother. He has traveled forty miles. He has the worst of all traveling companions, a guilty conscience. He is alone. He is exposed to danger. Near is the town of Luz. Its lights may be seen; its voices heard. But he does not enter. He might be discovered. He is on the backbone of Palestine. All about him lie great stones. They are like steps in a stair. That thought deeply impressed me as I looked about with this narrative in my mind. We read that he "took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down on that place to sleep." These stones arranged like steps of a stair were the last sight before his eyes as he went to sleep. Then came his dreams, and the stones became a mystic ladder, reaching from earth to heaven, and over its steps went the angels, ascending and descending. He awoke; he made the solemn vow which consecrated him to the service of God. As he awakes he exclaims: "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."<sup>1</sup> The stone which had been his pillow he set up for a pillar and poured oil upon it. He also built an altar and the name of the place was changed from Luz to Bethel, "House of God." That stone

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 28 : 11-22.

was the prophecy of all our churches in every land. Tradition says that it was taken to Jerusalem, thence to Spain, thence to Ireland, thence to Scotland, and thence to England, and that it is now built into the coronation chair which stands in Westminster Abbey.

Possibly Jacob erected some rude building over the altar; if so, this was the first local religious building ever erected on the earth, the first architectural witness to the worship of the living God. Thirty years later Jacob again visited Bethel; there he pitched his tent and reconsecrated the spot in fulfillment of his vow, and there he received renewed covenant promises from God. Here under an oak tree he buried Deborah, Rachel's nurse. Bethel was captured by Joshua and given to Benjamin. Here the Ark of the Covenant and probably the tabernacle long remained. Here at times Saul held his court. After the days of Solomon, Bethel became the seat of gross idolatry. Jeroboam chose it, because of the early sacredness attached to it, as the place for one of his golden calves, in order that he might wean the hearts of the people from the worship of God in Jerusalem. There was now a more stately sanctuary, a splendid temple to rival that at Jerusalem. Bethel thus became the center of idolatrous offerings; it was well situated also to intercept those who would go up to Jerusalem to worship. The prophets of Judah were sent to cry out against this idolatrous worship, for the name of this once hallowed center of divine worship was

changed from Bethel, "House of God," to Beth-aven, "House of Naught," and so of "Idols."

Punishment of the people's idolatry did not long linger. Amos had prophesied that Bethel should come to naught. God will not be mocked. A great feast day had come. Before the altar near the golden calf stood Jeroboam in the magnificent temple which he had built. A prophet of God appears and declares that one Josiah, of Judah, shall be born, who shall burn the idolatrous priests on that very spot. He further declared that as a sign the altar should now be rent and the ashes poured out. Jeroboam was filled with wrath. He put forth his hand toward the man of God, crying out: "Lay hold on him!" and instantaneously his arm was withered and he could not draw it to him again. The altar was rent from top to bottom and the ashes were poured out; and in due time Josiah did lay waste that spot, even as the prophet of God had declared, and Bethel has been practically a waste from that day to this day. This dramatic story is found in full in 1 Kings 12, 13 and 2 Kings 23 : 15-20.

It was near Bethel that "there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children," who had said to Elisha, "Go up, thou bald head." After the Babylonish captivity Bethel was inhabited by the Benjamites. In later times the Romans, under Vespasian, captured it, and in due time it dwindled down to its present poverty and wretched insignificance.

As we have already seen, Ai is but a short dis-

tance from Bethel; Ai, celebrated as the place of Joshua's defeat and later of his victory. Leaving Bethel we travel at first over a rough road, but after riding an hour we come to one of the most fertile regions of Palestine, a region abounding with vineyards and orchards, a region still bearing signs of the blessing of Ephraim. Northeast of Bethel and Ai is Ephraim. With this place we may identify the city of Ephraim of the New Testament to which our Lord withdrew with his disciples, after the raising of Lazarus. Places of great interest are soon to be visited, but now we ride from Bethel near Ain Yebrud through the valley or glen Wady el-Haramiyeh, "Glen of the Robbers," a place of frequent bloody tragedies, and we reach the modern Seilun, the ancient and sacred Shiloh. Here the tabernacle of the Lord was first permanently set up in Palestine—the Lord's tent.

Our living head who dwells in Shiloh,  
His bright sanctuary.

We learn from these narratives that we ought in all our journeys to have an altar unto the Lord. Most interesting are the suggestions which come to us from Jacob's visit to Bethel; he needed both rebuke and discouragement. He sinned against his brother, against his father, and against his God. God intended that the younger should rule over the elder, but God did not need Jacob's sin in order that the divine promises might be fulfilled. Good ends do not justify bad means. That is a hypocritical as well

as a Jesuitical and Satanic teaching which implies that any means may be adopted if only the ends sought are good. Rebekah was guilty of most unjust favoritism in dealing with her son. She wronged her husband, her elder son, her younger son, and herself, and dishonored God by her conduct. Nowhere does the Bible endorse the lie which she enacted, and severely was she punished for her perfidy. She probably never saw Jacob again after he left the parental roof. She cheated her husband most abominably and brought immeasurable sorrow into the entire household.

Jacob's dream shows us that heaven and earth may be near. The ladder which he saw suggests the close union between the two. It also teaches us that heavenly beings may constantly be passing from one mansion to another mansion of the Father's great house. Our Lord emphasizes this same truth when he said to Nathanael: "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." It is a remarkable fact that here the angels are spoken of as ascending before they are described as descending. Some of the Fathers of the church saw in the ladder of Jacob's vision a suggestion of the incarnation of Christ. He is the true ladder between God and man. In his divinity he reaches to heaven; in his humanity he touches the earth. Up this ladder we may climb; he became the Son of Man that the sons of men might become the sons of God. Over the head of every child of God as he sleeps, angels may hover, and above him may

be the great God bending over him in benediction.

The later history of Bethel shows us at once both the fulfillment of God's promises of blessing and the certainty of the infliction of deserved punishment. It is a terrible thing to oppose the living God. When God's people sinned by disobeying his command they were powerless in overcoming their foes. The defeat of Joshua at Ai led him to make careful inquiry and to discover the transgressor. Sin to-day cuts the nerves of power. Sin robs us of intellectual vigor and spiritual enjoyment. The church of God would be irresistible if it were entirely constrained by the love of Christ, and were living always in the exercise of perfect obedience to God. When Christians so live men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus and have learned of him. When they so live the church becomes "clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners." Jacob's ladder will ever be fruitful in suggestion, instruction, and inspiration.

'Twas thus the ladder's lowest round  
Rose up where, faint and weary thrown,  
The Patriarch's head no pillow found  
More gentle than the stone.  
Yet *there* he caught the message bright  
That sounded down the golden spars,  
And track'd, in dreams, the steps of light  
That stretch'd beyond the stars,  
And knew they were the shining road  
That took the angels up to God.

## XV

### SHILOH—"PEACE"

I HAVE already briefly mentioned the route from Bethel to Shiloh, but it is worthy of fuller description. Vines, figs, and olives remind us that we are in the fruitful territory of Ephraim. We pass over some very rough roads and a height crowned with a ruin called Kasr el-Berdawil, "Castle of Baldwin." We then take the road to the north, leading past ruins and grand olive trees. Near us is Jifna, the ancient Gophnah, which lies in a pleasant oasis and contains about four hundred inhabitants, most of whom are Christians. There are a Latin monastery and church, and to the south of the village is a Greek church. From Jifna there is a road to Tibneh, supposed to be the ancient Timnath-serah, where the tomb of Joshua is pointed out among other rock graves. There is the narrow valley with its lonely environs, which seems to justify the name given to it, "The Spring of the Robbers." The water is remarkably good as it trickles down from the base of the cliff. Soon we are at Sinjil, a small village named originally Casale Saint Giles by the crusaders, from Count Raymond of Saint Giles. We must make a slight digression to reach Shiloh, but it will well



repay us to go to this ancient place. After a number of turnings and the avoidance of different pathways, we are at these very interesting ruins. Without doubt Seilûn is identical with the Shiloh of Scripture. Shiloh is to-day a large heap of ruins. Standing beside these ruins, if the traveler has any real knowledge of Scripture, his first thought on beholding the mound covered with masses of *débris*, huge stones, and pieces of broken columns, will be the singularly graphic fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah when he said: "Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people, Israel. And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, . . . but ye heard not; . . . therefore will I do unto this house . . . as I have done to Shiloh."<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah is here using Shiloh as a type of the destruction which should fall on the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. He therefore adds, in 26 : 6 : "I will make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth."

The traveler may then well think of the interesting historical events which cluster about the name and place. Bear in mind that we are about twenty miles north of Jerusalem, twelve miles south of Shechem, and two miles east of the main road between them by way of Bethel. When the Promised Land was subdued, the

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<sup>1</sup> Jer. 7 : 12-14.

Israelites assembled here and established the ark and the tabernacle, which had previously been at Gilgal. Here Joshua allotted portions to the seven tribes not yet located. Here the ark and the tabernacle, the symbols of the worship of Jehovah, remained during the period of the judges. In a little valley are a spring and pool affording an abundant supply of water. This was in all probability the scene of the dancing of the daughters of Shiloh in connection with the yearly festivals. There were the three great annual feasts—the Passover, the feast of Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles, after the fruits of the earth were all gathered. This feast was a national harvest home. It was observed with dances on the green near the ancient well, and at one of the feasts the remnants of the Benjamites seized the daughters of Shiloh for wives. To Shiloh Hannah came to pray; there her vow was made and there it was fulfilled. In Shiloh Samuel grew up; to this place he was brought from Ramah and given to the Lord by his grateful mother. Hither came the mother to the yearly sacrifice, bringing with her the little coat for the boy Samuel, who ministered before the Lord. Here were committed the sins of the sons of Eli, and here sat the old man waiting for news of the battle with the Philistines. Up this valley ran the messenger with torn garments and with ashes on his head to announce the ark's capture by the Philistines. Here Eli fell backward and broke his neck on receiving the fearful tidings. Terrible was the

news that his sons were dead, but most terrible was the news that the ark was taken. He regarded the desolation of God's house as sadder than the desolation of his own home. The pitiful message brought sorrow to the now widowed woman, who could not be comforted with the birth of a boy when his father was dead and the ark taken, and with her dying breath she called the child "Ichabod," because the glory was departed.

With the loss of the ark Shiloh lost all. Taken by the Philistines, the ark never was returned to Shiloh, and from that time the city is seldom mentioned. To Shiloh came in disguise the wife of Jeroboam to consult the prophet Ahijah as to the recovery of her darling child. She was told of the coming extermination of the whole royal family, and also of the death of the sick child the moment her feet should touch the door; and all these sad prophecies were literally fulfilled, as we see by 1 Kings 14 : 1-17.

At Shiloh we naturally expect to see traces of the tabernacle, where the ark for hundreds of years remained. Major Wilson has pointed out such traces. The unusual title of the principal mosque at Shiloh suggested the tradition of the presence here of the tabernacle of God. That title is: "Mosque of the Eternal." In Gen. 49 : 10, Christ is called Shiloh: "Until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Shiloh was the place to which God's chosen people gathered, as we have already seen; so unto Christ as the complete

Shiloh should men come. This prophecy, as I stood by the ruins, was full of cheer and hope, full of truth and gladness. Christ said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Already this glorious prophecy is having its fulfillment. God hasten its full realization!

**TIBNEH OR TIMNATH-SERAH.**—This place I did not visit, although, as already stated, I was near it; but it is so important that I ought not to pass it by without a fuller reference. Timnath-serah has been identified as the modern Tibneh west of Shiloh. It is referred to in Joshua 19 : 50, and also 24 : 30, and also in other places. It furnished Joshua a home and an income in his lifetime and a burial-place when he died. It is a very interesting fact that recently Joshua's tomb is supposed to have been discovered by M. Guerin, who was engaged by the French government in scientific explorations in Palestine. He located it at Tibneh, or, as he calls it in French, Tigné. And this place he considers to be the ancient Timnath-serah, the heritage of Joshua. There are many tombs in the hills at this place. There is one, however, with a vestibule supported by two columns, and the place is furnished with nearly three hundred niches for lamps. The vestibule gives entrance to two chambers, one containing fifteen receptacles for coffins, and the other one. M. Guerin believes that the body of Joshua was placed in this single receptacle. In the Septuagint it is

stated that the sharp flint knives with which at Gilgal the distinctive Jewish rite was performed were buried in Joshua's tomb. On removing the *débris* which covered the floor of the tomb, M Guerin found a number of flint knives, and on making some excavations at Gilgal a number of similar knives were found. There is a fillet surrounding the pillars in the vestibule of the tomb which indicates an Egyptian style of ornamentation in the tombs, and so argues that the tomb was erected at a period which harmonizes with the time of Joshua. This is certainly a very interesting find. God is bringing from the sands of the desert and from many hoary tombs witnesses to the truth of his word.

HASTENING TO JACOB'S WELL.—The sun was hot as we hastened forward on our journey to Jacob's Well, but the plain over which we pass must present in springtime a green and attractive appearance. Descending into the Wady el-Lubban we soon reached a fountain of excellent water beside a ruined khan. The place is supposed to be the ancient Lebonah, which is mentioned in the book of Judges in a passage which helps us to locate Shiloh. Traveling on a better road, passing a village and a khan, descending to another khan and having our luncheon, we then go up a hill to a plateau, where a glorious view greeted us. Before us is a plain surrounded by the hills of Samaria. On the left is Gerizim and beyond that rises Ebal, and away to the north is the magnificent snow-

clad Hermon. All about us are evidences of fertility; the "good things" promised to the tribe of Ephraim still remain. The olive and the fig and the vine still abound. We are now, and have been for some time, in Samaria. Who are the Samaritans? This is an interesting question. Later it will be answered more fully, but a partial answer now will help us.

After Israel had been conquered by the Assyrians the territory lay waste, except as it was inhabited by colonists from the east. These were pagans. The king of Assyria sent them some Jewish priests; as a result the people adopted a mixed religion. They became by blood and faith mongrel Jews. We are told that "they feared the Lord and worshipped their own gods." The Jews disliked them and rejected their offers of help in building the second temple. The Samaritans, however, built a temple for themselves. The Jews in Christ's time had no dealings with the Samaritans. Both Jews and Mohammedans oppose them to this day.

The plain of El-Mukhna, along which we ride, is the most beautiful and fruitful of valleys. It is about ten miles long and nearly two wide. We take the road which leads to Jacob's Well. Our horses for hours have been carefully picking their way over stony places; now there is a chance for a brisk canter, and as such opportunities in Palestine are rare, horses and riders are ready for a gallop in this beautiful and historic plain. It is approaching evening; the sun

is westering. We mounted our horses before sunrise; we are tired, but glad and grateful as we ride. Glorious are these lofty mountains of Gerizim and Ebal; beautiful is this plain. Here perhaps grew the grain which suggested to our Lord the ripening harvest among the Samaritans. Before us is Nablus, and here beside us is a very sacred spot; it is also one of the best authenticated spots in Palestine. It is Jacob's Well. We dismount; our legs are stiff and sore; our lips are dry from the hot sun and wind. But our souls are tender, grateful, and joyous. All about us are Russian pilgrims, footsore and weary; they are mending their garments and shoes and taking part in the worship at the evening service beside the immortal well. We have yet to hasten to Nablus, but we shall refresh our lips and hearts beside the well on whose curb sat Jesus at the noonday hour. Of this well I shall speak at greater length hereafter.

We see here, as we have seen so frequently in our discussions of sacred sites, how modern discoveries are proving the truth of Scripture declarations. There is scarcely a day but we find that even the secular papers are bearing witness to the harmony between the discoveries of modern science and the teachings of the old Bible. The critics took the pen to confute the prophets and evangelists, and now we see excavators taking the spade to confute the critics. Again and again it has been affirmed that there was no record on the monuments of Egypt cor-

roborating the statements of the Old Testament regarding the residence of the Israelites in that land. This assertion has frequently been used by those who attack the credibility of the Old Testament. Professor Toy, of Harvard University, in lecturing recently in New York City on the Old Testament, called attention repeatedly and significantly to this supposed omission. We now find that Prof. Flinders Petrie, in a recent number of the "Contemporary Review," gives a full account of the discovery of a marble slab in his excavations at Thebes. This slab contains six thousand signs, and Professor Petrie gives Mr. Griffith's translation of one inscription. It is worthy of our consideration. This inscription describes a Libyan invasion; it gives also a list of conquests in the East. In recording these conquests this sentence occurs: "The people of Ysiraal is spoiled, it hath no seed; Syria has become as widows in the land of Egypt." Many explanations have been given of the phrase, "hath no seed." Professor Petrie gives five different explanations, but the matter of chief importance for us is that an inscription is found giving a clear account of Israel as in close association with the Hittites and Syrians. The entire story of this marble slab is deeply interesting, but it is not our purpose here to enlarge upon the details of the discovery. The amount of inscription on it is very great and its condition is perfect, not a single sign being defaced or even injured. It is affirmed that the scenes are as complete and the faces of the figures as



fresh and bright as if all the work had been done yesterday. It is delightful to the student of the Bible, even though he considers it only as history, to see how its statements are confirmed by the discoveries of modern science in its various forms of activity. Doubtless this process will continue. Many of the critics and skeptics of to-day will be utterly routed by the discoveries of earnest excavators and by the interpretations of competent critics in future generations. God is proving, as seldom before in the history of the human race, that his word shall stand whatever else may fall. "The grass" of infidel oratory "withereth," the "flower" of infidel science "fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever."

## XVI

### JACOB'S WELL AND JOSEPH'S TOMB

IT was toward evening when we reached this deeply interesting place. We had already been about ten hours on our horses for that day, and we had still to ride to Nablus, or Shechem, distant nearly a half-hour's ride; but the topographical and historical charms of the locality held us under their spell. I have few memories of the Holy Land more vivid and delightful than those connected with this sacred spot.

After riding up the long valley of El-Mukhna we turned the northeast corner of Mount Gerizim, rode about half an hour more and then turned to the right of the road, and we were at the famous well. Adjoining it are the ruins of an old church and heaps of rubbish are piled up on every side. The well belongs to the Greek Church, and while I stood beside it a service was in progress under the leadership of a priest of that church. He read the account given in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel of the interview between Christ and the woman of Samaria. I could catch enough of the words to guide me as to what was the subject of the reading. The people listened with open-eyed wonder, when they were not kneeling before the priest or kiss-

ing parts of the crumbling structure about the well.

There is a very general agreement among Jews, Christians, and Moslems that this is the well of Jacob. The tradition to this effect is traceable as far back as the fourth century. The location of the well is highly favorable to this general opinion; it is on the high-road from Jerusalem to Galilee, and is thus in full harmony with the narrative in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel, to which reference has already been made. The Samaritan woman came from Sychar, which is probably identical with the modern Asker. Her language to Christ shows us that in that early day this well was supposed to be Jacob's, and that the neighboring field was that which he purchased and where Joseph afterward was buried. Doctor Hanna tells us that this is the only limited and well-defined locality in Palestine that we may with certainty connect with the presence of our divine Lord and Master. He thus writes: "You cannot in all Palestine draw a circle of limited diameter within whose circumference you can be absolutely certain that Jesus once stood, except round Jacob's well; and I had the greatest possible desire to tread that circle round and round, and to sit here and there and everywhere around the well's mouth, that I might gratify a long cherished wish." And then he adds: "How bitter a disappointment on reaching it to find no open space at the well-mouth; but spread all around the remains of an old building, over whose ruinous wall we had to

scramble and slide down, through heaps of stones and rubbish, till through two or three small apertures we looked down into the undiscoverable well." But notwithstanding the partial disappointment of which Doctor Hanna speaks, this is still one of the most interesting spots in Palestine.

Before examining the well itself let us take in our surroundings. Around us are the fields to which Christ pointed when he said: "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest."<sup>1</sup> On our right is the parcel of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Yonder is the opening between the two hills through which Christ saw the groups of people pouring down from Sychar. There on the left is Gerizim, to which the woman of Samaria may have pointed as she said: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain."<sup>2</sup> An actual view of this fascinating place wonderfully illustrates and illumines the whole narrative as given in the fourth of John.

As you approach the well you come to an irregular chamber cut into the ground and walled up on the sides. Perhaps the space was once nearly square—about seventeen by fifteen feet. This space was once spanned by an archway, and doubtless over it there once was a chapel built in the fourth century and still existing in the eighth. The well is in the center of this chamber, its mouth being concealed by heaps of

<sup>1</sup> John 4 : 35.

<sup>2</sup> John 4 : 20.

rubbish and stones. It is not a spring of water bubbling up from the earth, but is rather a shaft cut into the living rock, about nine feet in diameter and about seventy feet deep. Once it may have been twice as deep. Maundrell, in 1697, found it to be one hundred and five feet deep. The falling into it of rubbish and the dropping of stones by many tourists and pilgrims have greatly lessened its depth. It was intended to be a reservoir of water rather than a means of reaching a natural spring. If one were to enter the funnel-shaped mouth and descend, he could enter a sort of cave a few feet below the surface, and would find the remains of a small dome which once covered the mouth.

Take in the picture of Christ here sitting on the well, wearied with his journey. Was he thinking of Abraham, who built his first altar in the land at this opening of the plain? Perhaps he thought of Jacob, whose only possession in the land of promise was here; perhaps of Joseph wandering in this neighborhood in search of his brethren. Perhaps he repeopled the sides of Ebal and Gerizim, and heard the "Amen" as the curses were pronounced on Ebal and blessings on Gerizim. Well might he say in the midst of such associations, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." The whole neighborhood was full of the things concerning himself.

The question has sometimes been asked, why should Jacob have dug this well when springs were so numerous in the vicinity? But so far as we know there was no suitable spring on his

part of the ground. He was too wise to be dependent on others for water for himself and his cattle; it was most important that he should have a well of his own. In no part of Palestine is water more abundant than at Shechem. Why, then, did this woman come to Jacob's well? Perhaps the water from this deep reservoir was cooler than ordinary spring water, and it is almost certain also that in the judgment of the people a special sacredness attached to this water as taken from the well of "our father Jacob," as the woman said to Jesus. It is not at all unlikely that she lived in that part of the town of Sychar situated nearest to the well.

About a quarter of a mile to the north of the well is the building shown as Joseph's tomb. It is exactly in the center of the opening of the valley between Gerizim and Ebal. The present structure is entirely modern. It was restored in 1868 by a Mr. Rogers, the English consul. In the hollows of the tomb the Jews, and perhaps the Mohammedans, burn incense to the memory of Joseph. The structure is in good repair and measures thirty by thirty-five feet. It is claimed that under a particular spot is the very dust of Joseph, and this statement is possibly true. In Josh. 24 : 32 it is said: "And the bones of Joseph which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred pieces of silver; and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph."

But a greater than Joseph was here. Shechem is hallowed because of the presence of Jesus. This thought glorifies all Palestine. Jesus came by the very road which I came, and he looked on sights on which my eyes rested to-day.

Oh, here with his flock the blest Wanderer came ;  
The hills he toiled over in grief are the same ;  
The founts where he drank by the wayside still flow ;  
And the same airs are blowing which breathed on his brow.

THE VALLEY OF NABLUS.—We remount our horses, turn to the west and enter the valley of Nablus. On our left rises Mount Gerizim, on our right, Mount Ebal. The valley itself is well cultivated ; so are portions of the sides of the mountains. The sun is near its setting ; we have been on our horses for ten hours and we and they are weary. The town of Nablus is just before us, and toward it we are hastening. In a few minutes after leaving Jacob's Well we reach the village of Balata. Both Christian tradition and Samaritan chronicles agree that here stood the oak of Abraham. Under this oak Abraham had worshiped. Under this oak Jacob, before going up to Bethel, as we learn from Gen. 35 : 4, buried the teraphim, idols or images, which were in some way regarded as objects of idolatrous worship. In coming to Shechem his family clung to their superstitious worship. It is supposed that these teraphim were figures somewhat resembling the human form. Eastern people are still given to superstitions regarding the talismanic power of earrings and other charms.

Soon after we reach a spring where there are Turkish barracks with a small arsenal and hospital. We now see some of the many beauties of this lovely valley. A reasonably good carriage road leads from this point into the town of Nablus. Olive groves now begin. Take in the view: Gerizim, on our left, is three thousand one hundred and seventy-nine feet high; and Ebal on our right is three thousand three hundred and seventy-five feet high. Their tops are about eight hundred feet above the town, which we now can see a mile farther on. It clings to the foot of Gerizim and extends nearly to Ebal. The locality is lovely in the extreme. Many streams burst from the sides of the mountains, and in the springtime their sides are luxuriant with the rich vegetation and foliage. Vegetable gardens, fruit orchards, and groves of olives abound. Foliage is here seen "from the deepest green to the softest gray and the most delicate russet"; and as Doctor Fish remarks, these colors are "all harmoniously blended, melting in the distance into the purple and azure tints of the mountain sides and summits." The music of gurgling streams and the song of birds and the soft foliage make a scene strangely fascinating. Grape vines, flowers of endless variety, almond, pomegranate, poplar, walnut, apple, fig, orange, and mulberry may all be seen here. So much of Palestine is rough, barren, and deserted, that this town and its environs present a striking contrast. Every traveler, in springtime especially, will endorse Dean Stanley's fine description:



A valley green with grass and gray with olives ; gardens sloping down on each side ; fresh springs rushing down in all directions ; at the end a white tower embosomed in all this verdure, lodged between the two high mountains which extend on each side of the valley—that on the south, Gerizim ; that on the north, Ebal. This is the aspect of Nablus, the most beautiful, perhaps the only very beautiful, spot in central Palestine.

Soon we had entered Nablus, of which I shall speak later, and I dismounted at the Latin Monastery, after a ride of nearly eleven hours, having come from Jerusalem that day, and feeling sufficiently weary to sleep on any kind of a bed and under any sort of roof. It ought to be said that the "Brothers" in this convent manifested marked courtesy to their guest. They make no charge, but all guests are thus put in some sense on their honor, with an added appeal to their religious nature, and as a result they pay more than they would at a hotel of the same grade.

All who are familiar with Palestine and Syria speak of the absence of the soft atmospheric tints which give beauty in some countries. The glowing tints abound in Palestine, but the soft hues are wanting there. In the valley of Nablus, however, the abundance of moisture in the atmosphere, caused by so many streams, occasions the grayish blue and bluish gray tints which give a beauty to this neighborhood that is unique in Palestine. All the exhalations among the trees tend to give the soft blue gray and the dusky hues which remove from the mountains their harsh outlines and clothe them in hazy robes of peerless beauty. But the greatest charm which the

Christian tourist experiences in this entire vicinity is that given it by the presence and words of the Lord Jesus. One's heart is moved as he knows that he is looking upon mountains and valleys on which the divine-human eyes of him who was Son of God and Son of Man rested. The echo of his words to the woman of Samaria seems still to be heard in this historic valley. His declaration to her of his Messiahship, and his sympathy with her whom the Pharisees would have cast out, still make his presence real; and these elements of his character find a full endorsement in the broad thought, fraternal feeling, and the sympathetic impulses of the brotherhood characteristic of the closing decade of the nineteenth century. Not Joshua, not Jacob, not Joseph, but Jesus preaches on these hilltops. Jesus Christ fills Palestine, fills the world with the wisdom of his teaching and the beauty of his character.

## XVII

### NABLUS AND THE SAMARITANS

A GLANCE at the form of this word, Nablus, shows that it is a corruption of the word Neapolis, or New Town. The fuller form of the name is Flavia Neapolis. The addition to the name commemorated the restoration of the town by Flavius Vespasianus. This name is one of the rare instances found in Palestine in which the ancient Hebrew name has given place to a name of Roman origin. It was called also Mamortla, which signifies "pass," or "place of passage"; but the more ancient name is Shechem, which means "the back," or "the shoulder."

This place brings us at once into touch with remote history. It brings before us Abraham, the patriarch, coming hither from Ur of the Chaldees; here he erected his first altar in Canaan.<sup>1</sup> Later, Jacob, his grandson, on his return from Padan-aram, encamped near Shechem, then a city of the Hivites; down here at the right he crossed the Jordan with his "two bands"; he bought a parcel of land, pitched his tent, and dug the famous well, of which I have already spoken. The land which he bought he bequeathed as a special portion to Joseph, who

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 12 : 6, 7.

also erected an altar.<sup>1</sup> After the conquest of the land Shechem fell to the lot of the tribe of Ephraim; but it was assigned to the Levites and became a city of refuge. While Joshua lived this town was a center of union to the tribes; probably because it was the nearest large town to Timnath-serah which, it will be remembered, was the residence of Joshua himself. After the death of Gideon it became the scene of the revolt of Abimelech, who induced the Shechemites to rebel and select him as their king. Under Rehoboam, who went there to be crowned, the national assembly was held there, and that assembly resulted in the separation of the northern tribes from the southern. Shechem became the first capital of the northern kingdom under Jeroboam; but the seat of government was soon transferred to Tirzah. During the Christian period Neapolis became the seat of a bishopric. It is an interesting fact that the Christian philosopher and martyr, Justin, a heathen by birth, was born at Neapolis about A. D. 100. Pastors of Neapolis are mentioned as attending church councils until A. D. 536. In the seventh century the city was taken by Moslems. In about 1099 the crusaders took the town, after the taking of Jerusalem; but the Moslems were again masters in 1242. The city and neighborhood are noted for their insecurity, the people having the reputation of being turbulent and quarrelsome. Nablus is a perfect watershed, the waters

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 33 : 18-20.

flowing off in all directions. Some streams run east into the Jordan, and others northwest into the Mediterranean. The city is one thousand eight hundred and seventy feet above the sea level and has, perhaps, twenty thousand inhabitants, of whom seven to eight hundred are Christians, mostly of the Greek Church, about two hundred Samaritans, and a few Jews, a few Romanists, and one hundred and twenty priests. The Romanists have a monastery and school in the eastern part of the town. There are twenty-six manufacturers of soap, which is made from olive oil. There is also a considerable trade in wool and cotton with the countries east of the Jordan.

The streets are narrow, crooked, and dirty. The houses are packed close together as in Jerusalem. The bazaars are extensive, and the streets are so crowded as to make one's progress slow and difficult. Traveling merchants are here from many parts of the world, and there is the usual chaffering in buying and selling. Time is of little value in the Orient, and the sale of an article worth only a few cents may take half the morning and also volumes of loud and meaningless talk. Instead of counting their money, they weigh it; this is true not only of bullion, but also of coin, lest a depreciated kind might be offered. As in the days of the patriarchs, stones are used for weights in buying and selling. In Lev. 19 : 36, we have in our translation "just balances"; the literal translation is "just stones"; and the word shekel, comes from shakel,

to weigh, indicating the original mode of reckoning money.

Here is the spot where it is supposed the tribes came to renew their loyalty to the law. Yonder high point is still called Joshua's pulpit. Some critics have been disposed to deny that the voices could be heard from one mount to the other; but there is no ground whatever for this denial. Many actual tests have proved how very easily the voices could be heard. It was not on the tops, but on the sides, of these mountains that the representatives of the tribes stood on Gerizim to bless and on Ebal to curse, while the thousands of Israel stood in the valley between to utter their long and loud "Amen." It was an occasion of wonderful solemnity. The valley at this point is not more than six hundred feet across, while where the town stands it is from one thousand five hundred to two thousand feet. At the point where the tribes met the valley is a sort of natural amphitheatre, there being a recess in Ebal exactly corresponding to a recess in Gerizim. Captains Wilson and Anderson, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, proved by actual measurements and experiments, that this place is admirably adapted in size and in acoustic properties for great assemblies. There is still a spot where there is shown the Pillar El-Ahmud, which is supposed to be the traditional stones set up by Joshua. There is no ground whatever for the opinion which I used to hear often expressed that Ebal was peculiarly barren while Gerizim was green and fruitful.

There is some vegetable growth on both, but until the base is reached, both are for the most part barren.

In the midst of much that is very beautiful in Nablus is the sorrow which one experiences in seeing the miseries and hearing the plaintive cries of the lepers in this city. They constantly intrude their misfortunes before the notice of the visitor. Their distorted faces and wasting limbs are a sad sight, and their husky wail is one of the saddest sounds one ever hears. They dwell apart and marry only among themselves. Their children are as pleasing in appearance as other children until they reach the age of ten to twelve years; then the deadly taint exhibits itself, and soon they also must take their place with others like them in the leper community.

THE SAMARITAN PEOPLE.—Their quarter is in the southwestern part of the town. There these strange people have lived, separate from all other peoples of the earth, for nearly three thousand years. They have their own Bible, the five books of Moses, and they continue their own forms of service, sacrifice, and worship. Think of the great changes which have taken place in the world during the time that these people have existed as a distinct religious body! Empires have risen and fallen, dynasties have sprung up and held sway and have passed into oblivion; republics have "danced into light, and have died into the shade," but these strange people have held together and have maintained

their racial distinctions and their religious peculiarities unchanged amid the thousands of changes in thousands of nations. Their synagogue is a small whitewashed chamber, which we reached by passing through very narrow and obscure streets. The Mohanimedans constantly oppress this feeble remnant of a very ancient and remarkable people. The pavement of the little synagogue is covered with matting; the rule being that it must not be trodden on with shoes. Arabic is now the language of the Samaritans in ordinary matters, but the prayers are repeated in the Samaritan tongue. The men wear white surplices and red turbans; they can, therefore, be readily distinguished when met on the streets. They are very cleanly. By the payment of a small sum of money I had the opportunity of seeing the Samaritan Codex, or copy of the Pentateuch. It is kept in a vault and it was brought out carefully wrapped in a crimson satin scarf, which was embroidered with letters of gold. The parchment is yellow with age and is much worn by frequent handling. The Samaritans claim that it was written by Abishua, the son of Phinehas, a son or grandson of Aaron, and that it is three thousand five hundred years old. But this claim is doubtless a myth, and an inferior codex is generally palmed off on gullible travelers. By paying an extra fee I saw both the old and the older one.

Yakub is the present high priest. He claims to be a descendant of the tribe of Levi. His office is hereditary, and the holder of it is sup-



ported by tithes paid him by his people, who are now a feeble folk. These descendants of the ancient Samaritan people are their only representatives now in the world sufficiently strong and numerous to maintain public worship. They alone, of all peoples, keep up bloody sacrifices according to the old Jewish law.

Sanballat, the Persian satrap, being offended because his son-in-law was excluded from the priest's office and expelled from Jerusalem, allied himself with Tobiah the Ammonite, Geshem the Arabian, and built a temple on Gerizim. In A. D. 487 the Samaritans were driven away, and a Christian church built on the site of this ancient temple. After the Mohammedan conquest it fell into ruins and the Samaritans were permitted to return to their venerated place, but they built neither altar nor temple. Mount Gerizim was chosen, as we have seen, by the Samaritans as the place of a sanctuary of their own. Shechem at its base thus rose in importance, and Samaria correspondingly declined. Conflicts constantly took place between the Jews and the Samaritans. The temple on Mount Gerizim, which had stood for two hundred years, was destroyed by John Hyrcanus, about 129 B. C. Vespasian slew eleven thousand six hundred Samaritan rebels on Mount Gerizim who resisted him in his subjugation of Palestine. In the sixth century A. D. the Samaritans martyred many Christians. About the year 1000 there were about one thousand Samaritans at Nablus. Formerly they had small communities in Cairo and Damascus, but now

their only synagogue is the one at Nablus. Their numbers are steadily decreasing, there being now only about fifty families. They have preserved a very venerable type of Jewish face and manners.

**THEIR CREED.**—They believe in one God, and they abhor all forms of idolatry and image worship. They believe in good and evil spirits; they also believe in the resurrection and the judgment. They expect the Messiah in six thousand years after creation, but they do not expect him to be more nor greater than Moses. They hold only the Pentateuch, or the five books of Moses, written in the old Hebrew or the Samaritan writing. Bigamy is permitted under certain conditions, and when a married man dies his nearest male relative, outside the circle of his brothers, must marry his widow.

On the occasion of four of their festivals, that of unleavened bread, that of weeks, the feast of Tabernacles, and the Passover, they make a pilgrimage to the sacred Mount Gerizim. They observe all the Mosaic festivals; but only at the Passover do they offer sacrifices. On the top of the "holy mountain" there are extensive ruins of a great temple built about five centuries B. C. There is a circular pit, four feet wide and nine deep, in which the sacrificial lambs are roasted according to Exod. 12 : 10. The lambs are slain at sunset, and in this pit they are roasted. Prayers are recited, and then the people sit down and eat. The remnants are placed over

the fire and consumed, according to the command in Exod. 12 : 10. Candles are lighted and the ground is searched in every direction so that no fragment may remain unburned. They rigidly observe the Sabbath from Friday evening to Saturday evening, meeting three times in their synagogues and worshiping toward Gerizim.

I soon rode away over a shoulder of Ebal and took my last look at these two mountains, made immortal as the place of the blessing and the cursing. I could again people the valley, again hear and see the six tribes on Gerizim uttering blessings, and hear and see the six tribes on Ebal uttering curses, while the thousands on thousands stood in the valley between responding with their long and loud Amen ! It was a wonderful scene. The sun scorches us as we ride over the hills on our way to Samaria, and we think of our Lord who showed his largeness of heart by honoring the name Samaritan in his parable, and by revealing himself to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well, telling her more fully than up to that time he had any other that he was the Messiah. We need again his rebuke of the tendency to worship God on this mountain or that, and to remember his great saying : "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

## XVIII

### FROM NABLUS TO SAMARIA

AFTER "doing" Nablus we mounted our horses a little before noon and started for Jenin, taking in Samaria on our way. The sun was hot, and the roads were dry and glaring under the scorching heat. But we pressed on over the hills and through the deep valleys. In these rich valleys, at the proper season of the year, every variety of vegetation is seen. Many brooks and streams flow down the mountainsides and collect in the vales below. As before remarked, those on the east flow to the Jordan, and those on the west to the Mediterranean—the vicinity of Nablus being the watershed of this region.

We slowly climbed over a part of Ebal; on neighboring hills pleasant-looking villages were seen. Two miles northeast of Ebal is Talluzah, the ancient Tirzah, "delight." It is truly beautiful for situation. Once it shared with Shechem the honors of being the capital city of the northern kingdom. In Solomon's Song 6 : 4, we have the words: "Thou art beautiful as Tirzah"—words that are applied to the spouse who, as is generally supposed, represents the church. Having used that text in a sermon, I was more

than glad to localize my thought and to emphasize my appreciation of the beauty and appropriateness of this Scripture reference. Tirzah was originally a city of the Canaanites, and later became the royal seat of the kings of Israel from Jeroboam to Omri, who finally built the city of Samaria, which supplanted it as the capital of the kingdom.

Three and a half miles east of Shechem is a village which Robinson identifies with that of Salim where John the Baptist was baptizing, "because there was much water there." Some, however, place it near the Jordan, eight miles south of Beth-shan. The English Palestinian Expedition identifies it with Zarthan, or Tell Sarem. There is a large number of springs there, and it is therefore a place "where there is much water."

**SAMARIA.**—Off in the distance, standing alone, is the hill of Sebastiyeh, or Samaria. Under the glare of the noonday sun we ride up the hill and soon reach the town. Wonderful memories crowd the mind as we approach this small, dirty village, surrounded by hedges of cactus and by historic ruins. These ruins suggest striking contrasts between the former grandeur and glory of the place and its present decay and desolation. We put our horses in the charge of one of the idle boys waiting for the guileless tourists, and before we look at the town as it appears today, refresh our minds with some facts of history.

Samaria is between six and seven miles northwest of Shechem. It is built on an oblong hill rising one thousand five hundred and forty-two feet above the level of the sea. It rises near the center of a broad and deep valley encircled by hills, and its lofty situation enables one to see the Mediterranean in the distance. About 920 B. C. Samaria was built by Omri, king of Israel, and named Shemer, after the previous owner of the hill.<sup>1</sup> Tirzah and Shechem had been capitals of Israel, but now Samaria became the capital and continued such for two hundred years, until the captivity of the ten tribes. Shemer, or Shomer, was the first owner, hence the name Samaria, as we have seen. Soon the city became a seat of idolatry, and the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, and Micah prophesied very severely against it. In time Ahab built here a vast temple for Baal, as we learn from 1 Kings 16 : 32, 33, and idolatrous worship was formally recognized by king and court. Indeed, a part of the city was called, "the city of the house of Baal." This temple was destroyed by Jehu.

Samaria was a place of great strength. Twice it was besieged by the Syrians and rescued from them. The later siege was marked by a terrible famine, and a remarkable deliverance was foretold by Elisha. The king of Assyria besieged the place for three years, and Sargon took it 722 B. C.,<sup>2</sup> and the people were carried as captives to Assyria. Cuthite colonists partly re-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 16 : 23, 24.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 17 : 5, 6 ; 18 : 9, 10.

stored the city. Alexander the Great took the city 333 B. C. He colonized it with Syro-Macedonians. John Hyrcanus captured it 129 B. C. In time Pompey restored the Samaritans who had been supplanted by Jews and Syro-Macedonians.

Augustus gave the city to Herod the Great, who chose it as his capital, adorned it with splendid palaces and a magnificent colonnade, which extended all around the hill. In honor of Augustus he named it Sebaste, which is the Greek equivalent of Augusta; the name which the Arabs now give it, "Sebastiyeh," is just their form of the Greek word Sebaste. Herod brought six thousand colonists, who were chiefly veterans; he also surrounded it with a strong wall and built a grand temple which he dedicated to Augustus. So perfect were the fortifications that the city was thought to be impregnable; and this fact gives peculiar point to the prophecy of Amos when he said (6 : 1): "Woe to them that . . . trust in the mountains of Samaria." Fragments of statues of the gods of the Greeks and Romans, among them a stone image of Jupiter, have been recently found, these gods having taken the place of Baal of the Phœnicians.

Two incidents of the siege of Samaria will be remembered: The compact between the starving women, expressed in these words, "Give thy son that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow"; and the incident of the "four leprous men who sat at the entering of the gate,

and said one to the other, Why sit we here until we die?" and then acting on the suggestion and entering into the camp they found "there was no man there, neither voice of man," for the Syrians had all fled in the utmost terror.

It will be remembered that the brave and noble prophet Elijah came to this city from the mountains of Gilead to rebuke the wicked King Ahab and foretell the long drought that was to come upon the land. Yonder in the valley lay the great Syrian army of Ben-hadad, the army so terribly defeated by the Israelites. To Samaria from Ramoth-Gilead came the blood-stained chariot of Ahab, who was pierced with an arrow from a bow drawn at a venture; the chariot was brought to be "washed in the pool of Samaria," and the dogs licked up the king's blood, and the prophetic word was fearfully fulfilled. In Samaria, either the city or district, or both, the gospel was successfully preached by Philip and others, as we see by Acts 8: 5-25. Here the sorcerer Simon had long practised his impostures, and he desired to buy the gift of working miracles. It was from this city, or region, that Philip was summoned to go south to baptize the Ethiopian treasurer. The church formed in Samaria was represented in the Council of Nicea, A. D. 325; but in 614 the city fell under the power of the Moslems. A bishopric was established here by the crusaders, and many travelers mention the place in the succeeding centuries. But as Nablus grew in importance, Samaria declined, until now it is virtually a



heap of ruins. Wonderful is the interest which attaches to places when we see them with all their remarkable historical associations fresh in mind.

The first thing we did was to visit a Moham-medan school. The children were all studying aloud. It was a noisy school, I assure you. Our presence seriously interrupted their studies. Then the head-master brought up some of his best scholars to give us an exhibition of their great attainments; and through the interpreter, I of course expressed great admiration for their attainments and appreciation of his consideration for our pleasure, for it must be assumed that there was nothing which I so much desired as to hear a recitation in Arabic. As we looked about we were again impressed with the exceeding beauty of the situation; the valley below, the terraced hill, and the Mediterranean twenty miles away, but clearly visible. We visited the ruined church of John the Baptist, built by the crusaders of the twelfth century, on the supposed, but very improbable, site of his grave. Jerome is the first who mentions the tradition that John the Baptist is buried here. Later came the tradition that he was beheaded here. This church is now used as a mosque, and it is a very picturesque ruin. On the walls are still crosses of the Knights of St. John, although an attempt has been made to obliterate them. In the court there is a dome over the traditional sepulchre of John the Baptist. Descending a number of steps, lighted by a torch, we reached

his tomb, together with that of Obadiah and several others. A massive stone door four feet high, is shown, said to be the actual door of John's prison; but as Josephus states that John was beheaded in the castle of Machærus, on the Dead Sea, it is difficult to see how his tomb is here. Jerome, as already indicated, was the first to refer to the tradition that John the Baptist was buried here.

No one can visit Samaria without being struck by its splendid ruins. The Colonnade, or street of colonnades, many of the columns being monoliths, runs around the hillside. These colonnades certainly date back to the time of the Herods; and many of them may be much older. Perhaps the number of these columns, whole or broken, is quite a hundred. Some are standing, some have fallen. Many lie scattered on lower terraces. They are of all sizes and now quite irregularly arranged, but when perfect in themselves and regularly arranged they must have been superb. The rubbish on the hill clearly shows that once it was the place of great palaces, temples, theatres, and other public and splendid structures. On one terrace it is well-nigh certain that once a temple or theatre of vast proportions and of great beauty stood. Going through the village one sees in dirty hovels slender shafts and columns with curiously wrought capitals, recalling the meridian days of Greek and Roman art, and intended to please the eyes of proud and voluptuous kings and queens.

My dragoman took great pains to point out the traditional sites, such as the gate where the lepers sat, the palace of Ahab, the temple of Herod, and the old market. But nothing was of so much interest as the columns and colonnades of which I have spoken; and of these none were of so much interest as those which have been rolled down the hill a distance of at least four hundred feet. Think of this fact as a literal fulfillment of Scripture! Listen to the words of God through the prophet Micah (1 : 16): "I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard, and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley." There they are to-day, poured down in the valley. All this desolation is on the spot where once stood the splendid city of Samaria. What memories of Ahab, of Jezebel, of Elijah, and of Herod, rushed upon me! The literal fulfillment of the prophecies of Scripture cannot but impress the tourist who visits Samaria. He must be an irrelevant thinker who does not see the close relation between the prophecy and the condition of things there. One might prophesy regarding certain general results among nations, if he were entirely familiar with the trend of their thought and action; but this prophecy comes down to details which are most minute. God was to pour the stones down into the valley; there the stones are lying to-day. God further declared that he would make Samaria "as plantings of a vineyard." This prophecy implies that portions of the ancient site should be used for various farm

purposes. Let the tourist look around him and he will see the fulfillment of these predictions. There to-day are seen traces of vine-terraces all about this historic hill. Here also are patches of some kind of grain; here also is the threshing floor; and here are evidences that the Arabs have recently been threshing and winnowing their grain. Can it be possible that once there stood on this hill and its sloping sides a great and splendid city? How wonderful are the literal fulfillments of ancient prophecies regarding Samaria and Palestine as a whole! This land is a witness to the truth of God's word; its barren hills and desolate plains testify to the reality of God's threatenings and the sins of God's people. From barren hillsides, rifled tombs, ancient parchments, and works of art of many kinds, proofs are multiplying regarding the truth of prophecy and the unchangeableness of God.

## XIX

### FROM SAMARIA TO DOTHAN AND JENIN

WITH many memories of the splendor of Samaria in its palmy days and of the horrors of the time of which it could be said, "Lo, we boiled my son, and did eat him," and with an overwhelming conviction, as we looked on the stones thrown down into the valley, of the literal fulfillment of prophecy, we press on our way northward. Places of historic interest are about us. The Bible is becoming more and more a new book as it is illustrated by the sight of the places described. It is true that doubts regarding the genuineness of the sites rob the places pointed out of much of their power over the imagination; still, even the traditional sites are not without power to kindle the mind, to gratify the curiosity, and to vivify the historical narrative.

With thoughts like these in mind we descended the hill where are the columns, entered the valley of Barley, and soon reached the village of Burka, under whose fine old olive trees travelers often camp. From the top of the hill near a glorious view bursts on the sight,—a great plain and its villages,—the plain of Esdraelon, full of places of interest, and yonder in the distance is

white-robed Hermon. Looking off at our right is Abel-Meholah. The mere mention of this name calls up a long train of historic association. Abel-Meholah! let us think of the name a little, as our horses slowly pick their steps over the often rough path along which we are journeying. Near this place Gideon defeated the Midianites, as we see in Judg. 7 : 22. This was the time when Gideon's brave three hundred blew their trumpets, broke their pitchers, held their lamps in their left hands, and shouted: "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The effect of these crashing sounds and reverberating shouts was tremendous. The noise of so many trumpets, the flashing of so many lights, and the crash of the broken pitchers, gave the Midianites an exaggerated idea of the numbers by whom they were beset. They supposed that the number of Gideon's fighting men was in proportion to that of the trumpeters. Terrible was the slaughter on the one side and glorious the victory on the other. This place was the birthplace of Elisha, and here he was found at the plow by Elijah when returning up the valley from Horeb.<sup>1</sup> The word means "the meadow of the dance." To the borders of Abel-Meholah the routed, panic-stricken Midianites fled, uttering the wild cries peculiar to their race. Nearer the usual route of travelers is Ophrah. This town was in the tribe of Manasseh. Here Gideon continued to reside after he had deliv-

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 19 : 16.

ered Israel from the Midianites. Here too, his ephod was established and became a snare to Israel. This ephod was adorned with the spoils of Zebah and Zalmunna, and became an object of superstitious worship. There is, however, some difficulty in fixing with certainty on this site.

**DOTHAN—"TWO WELLS."**—We have now traveled about eight miles directly north of the city of Samaria; we are also on the border of the territory of that name, and we arrive at the ruins of Dothan. We are close to the great camel route between Egypt and Damascus. We are, also, as Doctor Fish reminds us, "at the gateway of the Carmel range of mountains in the plain of Esdraelon." Dothan, or Dothaim, is a place of great interest. It is on the caravan route from Syria to Egypt, fifteen miles north of Shechem and four to five miles southwest of En-gannim, now Jenin. It is now uninhabited; but its ruins on a hill on the south edge of a fertile plain still bear the name Dothan. The word means "the two wells"; and two copious wells or fountains are found to this day at the foot of the hill. One of them at least is very old, and was probably there in the time of Joseph. To Dothan Joseph came seeking his brethren who had wandered thither with their flocks from Shechem.<sup>1</sup> When his brethren saw him afar off they conspired against him, saying:

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 37 : 17.

"Behold, this dreamer cometh." These brothers were of the spirit of Cain, who slew his brother, and have left a name of infamy to all generations of mankind. Nine men here conspire to kill a brother of the most amiable qualities, who tenderly loved them, and who was in the very act of showing his love when their anger blazed out against himself. Reuben did not wish them to shed blood, but suggested that they cast Joseph into a pit. There are many deep pits or dry wells here still. The old story becomes wonderfully real when one is on the ground. We know that in the Orient empty cisterns, often with mud at the bottom, have long been used as prisons. The sons of Jacob, no doubt, came north from Shechem on the road which we traveled. They came a long distance, from Hebron in the south, to find water and grass in this place. It is still a place of excellent pasture. Their father said to Joseph, in his anxiety for their good, "Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem?" "Go and see whether it be well with them, and bring me word again."<sup>1</sup> Off started Joseph. The distance for that country was far—about seventy miles. Wandering in the fields at Shechem a man found Joseph and asked, "What seekest thou?" Joseph told him that he sought his brothers. The man then said that he had heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan,"<sup>2</sup> and on went Joseph in the kindness of his heart to show favor to his brothers.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 37 : 13.<sup>2</sup> Gen. 37 : 17.



We have already noticed the reception they gave him. They have now a fine opportunity, as they are so far away from their father, to get rid of this hated son. Their father showed an unwise fondness for Joseph in giving him his long white robe. That robe too, implying that its wearer was not to be an ordinary worker, had something to do with Joseph's dreams of his future greatness. Joseph's "coat of many colors" was not a coat of many colors. This coat has a powerful hold on the imagination. One hesitates to disturb this popular idea. We all may have thought that it was a very foolish thing in Jacob to dress up Joseph in this peacock style. We have all conceived of this coat as blending various hues, such as are seen in imperial robes woven in Indian looms. Dr. Samuel Cox has effectively disposed of this gaudy coat. He has shown that the Hebrew words simply mean "a tunic reaching to the extremities." It may have had a stripe of color on the edge of the skirt or sleeves, but nothing more. It was a robe which indicated that in the opinion of Jacob there was to be no hard work done by Joseph. This was the robe of the learned and leisure class. Joseph was to live softly and to be guarded against hard work and rough weather. The other brothers must wear short garments, fitted for daily toil; but not so in the case of Joseph. It was this fact which aroused the murderous jealousy of his brothers. In giving Joseph this long white tunic Jacob grievously erred. This robe also may have intimated that his father wished to

endow him with the rights of primogeniture in place of Reuben, who had forfeited them. But the conduct of the sons was still Satanic in its cruelty. At Reuben's suggestion they caught Joseph, stripped him of his fine garment, and threw him into a pit, intending to leave him there to starve. Just then a company of traders in spicery, balm, and myrrh were seen coming with their camels; they were on their way from Gilead to Egypt. Near here we met a similar company. Often along this road caravans are seen with mules, asses, and camels laden, on their way from Damascus to Egypt. A new idea takes possession of the brethren of Joseph, and they draw him from the pit and sell him to these Ishmaelites, for twenty pieces of silver, the price of a slave. We see how wonderfully God overruled this event for the good of nations and for the glory of his own great name. Joseph goes from the prison to be the grand vizier of Egypt. God through Joseph saved countless lives. Our mind, as we recalled these events, went away to the heart-broken father; and tender sympathy went out to beloved Joseph, going off in his sorrow as a slave to Egypt—going off to be near Egypt's throne and to become immortal in the world's history.

ELISHA AT DOTHAN.—Here Elisha tarried when Ben-hadad was marching to Samaria. Ben-hadad feared that there was an enemy in his camp. He demanded to know who the traitor was. All his best-laid plans were discovered;

he was utterly baffled. It was then told him that there was no traitor in the camp, but that the prophet of God knew all his movements and gave information to the king of Israel. Then Ben-hadad, the Syrian leader, determined to seize Elisha. Silently during the night his hosts went to compass the city of Dothan, and in the morning they had so invested it with horses and chariots that the escape of Elisha seemed to be impossible. The servant of Elisha was overwhelmed with despair and cried out: "Alas, my master! how shall we do?"<sup>1</sup> But Elisha calmly said to him: "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them."<sup>2</sup> He then prayed thus: "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see"; and we read that "the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."<sup>3</sup> And this was probably the mountain on which we are standing. We read further that the Syrians were smitten with blindness and were led into Samaria.<sup>4</sup> How real that old and stirring story became as we stood on the spot made so wonderful by the presence and power of God!

Jenin, the En-gannim of Scripture, is our place of rest for the night. Leaving Dothan we pass over a slippery descent into the valley; then we go through a narrow glen, once famous as a stronghold of robbers, and soon the well

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 6 : 15.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 6 : 16.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Kings 6 : 17.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Kings 6 : 18.

watered, beautifully situated, and prosperous town of Jenin is reached. The name En-gannim means "Fountain of Gardens." It was a town on the border of Issachar, and was given to Gershonite Levites.<sup>1</sup> Josephus speaks of the town under the name of Ginea and as one of the boundaries between Galilee and Samaria. It is a place of gardens to-day. A large fountain, whose waters form a brook, makes the village green and prosperous. It contains about three thousand inhabitants, in perhaps three hundred houses. Olive trees, palm trees, prickly-pear hedges, and rich gardens characterize the place. There is a good-sized mosque, which perhaps was once a Christian church. We went into the town at a brisk trot, starting up the idlers about the fine spring, rousing the dogs, and attracting the attention of the people generally.

Here on the borders of the plain of Esdraelon, the battlefield of the nations, we were to pass the night, and the next morning a long-cherished desire—seeing the plain of Esdraelon—would be gratified.

Samaria has already suggested to us remarkable fulfillments of prophecy. Dothan gives us a wonderful example of the saving power of God. Never was there greater folly than that of Joseph's brethren in their desire to gratify their own wicked desires and to overthrow the purposes of God. God made their acts contribute directly to the accomplishment of his

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<sup>1</sup> Josh. 19 : 21-29.

plans. Joseph was to rule over his brethren ; Joseph did rule over his brethren. He saw in his dream these brethren bowing down before him ; he saw in his experience in Egypt these brethren actually so bowing. The great Greek dramatists have illustrated in striking forms the impossibility on the part of men of thwarting the purposes of God. This is the philosophy and theology which underlie their greatest dramatic tragedies. It is a truth everywhere taught in the Bible ; it is a truth everywhere taught in human history. God's hand is as truly in the history of to-day as it was in the history of Joseph. His hand is behind the loom, guiding its movements and directing the pattern in its web. With Lowell we can say

Behind the dim unknow  
Standeth God within the shadow,  
Keeping watch above his own.

We must not for a moment eliminate God from modern history. These great truths, however, do not relieve men from the responsibility of their own acts. Divine sovereignty is not more certain than is human freedom ; but God's sovereign purpose in no way excuses our wrongful acts or relieves us from the duty of always doing right.

Dothan is voiceful also concerning the value of Elisha's faith and the folly of fear on the part of Elisha's servant. God to-day reveals his secrets to his people. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. We sometimes think

that all the forces of the universe are material forces. These we see, hear, and feel; but the mightiest forces are those that are unseen and unheard. There are moral forces sweeping through the universe; they are silent as the falling dew, but mighty as the storm. These forces are trackless, but resistless as the laws of gravitation. Men do not so much need fuller proof of the existence of God and of eternal things as they need better eyes. They do not need greater light so much as they need clearer vision. The light of revelation may be brighter than the sun at noonday, but men will not see it if they persist in dwelling in the dark cellar of spiritual unbelief and of gross materialism. It was not necessary that God should put the horses and chariots round about the hill in order to give assurance of protection to Elisha's servant. The horses and chariots were already there. This servant simply needed to have his eyes opened that he might see them. Thousands of young men need to-day to have their eyes opened that they may believe in the reality of spiritual things. Round about us are ten thousand spiritual forces mightier than all the material forces known to science. The silent forces are always the mightiest. The sun lifts more water into the heavens during the silent hour of a summer's noon than all the noisy machinery of the earth could pump in many years. It is utterly unscientific to deny the existence of spiritual realities. They are as susceptible of proof within their own sphere as are

the material forces within their sphere. Round about us are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. Above us is the great God. The pure in heart can and do see him, and heart purity is the essential condition of this beatific vision. Only those who see the Invisible can do the impossible. The hosts of God shall as truly protect the children of God to-day as they did Elisha and his servant, and the enemies of God, in various providential ways, shall become as blind and as powerless as did the Syrians when they were led in helpless darkness into Samaria.

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## XX

### THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON

THIS plain occupies a conspicuous place in the topography of Palestine, and its place in the history of Israel is scarcely less conspicuous. Any description of Palestine which should omit a full reference to this plain would indeed be Hamlet with Hamlet left out. For thousands of years this great plain has been the highway of the nations, and for thousands of years it has been also the battlefield of the world. Perhaps there is no field on the globe where under so many different civilizations the clash of arms, the groans of the dying, and the shouts of the victorious have so often been heard; perhaps no field which so often has been fattened by the blood of the slain. This plain is the map of Israelitish history. It has been the judgment field of many nations, and it gives its name to the last great battle between good and evil. Its history is the history of nations and centuries. Later I shall speak of these historical matters more in detail.

NAME AND SHAPE.—The word Esdraelon is merely the Hebrew word Jezreel in the form which the Greek language gives it. The plain



is sometimes called simply the valley of Jezreel, because of its relation to the old royal city of Jezreel which was situated on a spur of Mount Gilboa near the east side of the plain. It was called the valley of Megiddo, because of its relation to Megiddo, the old royal city of the Canaanites. Megiddo stood on its southern border, and it was at Megiddo that Barak won his great victory and that Josiah received his death wound. Josephus called it simply the Great Plain. This name is given to the large expanse of level or undulating land lying between Jezreel and Acre. It is from twelve to eighteen miles wide, and it extends from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea. It separates the mountain ranges of Carmel and Samaria from those of Galilee. The plain is nearly a triangle. Its base is on the east and extends from the town of Jenin to the foot of the hills below Nazareth, and is about sixteen miles long. The north side is formed by the hills of Galilee and is about thirteen miles; the south side is formed by the Samaria range and is about eighteen to twenty miles long. The apex on the west opens through a narrow pass into the plain of Acre, the ancient Accho. The plain rises gradually from the Mediterranean about four hundred feet. The west part is level, but on the east it is more undulating, and is finally broken by Mount Gilboa and Little Hermon into three valleys about two to three miles in width, and these valleys at length sink down into the valley of the Jordan. The middle of these valleys is properly the val-

ley of Jezreel. The manner in which these three branches stretch eastward from the base of the plain has been well likened to the fingers from a hand. These fingers are divided by two gray ridges of mountains, one called Mount Gilboa and the other Little Hermon, or by the Arabs, Jebel el-Duhy. To the northwest the river Kishon traverses this great plain. In the spring it is green with grain of different kinds when properly cultivated; but where it is neglected weeds grow in great profusion. Once it was well watered and famous for its fertility, but now there is a blight from which the whole land suffers. Here and there are knolls on whose sides olive trees grow. The soil naturally is exceedingly rich, but the plain is almost uninhabited. A few small villages are seen on its borders, but its crops are insecure because of the depredations of roving Bedouins, who are as likely to rob the peasants of their crops as were the Midianites in the days of Gideon, and most of the soil now is in the hands of rich men in Damascus and Beirut, who are almost as hard on the peasants as were the Midianites in the early day and as are the Bedouins in our day. There is no small ownership. A few men living in different parts of the country, especially in the two cities named, farm out parts of the great plain. The blight of Turkish tyranny leaves much of it uncultivated and practically deserted. The highways are deserted and the villages have mostly ceased, but under proper cultivation great prosperity would be certain.

SCRIPTURE PLACES.—Within single views a wonderful number of places mentioned in Scripture cluster together. Doctor Fish calls attention to the fact that standing at the opening of the plain we can see at the west Mount Carmel ; at the north the mountains of Zebulun, Naph-tali, and Issachar, including those back of Naza-reth ; at the east Mounts Tabor, Little Hermon, and Gilboa ; and we also see the sites of Jezreel, Bethshan, Shunem, Nain, Endor, Cana, and Nazareth, and still other places famous in the story of the Old Testament or the New. Think of all the history which in both Testaments gathers about these names ! Long had I wished to ride over this plain. Now this wish is gratified, and I am actually treading this historic soil.

BATTLEFIELD OF THE WORLD.—The valley of Megiddo, I have already remarked, is so called from the city of Megiddo, which stood on its southern border ; it was here also that Barak triumphed and that King Josiah received his death wound. It is not at all unlikely that the Apostle John, in describing in the book of Revelation the final conflict between the hosts of good and evil gathered to a plain called Ar-mageddon, which is just the Hebrew for the city of Megiddo, had this place in mind. This plain was the great battleground of Palestine, in a sense of the world. Its situation made it such. It was always the main passage of entrance and exit for the nations whose methods

of warfare limited them to the level country. Thus it became the arena of war between the lowlanders, who trusted in their chariots, and the highlanders, who fought most successfully on the heights. None of the battles which secured the conquest of the land for the Israelites were fought here. Most of them took place in the south. Most of the battles in Esdraelon were forced on the Israelites by invading armies. Israel won some great victories here, but the plain will always be associated in history with the defeat of Saul at Gilboa and of Josiah at Megiddo. These two defeats gave rise to the two saddest dirges in the literature of the Jewish people. On this plain have glittered the lances of the wild men of Moab. The soil has trembled under the horses' feet and under the chariots of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies. Over it thundered Sennacherib; over it marched in stately tread the phalanxes of Macedonia and Rome. Here Deborah and Barak encountered the forces of Sisera, and the battle which followed swept over most of the plain and dyed its waters and fattened its soil with blood. At the foot of the ridge where stood Jezreel Gideon achieved his great victory over the Amalekites and the Midianites. By the fountain near the same city the host of Israel under Saul encamped before it was chased on the mountains of Gilboa. At Megiddo, as we have seen, Josiah was slain by the Egyptians under Pharaoh-necho. Across this plain Elijah ran sixteen miles from Carmel before the chariot of Ahab.

At the foot of Tabor Vespasian fought against the Jews. Here the Crusaders and Saracens have slaughtered each other.

It has been the chosen place of battles in the Holy Land from Nebuchadnezzar to Napoleon. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, Arabs, Crusaders, and Frenchmen, warriors of every nation under heaven have here fought in fierce battles. The most noted modern contest was that of 1799. The Turks with an army of twenty-five thousand (some say twenty-seven thousand) were utterly vanquished by the French, who with fifteen hundred (some authorities nearly double the number) men under Kleber fought for six hours and were finally succored by Napoleon, who came with six hundred men and dashed upon the foe with such terrible force as to scatter them like chaff before the wind.

There is no such other plain in Palestine, historically or geographically. The language of Doctor Clarke, quoted in Smith's "Bible Dictionary," is not too strong to picture the wonderful scenes here enacted. He says: "Warriors out of every nation which is under heaven, have pitched their tents in the plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld the various banners of their nations wet with the dews of Tabor and Hermon." Napoleon is represented as having been profoundly moved with the memories of Christ, the Prince of Peace, as he rode past Tabor to engage in bloody battle on this historic plain. Of some of these stirring events I shall speak

more at length in connection with the places where they occurred.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAIN.—Its great richness is to be noted. Beautiful is the contrast between its greenness and the gray bleak crowns of Gilboa and the rugged ranges on the north and south. It was a frontier of the tribe of Zebulun, and in Deut. 33 : 18 we read : "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out." It was also the special portion of Issachar, and we read : "And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant ; and he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute." But its present desolation is equally observable. It is authoritatively said that "if we except the eastern branches, there is not a single inhabited village on its whole surface and not more than one-sixth of its soil is cultivated." Here the wandering Bedouin has his home. He dashes over its smooth turf on his fleet horse ; he plunders peasants and tourists. He then hastens, when hard pressed, beyond the Jordan, carrying his tents, flocks, and herds with him, and the government is too weak to follow and punish him. The plain has always been greatly exposed. Over it rode the old Canaanites in their iron chariots, and before them the Israelites were powerless. To it came in the time of Gideon, as we have seen, the nomad Midianites and Amalekites, those children of the East, who were "as grasshoppers for multitude" and whose camels were as the sands of the sea for numbers.

While our friend Doctor Fish was at Megiddo some prowling Bedouins crept to his tent door and stole his trunk, which was near his head. The trunk was recovered, and a second time came the Bedouin prowlers, crawling on their hands and one foot, the other foot being cocked over their backs in imitation of the tails of dogs. The first qualification for greatness on the part of an Arab is expertness in stealing. It is said that the funeral services consist chiefly in a recital of the virtues of the deceased, and if it can be said of any dead Bedouin, "He was a good man; he could steal by moonlight and in the dark," the highest encomium to his virtues is paid. We were not molested, but we saw the black tents of the Bedouins very often.

Dr. George Adam Smith, in his recent volume, "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land," calls attention to the fact that there are five entrances to the plain of Esdraelon and that they are all visible from Jezreel. With these entrances clearly in mind, we can readily see how well adapted this field was to be the arena of great battles. It is really a vast theatre, as Doctor Smith has suggested, with its clearly defined stage and with its proper exits and entrances. In the first battle Israel not only overcame a foreign tyrant but circumvented that tyrant in his purpose to prevent Israel's unity. The entrances to the hill country of Israel were in the hands of the Canaanites, and the northern tribes, Zebulon and Naphtali, were cut off from their southern brethren. The very existence of

Israel was menaced. This fact was recognized both in the song of Deborah and in the prose accounts of the battle. Of this battle I shall have occasion to speak more fully later, but it is interesting to observe at this point how all the physical conditions contributed to the success of Israel at this critical time in her history. The plain, owing to the storm, was soon in a condition rendering it impossible for the chariots to move, and the horses plunged helplessly in the mire. These facts are brought out eloquently in the song of Deborah. The highland footmen were masters of the situation. In this great victory Barak and Deborah were helped rather than hindered by the level ground. The Turks in 1799, when Kleber and Napoleon scattered their enormously superior numbers on this same field, fled in the same direction as did Sisera after his defeat.

This great plain had a conspicuous place when Israel repelled the next invaders; they were the Arabs of various terrible names from over the Jordan. Their battle was at the head of the long vale running down to Bethshan. We shall have occasion later to study Gideon's remarkably wise tactics, and to observe the skill with which he selected his heroes and the success with which he followed up the flight of his foes. The campaign of the Philistines against Saul, and also the other historical battles on this field, we cannot fully understand unless we have the characteristics of the field itself clearly in mind. God has made the configuration of this plain to



contribute greatly to the triumph or defeat of his people.

No one can travel over the great plain without having striking illustration of the truth of the record in all the accounts of the great battles fought on this field. Not more fully does Gettysburg illustrate the terrible fighting which was at once the high-water mark of the rebellion and its death knell than does the plain of Esdraelon illustrate the movements of the armies which have dyed its soil with blood, and whose victories or defeats have changed the history of nations. Palestine is an illustrated edition of the Bible.

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## XXI

### ZERIN, THE ANCIENT JEZREEL

WE started early from Jenin for our journey across the plain of Esdraelon. Soon the village of Taanach was pointed out on our left. This village consists of a mere handful of wretched houses, although once it was a royal city of the Canaanites. It is mentioned in Josh. 12 : 21, and was one of the thirty-one cities conquered by Joshua. It was in the territory of Issachar, but was assigned to Manasseh, and allotted to the Levites. In the war between the Canaanites and Israel it was a strong post of the Canaanites under Sisera, and seems to have been their headquarters. The town is mentioned in the triumphant song of Deborah, "The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo."<sup>1</sup> We learn from 1 Kings 4 : 12 that it was one of Solomon's places of supplies. All that now remains of this old and famous town is the ruins on a hill on the southwest border of the plain of Esdraelon.

About five miles farther on we reach Megiddo, now marked by an old khan or inn. Megiddo and Taanach are always mentioned together;

<sup>1</sup> Judg. 5 : 19.

they were evidently chief towns in the rich district which formed the western portion of the great plain of Esdraelon. Like Taanach, Megiddo was a royal city of the Canaanites, and was also assigned to Manasseh, although the Canaanites long retained a foothold therein. It commanded a pass from the plain on the north to the hill country of Samaria. It has been identified with a place now called Leijun, which is supposed to be the Legio of the Romans. It was here that King Ahaziah died; it was here that King Josiah was defeated and slain, and afterward sorely lamented by the nation,<sup>1</sup> as it realized therein the death-blow to its hope. It was easy to see here how the hosts of Deborah and Barak on the one side, and those of Sisera on the other, were drawn up and how the result of the battle was secured. On the summit of Tabor the hosts of Deborah and Barak were assembled; those of Sisera in the plain of Megiddo between this place and Taanach. Deborah gave the signal for battle and Barak rushed down. The stars fought against Sisera; the rains fell in torrents; the Kishon rose and ran furiously. It beat against the chariots and horses and they were swept away. Sisera sprang from his chariot, fled to the tent of Jael, and was finally slain by having the tent pin driven through his head. The whole course of the battle is plain as one stands on the site of the ancient Megiddo.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 9 : 27 ; 23 : 29 ; 2 Chron. 35 : 22-25 ; Zech. 12 : 11.

JEZREEL, "THE SOWING OF GOD."—We pass now under the bare mountains of Gilboa and soon we reach the modern Zerín, the ancient Jezreel. This is now a wretched hamlet of some twenty houses. It is surrounded with heaps of rubbish. Many holes may be discovered in which grain is hidden with the hope of putting it out of the reach of thievish Bedouins, as in the days of Gideon similar holes were used as storehouses to protect grain from the predatory Midianites. A superb view is ours here. The eyes takes in the plain of Esdraelon, as far as Carmel on the one side, and the valley of the Jordan on the other. What is known, in the limited sense, as the valley of Jezreel, lies to the north of Zerín.

What memories crowd upon us here! Here live again Ahab and Jezebel, Naboth and Elijah. Jezreel was the royal city of Ahab and of successive monarchs. Here stood his superb palace, but not a trace of it remains to-day. Here lived in royal splendor Jezebel, the Clytemnestra, the Lady Macbeth of the Bible; and from the window of the royal palace she was thrown to be devoured by dogs in the street. Here was enacted the story of Naboth and his vineyard; and here, finally, the whole family of Ahab was put to death by the fierce, relentless, but providential Jehu. These events are so thrilling, and withal so instructive, that before we ride farther we must pause to recite the story more fully and learn the lessons it so impressively teaches.

The name Zerin is really Jezreel, having simply passed through the changes incident to being dressed in different languages. The word means "God's sowing," a name derived from the richness of the soil in this plain. The word is rightly applied to the valley between Gilboa and Little Hermon, but in a more limited sense it is used of the city. The historical importance of the place dates from the reign of Ahab, who chose it as the place of one of his palaces. It was a kind of summer residence. Omri chose Samaria, and Baasha chose Tirzah, and Ahab divided his time between Samaria and Jezreel. The site shows the wisdom of choosing Jezreel. It rises gently out of the fertile plain of Esdraelon, and was a place of great strength. There is on the northeast side a rocky descent of at least one hundred feet. The place was easily fortified, and in that day this was a most important consideration. The place also enjoyed the advantages of a central locality; it looked straight toward the wide west level and it commanded a view toward the Jordan. On the east was the Jordan; on the west Carmel. The location was simply superb.

In or near Jezreel were a temple and grove of Astarte; there was also an establishment of four hundred priests supported by and under the direction of Jezebel. On the east side of the city was the palace of Ahab; here too, perhaps forming a part of the palace, was his "ivory house." The palace in which Jezebel lived was on the city wall and had a high window facing east-

ward. There was also a watch-tower on which a sentinel stood to give notice of the coming of messengers, especially from the disturbed districts east of the Jordan. To this day among the hovels there is a square tower which may be the modern representative of that ancient "Migdol," or "tower in Jezreel." Adjoining the royal domain was the tract of land which belonged by hereditary right to Naboth.

When the house of Ahab fell the glory of Jezreel departed. No other king selected the place for his capital. The blight of God seemed to rest on the place. Terribly instructive are the silence and desolation of the place to-day. The glory truly is departed. Where is the splendor of Ahab's ivory palace? Where is the glory of Jezebel's power? Elijah seems still to haunt the place as the incarnation of divine justice to punish the manifold weaknesses and wickednesses of Ahab and his fierce and cruel Jezebel.

AHAB AND JEZEBEL.—We may now fittingly look at this king and queen of the olden time. There never was a weak Ahab but that by his side there was a wicked Jezebel. Weakness is often virtually wickedness. Ahab was the seventh king of Israel and the son of King Omri, whom he succeeded 918 B. C. For twenty-two years, notwithstanding his many sins, he reigned over Israel. The story of his life is stained with crime. Jezebel, his wife, was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon.

She was an ambitious and passionate idolatress. She spent her time and thought, with Ahab's co-operation, in the effort to establish idolatry in Samaria and to exterminate the worship and destroy the servants of God. The brave Obadiah, at the risk of his own life, saved one hundred of the prophets of God. Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, under the direction of Ahab, perished at Mount Carmel at the word of Elijah, and then Jezebel sought to avenge herself on Elijah; and, bold as he undoubtedly was, he ran with fear from her presence. Ahab longed for the plot of ground which belonged to Naboth. He whined like a spoiled child. Jezebel rebuked him. She would get it for him. She did secure it by perjuries and murders. What cared she for either? But with Naboth's vineyard she got also the hated presence of Elijah and the dreaded curse of God. We pay a high price for any pleasure when we give for it our sense of justice and the favor of God. Jezebel diffused the poison of her idolatry in Israel; through her own influence and through her daughter Athaliah she sent the virus into Judah, and her son Jehoram perpetuated her evil influence in Israel. Her name has become a proverb for boldness and badness, for profligacy and malice. In Samaria Ahab erected a house of Baal, and set images of Baal and Ashtoreth. We read that he "did more to provoke the Lord to anger than all the kings that were born before him." As a punishment for his sin God visited the land with three years of drought

and famine; and then on that great day on Mount Carmel God destroyed the prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth.

Ahab went on in sin. After the murder of Naboth Elijah denounced the punishment of God upon him. A little time passed. With Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, he sought to regain Ramoth-Gilead from the Syrians. God warned him against the battle, but he defied God. He, however, took the precaution to disguise himself so that he might not be so conspicuous a mark for the archers of Ben-hadad. One of them "drew a bow at a venture" and slew him. For a time he was supported in his chariot, but toward evening he died and his army was dispersed. He was brought to Samaria to be buried, and while his servant was washing his chariot the dogs licked up the blood of Ahab, as Elijah had predicted.

The death of Jezebel was equally terrible. She was the evil spirit of his reign. Fourteen years passed after the death of Ahab. As queen-mother Jezebel was of great influence in the court of her sons. Jehu now advanced against Jezreel to overthrow the dynasty of Ahab. It was the supreme moment in the history of her house, and the spirit of the aged queen rose with the determination of despair to meet it. She was in the palace overlooking the approach from the east, and she saw Jehu driving furiously in his chariot. She painted her eyelids and tired her head. Perhaps she thought she could fascinate Jehu; perhaps she simply



desired to appear in all the charms of regal splendor. She looked down on him from the high latticed window and taunted him with an allusion to a former act of treason. Jehu looked up at her and hurled at her words of defiance. "Throw her down," he shouted. Two or three servants obeyed his command and dashed their royal mistress down from her chamber. In front of Jehu's chariot she fell, and the blood from her mangled corpse dashed on the wall behind and on the horses in front. On went Jehu, and his chariot wheels and horses' hoofs crushed out whatever of life remained. The body was left where the offal from the cities was thrown. The dogs, packs of which may be seen to-day on the spot, pounced on this unexpected prey. Soon nothing was left but the skull, the soles of the feet, and the palms of the hands. Jehu's heart was touched and he said: "Go, see now this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." Thus were the awful words of Elijah fulfilled: "In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel, and the carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung on the face of the earth, so that they shall not say, this is Jezebel."

It is easy for us to learn practical lessons from the history we have been studying. The weakness in Ahab's character was wickedness. He was merely Jezebel's puppet. He followed her guidance and became the victim of her superior strength and his own reprehensible weakness. A man must not be morally weak in the pres-

ence of temptations on the one side and obligations on the other. Adam could not excuse himself in the garden by weakly and cowardlike throwing the responsibility upon the woman. Adam's ungallant spirit in this respect showed the degrading influence of sin upon his more manly nature. Each man must bear the burden of his own responsibility, notwithstanding the share that others may have in tempting him to evil.

We see also the evils of an unholy marriage. Ahab ought never to have married the daughter of Ethbaal. This unfortunate marriage was the turning point in his whole history. She was reckless, fierce, licentious, and idolatrous. She united religious fanaticism with a naturally ungovernable temper. She was the evil genius of Ahab's dynasty; she cared neither for God nor man. She showed her power over her weak husband when she determined to secure for him the vineyard of Naboth. One would think that the hand of death had come into the palace when he beholds the sorrow of Ahab because he could not have this plot of ground. He was the lordly possessor of palaces; he was at the proud pinnacle of human ambition; he had servants and soldiers to do his bidding, but he could not be satisfied until he secured possession of the hereditary vineyard of the Jezreelite. His conduct was positively contemptible. Strictly speaking, the soil of Israel was the property neither of Ahab nor Naboth, but of God. By the law of Moses Naboth was prohibited from

parting with his paternal inheritance. Naboth, therefore, rejected Ahab's offer. He must obey God rather than man. We now see the evil of having this Clytemnestra or Lady Macbeth by the side of King Ahab. He had not the moral courage to perform the foul deed by which he hoped to gratify his selfish will. Jezebel would do it; her queen-craft would be as successful as it was Satanic.

Ahab and Jezebel were unevenly yoked together. Her name was originally a beautiful name; it is simply our Isabella. It has the significance, in the matter of moral purity, of our name Agnes, but the wild license and the magical fascination of this woman has made her name the synonym of cruelty, idolatry, and murder. Just as the word Jesuit, so suggestive of all that is deceitful and much that is abominable, comes from the sweet and holy name Jesus, so Jezebel is the chaste and beautiful name Isabella. Long afterward the name lived as a by-word for all that was execrable in conduct. This is strikingly illustrated by the use of the word in the book of Revelation.

We see also the certainty that God will punish sin. Neither Ahab nor Jezebel could escape. Sin seems to be a slight matter until it is committed, then it appears in its true character as exceeding sinful. When men have committed the crime even Satan seems to burn the sense of its iniquity into the soul of his own victim. Let us trust Him who alone can cleanse from sin and give us the victory over every temptation.

## XXII

### FOUNTAIN OF GIDEON

WE might go directly across the valley to Shunem, but by making a short detour to the east, we may visit the fountain of Jezreel, or as it is sometimes called, the fountain of Gideon. The water is clear as crystal. It issues from a rocky cavern and flows off in a goodly stream. Few places are suggestive of more thrilling memories. Here the stirring events recorded in the sixth and seventh chapters of the book of Judges live and move again before us. Here it was that Gideon encamped against the Midianites; here that the three hundred picked men lapped the water, and of these men God had said: "By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand." Let us look at these remarkable events; they will well repay our careful study.

Brave, dashing, and victorious were the soldiers of the heroic Gideon. They are worthy of immortality; and they have been immortalized on the page of sacred story. They lose nothing of their grandeur and glory even when compared with the "noble six hundred" who rode into "the jaws of death," "into the mouth of

hell," and whose praise is chanted in immortal verse by the laureate Tennyson. In giving praise to Gideon and "glory to the Lord of hosts, from whom all glories are," we desire to detract nothing from the illustrious three hundred, whose heroic and patriotic piety gave them a unique place not only in the Bible, but in the history of brave men of every century and every clime.

**THE COUNTRY DEVASTATED.**—In order rightly to understand the events recorded in connection with the bravery and victory of Gideon we must have clearly in our minds the condition of the country at the time. Earlier in this history we have the account of the defeat of Sisera. That defeat marked the failure of the last attempt by the old inhabitants to overthrow the people of God. Now, however, enemies from new quarters afflict the children of Israel. They are the Midianites and the Amalekites. The Midianites had gradually spread northward from the peninsula of Sinai, and the Amalekites were the old enemies of Israel whom they had fought at Rephidim. These two peoples had now joined their interests with some other tribes, known under the general title of "the children of the East," in order to overthrow Israel. They were accustomed to make incursions at harvest time, when they carried off flocks and destroyed the harvests, after the manner of the Bedouin Arabs of the present day. The Israelites were reduced to the sorest distress; many of them

were obliged to dwell in the mountains, in caves, and in strongholds. They did not dare to reside in the open country, but were obliged to find protection in these retired places and hidden caverns. Frequently still, whole neighborhoods are exposed to these ravages, and as a result whole villages have disappeared from the face of the earth. The peasants prefer to climb to a safe retreat in the hills where attacks are not easily made, rather than take the risk of living in the open fields. In Gideon's time these raids were on an especially gigantic scale. Cruel as is war always and everywhere, it was especially so in the midst of the terrible sufferings inflicted upon the helpless Israelites. Two chiefs, having the title of kings, are especially brought to our notice, Zebah, the "man-killer," and Zalmunna, "the pitiless." Their names indicate the power they exercised and the terror they inspired. There were two inferior chiefs, named Oreb, "the raven," and Zeeb, "the wolf"; these latter bore the title of "princes." These four chiefs led their wild followers in battle array against the defenseless inhabitants. The picture of their army given in the narrative is striking and startling. They are represented as appearing like the Arab chiefs of modern days arrayed in gorgeous scarlet robes, while on their necks and the necks of their camels there were gold chains and crescent-shaped ornaments. All their women were dressed with ear and nose rings of gold, together with many other jewels. This is the picture given us in this ancient record of the dashing and heart-

less enemies of Israel, and of the sad condition of the people themselves.

GIDEON THE DELIVERER.—When the night is darkest, the morning is near; when the knell of liberty is sounding, the deliverer is born. When the tale of bricks was doubled, then came Moses; when Israel was in despair and her enemies in triumph, then came Gideon, heroic deliverer and triumphant soldier of God. Our thought must be fixed upon him for a little as we study this interesting narrative. "Words are things," said the fiery Mirabeau in the wild French Assembly. This statement is true of Gideon's name. It means "feller," "hewer," or "destroyer." He was chosen of God for his noble mission. Amid the poor, or at least weak, clans of western Manasseh, was that descended from Abi-ezer; but among these households that of Joash held a prominent place. All his sons were brave and noble, "each like the son of a king." All except the youngest son, Gideon, had fallen on Mount Tabor in the many fights with the fierce Midianites. Unexpectedly did this great champion of Israel arise in the midnight hour of Israel's hope. Already he was known both to the Israelites and to their enemies as a mighty hero. The "tree-feller" was also a "man-feller"; and many a Midianite had already felt the strength of the arm of this "mighty man of valor." His home and fields were at Ophrah, and here the invaders encountered his strong arm and brave household. He

was modestly at work, like many other truly great men, when he received his call to higher duties and nobler endeavors.

Gideon was threshing wheat with a flail in the winepress in order that he might the better conceal the grain from the tyrants. In the winepress he would be less exposed to the notice of the invaders, and the flail falling on the grain placed perhaps on the ground itself would make less noise than if it were on a boarded floor. There would be danger that the enemies might hear the bellowing of the oxen, if they had been used to thresh the grain. The angel of the Lord immediately said to him, "Jehovah is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." This address seemed not only startling but ironical to Gideon, when he considered the depressed state of his people. He therefore replied, "O my Lord, if Jehovah be with us, why then is all this evil befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying: Did not Jehovah bring us up from Egypt? but now Jehovah has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." We can well understand how Gideon came to speak in a tone so despondent. The answer came: "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hands of the Midianites. Have not I sent thee?" Gideon still expressed his doubt; but he was met with this divine promise: "Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." The assurance that God is with him is all that he needs. A miracle finally entirely re-



moved his distrust, and inspired his heart with hope and assured him of God's presence and help in all his undertakings. This miracle is in itself deeply interesting. Gideon at once undertook to present the angel with a kid and unleavened cakes. These he laid upon the rock, and the supernatural visitor touched the offerings with the tip of his staff, and immediately a fire arose out of the rock and consumed them; and thus the meal immediately became a sacrifice. The angel then departed and Gideon was filled with holy awe because he had seen an angel of the Lord face to face. The heavenly visitant gave him a word of benediction, and Gideon built an altar, calling it Jehovah-shalom.

A new era dawned upon Gideon and the people of God. Striking is the language employed to describe Gideon's preparation for this heroic and patriotic service; we are told that the Spirit of Jehovah clothed him. This statement means that he was filled fully, possessed entirely, by the Spirit of God. Being thus clothed "he waxed valiant in fight," and was thus enabled to "turn to flight the armies of the aliens." When the Spirit of God comes in abundant measure upon men they are able to perform heroic deeds, and to achieve sublime results. We are not now surprised to read that Gideon blew the war trumpet through his own clan of Abi-ezer, and also that messengers were sent through the northern tribes and they joyfully obeyed the patriotic summons. All was now ready for a great deliverance; but Gideon felt the need of a divine token to assure

him of God's presence and blessing. God condescended to strengthen his faith by a double sign, the wet fleece and the dry, of the divine presence. One wonders at Gideon's demand that God should give him this token; his conduct seems presumptuous, after God had given a definite promise; but in passing judgment upon this demand of Gideon we must have constantly in view the necessities of his position. We now see the gathering of the clans, we hear the blast of the trumpets, and we are ready for the approaching clash of arms.

Gideon's career was a campaign rather than a battle, a campaign which divides itself into three parts. No fewer than thirty-two thousand men answered Gideon's call. He, however, proclaimed through the host that all who were faint-hearted were free to depart and to our astonishment, and, as we might well suppose, to his dismay, no fewer than twenty-two thousand withdrew. But even the ten thousand still remaining were too many. A strange method did Gideon employ to test the spirit of his soldiers. Here was a "copious spring, the spring of Trembling," flowing through the basin from under a huge rock, forming a pool of pure water, and to it his soldiers were brought that he might once more test their wisdom and their self-restraint. Only those who lapped the water with their hands, as men do who are in haste, were considered worthy to be retained in the army, and all those who lay down and leisurely drank were excluded. Dr. Smith, to whom I

have several times alluded, gives a somewhat new interpretation of the conduct of these men, and of the significance of the act of lapping. After calling attention to the well of Harod, as being some fifteen feet broad and two feet deep, and as sending forth a stream sufficient to work several mills, he goes on to say that the enemy might have been hidden in the reeds and shrubs standing around the spring, as they afforded ample cover for hostile ambushes. The soldiers, therefore, who bowed themselves leisurely on their knees to drink were in that attitude exposed to the enemy who might be waiting in ambush. This act of these soldiers showed that they did not appreciate the possible position of their foe, or their own possible danger. But the brave three hundred, who merely stooped and then lapped up the water with one hand, holding their weapons in the other hand and keeping their face to the foe, showed that they had clear heads as well as brave hearts, and were ready against all surprises of the enemy. He sums up this thought by suggesting that it was a test of the attitude toward the foe which it was most suitable for Gideon to make. He contemplated a night march and a sudden surprise; he therefore needed soldiers who could show common sense and exercise constant vigilance, as did the three hundred at the water. For only such caution would render his tactics successful.

These two modes of drinking are still common in the East. Orientals become amazingly dexterous in drinking by the use of the hands; they

throw the water into the mouth before the hand is brought close to it, so that the hand brings a fresh supply before the preceding one has been swallowed. The original word for "lappeth," *yalo*k, is precisely the sound which a dog makes in drinking.

The entire number of soldiers was now reduced to three hundred. Was Gideon to be pitied? One might so affirm; but God had said: "By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand." God cares for quality more than quantity. When God makes bare his arm, a few men become mightier than many thousands without his immediate presence and benediction. Only a slight difference marked the conduct of the rejected and the accepted soldiers; but that slight difference indicated an important distinction between these two classes. We may expect that Gideon soon would achieve victories for God's Israel and for Israel's God.

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM GOD.—At this critical moment Gideon needed and received another encouragement from God. At this moment the Midianites and Amalekites, and all the children of the East, lay sleeping in the valley, like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels, according to the Scripture narrative, were without number, as the sand by the seaside for multitude. How may Gideon attempt to overcome one hundred and twenty thousand of these dashing warriors with three hundred men? God recognizes

the necessity of interposing for the encouragement of his noble servant. Yonder in the valley beneath sleep the hosts of Midian; God commands Gideon to go down unto the host, taking his servant Phurah with him; and God accompanied the command by the promise that he had delivered Midian into Gideon's power. We now see Gideon and Phurah going stealthily down to the sleeping host. The darkness of night has come down alike upon the invaders and the invaded. Under cover of the night Gideon and his armor-bearer reach the outskirts of the tents; deep silence reigns over the encampment. Like all Arabian armies, this army had no sentinels. One of the sleeping Arabs awakes; a dream has startled him. He is telling that dream to one of his companions. How eagerly Gideon and Phurah listen. This dream meant much to Midian; it will mean much to Israel. A thin and round cake of barley bread is seen rolling into the camp. Mysterious cake! Marvelous dream! And now the cake reaches the royal tent in the center of the encampment, and headlong the tent falls upon the ground. So spake the awakened Arab; so heard the anxious and delighted Gideon. The Arab affirms that it meant nothing else save "the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash." Grateful Gideon, he bows himself in thankfulness to the ground, and then dashes off up the mountain-side with a glad heart; he returns to his three companies at their posts.

Near midnight the signal was given, and three

hundred torches flashed out on the darkness of the night. Never were stillness and darkness more suddenly disturbed. Three hundred pitchers crash; three hundred men shout until the midnight air resounds as if hundreds of thousands instead of three hundred soldiers were making an onset! And the stirring war cry, "for Jehovah and for Gideon," breaks upon the stillness of the midnight air! The Arabs break camp, rush hither and thither in the darkness and confusion, uttering the wild cries peculiar to their race. Every man drew his sword against his fellow. The vast multitude poured in hopeless confusion down the valley toward the ford of Jordan; their aim was to cross the river at Bethabara, but Gideon would not permit them to escape.

"FAINT, YET PURSUING."—We come to what was really a second battle; for the Ephraimites were now aroused, and that great tribe seized the ford and cut off the fugitives. The two greater chiefs had crossed the river before the Ephraimites arrived, but Oreb and Zeeb, the lesser chiefs, were caught and slain. "Faint, yet pursuing," dashed Gideon and his brave three hundred after the retreating enemy.

At Succoth and Peniel Gideon found halting-places. Although two battles had been won, a third must be fought and a third victory achieved. Gideon now followed the course of Zebah and Zalmunna, the two chiefs who had been over all the host, with flying steps, and pursued them in

their rapid flight. Shall he overtake them? Shall the victories won be followed by another triumph? On, on, far into the desert rushed Gideon and his brave followers, and at distant Karkor he overtook the flying Arab host. There the remnant of their army had encamped in fancied security. Gideon immediately resolved to surprise them by a rapid detour. In his plans he was eminently successful, and suddenly falling upon them from the east, he utterly routed them, and by sunrise he was marching in triumph on his way back to the Jordan. Never was a victory more complete. The day of Midian, "with its confused noise, and its garments rolled in blood," remained ever after as the emblem of complete destruction of the foes of Israel. Not only Isaiah, but the author of the eighty-third Psalm speaks in stirring language of this great triumph. He represents the enemy driven over the uplands of Gilead like the chaff blown from the threshing-floor, and like the dry weeds before the fierce flames on the mountains.

So magnificent was Gideon's triumph that he rose at once to the highest honors which the tribe could confer. It was their intention to crown him as king, but he was humble as heroic; he was modest as brave. Few men could have been more fit for the honor of royal rank. His very appearance was kingly, but he earnestly refused the proffered crown.

LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.—God gives us at times opportunities for doing great things for him.

Happy are we when we recognize our opportunity and discharge our obligation. Again, God can work with few as with many; he regards character more than numbers. Unfortunately a small percentage in all our churches do the work; but few are ready to respond to the blast of the trumpet for battle against the devil and all forms of evil. Many soldiers are heroic in sham battles and on parade day; but when war really comes, thousands are faint-hearted, and other thousands are self-indulgent, and still others lack common sense. Many are skulking in the rear, some are sulking in their tents, while an undue proportion are in hospitals or in ambulances. If the test were applied to churches to-day, perhaps as great a proportion as in the army of Gideon would be unfit for battle.

Once more the trumpet sounds, summoning us to the conflict. Hosts of Midianites and Amalekites in the form of social, political, and personal evils are all about us. Let us sound the cry, "For God and native land," and rouse ourselves for duty. Let us, here and now, consecrate ourselves afresh to Christ and to his church; but let us determine to undertake nothing in our own strength. We are unable alone to cope with our terrible foes; but let us shrink from no duty to which we are clearly called of God. God will permit us to test him with the fleece; and God will give us encouragement by confessions of weakness from the foe, as Gideon was encouraged by the dream regarding the cake of barley bread.



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Let us doubt nothing when God promises us his help. Forward, O church of the living God. Let us no longer sing, "hold the fort," but let us shout, "storm the fort." And let us, when the victory is won, take no glory to ourselves, but give it all unto God. God must strip us of pride that he may use us for work. May the God of Gideon be our God, our portion, our all, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

## XXIII

### MOUNT GILBOA AND ITS BATTLE

MANY noted events occurred in this immediate vicinity. Indeed, we are in the very heart of historical facts of thrilling interest. They occupy a large place in the Bible narrative and in the writings of Bible expositors. The battle of Saul with the Philistines, because of the dramatic events themselves and because of the death of Saul and his three sons, and because of the relation of the battle to the history of Israel, is worthy of a prominent place in our discussion of these places which now we are visiting. One can ride in a few hours to all the more prominent places mentioned in these dramatic histories.

Very nearly on the same ground as that on which the brave Gideon had gathered his armies, "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might," near the fountain of Jezreel, Saul pitched his camp. The Philistines were encamped yonder at Shunem. The armies were in full sight of each other. The spirit of Saul sank within him; his heart greatly trembled at the sight of the host of the Philistines. It was the great crisis in his life; he had long been falling from God and from his earlier and nobler

self. The end was now near. The measure of his iniquity was almost full; he was rushing rapidly to his terrible doom. One's heart grows tender as the contrast between Saul of the earlier day is made with Saul now standing on the edge of his fearful fate.

**BATTLE OF MOUNT GILBOA.**—The Israelites had long kept the Philistines under control; but they were now restless and determined to strike a decisive blow. The Israelites were usually victorious in the hills. They were like the Highlanders of Scotland, well-nigh unconquerable amid the fastnesses of the lofty hills and inaccessible rocks. So were certain of the Spanish, or rather Gothic, people when Spain was invaded by the Moors; so were the Basque people in Spain against all invaders. The Israelites were, as a rule, very unwilling to risk a battle with the Philistines on the plain; there the Philistine chariots could move freely, and before their trained warriors, the Israelites when fighting in the plain had little chance of victory. This fact they knew well; the Philistines knew it well also. The Philistines, therefore, determined to gather all their strength and force a great battle in the historic plain of Esdraelon. Near the town of Shunem, on the southern slope of the range known as the hill of Moreh, they pitched their camp. On the rise of Mount Gilboa, as already stated, and nearly opposite, was the army of Israel. Memories of noble Gideon encamped on nearly the same spot, may have

been present to Saul and other leaders of the hosts of Israel. Perhaps, also, the name "spring of Harod," "spring of Trembling," may have seemed prophetic of evil; at least this much seems to be implied when it said, as already quoted of Saul, "his heart trembled exceedingly."

**SAUL'S EVIL CASE.**—Once there was a decided break between Saul and Jonathan; but Jonathan finally cast in his lot with his father when the great crisis in his history came. He was with his father in his decline, and "in death they were not divided." On the hills of Judah Saul and David parted. He no longer had Samuel with whom he might advise. Samuel was dead. David was estranged. God was displeased. In former years the Spirit of the Lord had aroused Saul, but now that Spirit had departed. There was now no harp of the shepherd psalmist to drive away the spirit of brooding melancholy which was settling on his spirit. The Lord answered him not. No answer was vouchsafed in vision or dream. The Urim and Thummim gave out no message. He was alone in his camp. The Philistines were encamped yonder and near. Terrible fears filled his soul. Heaven and earth were silent. Suspense was unbearable. If he cannot get a voice from heaven, perhaps he can get one from hell.

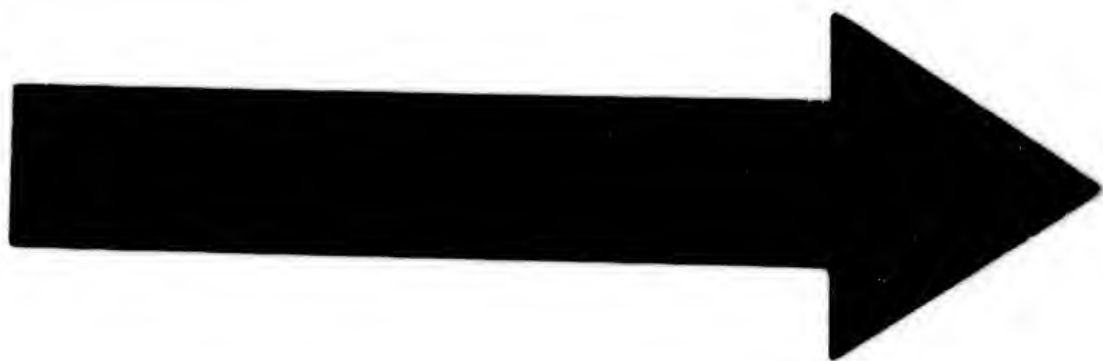
In a fit of religious zeal, and perhaps as an atonement for neglect of duty in other respects, he had put out of the land the wizards, necro-

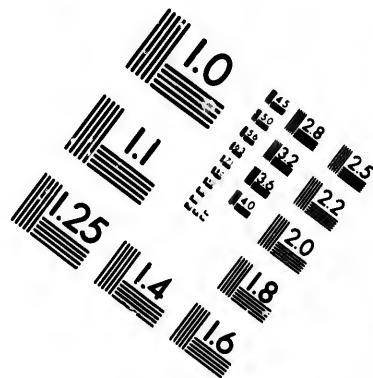
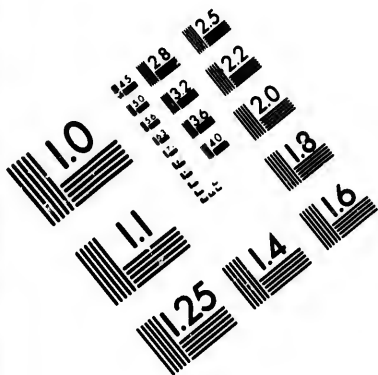
mancers, and familiar spirits. But now forsaken of God and of David, and Samuel being dead, he turned to the class of impostors who were supposed to be driven from the land by his own decree. His more intelligent religious zeal now became dark and desperate superstition. What shall he do in this fearful crisis? On yonder ridge the Philistines are encamped, and on the other side of the ridge was Endor, meaning, "the spring of Dor." There amid rocks on that wild mountain side dwelt a solitary woman. For some reason, family or perhaps political, she was spared when others of her class were banished. Three unknown guests now pressed their way to the weird abode of this strange woman. They made their way under cover of darkness. They were Saul and two attendants. The journey was perilous; the night was dark. But it was darker in Saul's soul; "the horror of great darkness" was upon him.

Jewish tradition tells us that his companions were Abner and Amasa. They went to this woman to ask her to wake the dead Samuel from the world of shades. We can trace the road which they must have taken. They crossed the plain, went round the left flank of the enemy, climbed the ridge of Little Hermon, and then went down a somewhat steep descent to Endor, where the strange woman abode. Let us follow them, so far as the details in the sacred narrative will permit. We must confess that the account is not very distinct, but we see and hear enough to make the occasion weird indeed. See

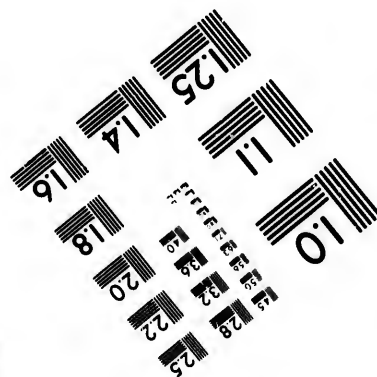
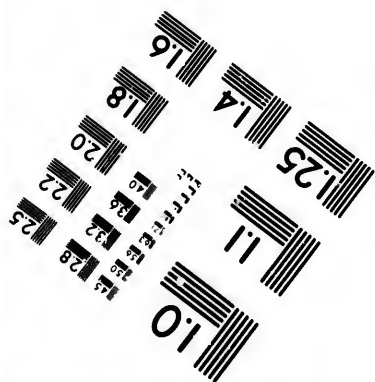
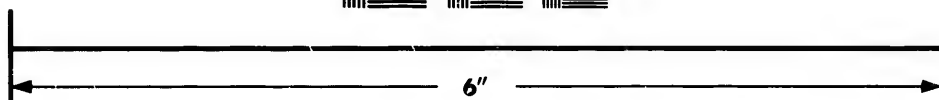
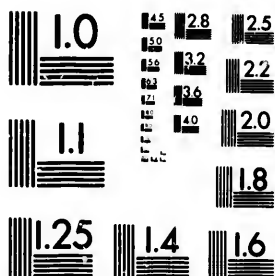
the three men approach! Hear the shriek of surprise when the woman saw Samuel! Behold the venerable figure rising from the earth. See the majesty, almost like a god's, in his appearance! His head is veiled in his sacred mantle. His countenance is disquieted, his expression is threatening. Once Samuel and Saul met at a feast in Ramah, with joy and rejoicing. Then Saul was the chosen and goodly youth to whom "there was none like among the people." Now all is changed. Behold him now when he hears the prophet's judgment, as he fell and lay "the whole length of his gigantic stature upon the earth, and was sore afraid and there was no strength left in him."

Terrible were the words which he heard. The proud and reckless, the anointed and yet the fallen Saul heard his death-knell echoing from the world of spirits. These were the fearful words which he heard: "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me; the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hands of the Philistines." Terrible words are these! See the three men with this awful news pressing their way back to the camp. How heavy a load Saul had in his heart; how terrible must the rest of the night have been! How he must have longed for and yet dreaded the breaking of the day! The day dawned. The Philistines soon poured down the valley. Yes, I can clearly see, standing here, where they marched. The Bible account of the battle is broken; we get only glimpses of the fearful day for doomed





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Saul and smitten Israel. We can, however, almost see the showers of arrows from the Philistine archers. We can see the Philistine charioteers press the Israelites hard even up the mountain side. Finally the Israelites are forced up the slopes of Gilboa. Some of the fugitives are driven down the valley to the Jordan, but the fiercest fighting is on the heights of Gilboa. On the "high places of Gilboa," their own chosen fighting ground, "the pride of Israel was slain." The final conflict took place "on the green strip which breaks the slope of the mountain upland as it rises from the fertile plain."

Listen to the clash of arms! Hear the shouts of the victorious and the groans of the dying! Where are Saul and his three sons during the fierce fight? See them emerge from the darkness of the remote time and the vague story. Read the words of Scripture: "And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers." Look again. His three sons have fallen before him. Oh, brave and beautiful Jonathan! Saul's body is wounded; his soul is in great darkness and despair. But on his head is the royal crown, and on his arm the royal bracelet. His shield is stained with blood, and is cast away as no longer needed. But in his hand is the huge spear. There is grandeur in Saul even now. He is smitten with death; he seeks death, but he cannot at once die. If captured he will be made the sport and mock of the victorious Philistines. He begs his armor-bearer to thrust him through;

but this last boon is denied him. Soon, stained with blood and wild with despair, he will be in the hands of his foes. This thought he cannot bear. He leans heavily on his spear. The dizziness and darkness of death are now coming on him. He fixed his sword in the blood-stained ground and with the energy of despair falls heavily upon it. A wild Amalekite, lured to the field in the hope of spoil, came up and completed the work begun by the arrows of the Philistines, and continued by Saul's own sword. So perished Saul, the first king of Israel. The next day the corpses of Saul and his three sons were found by the Philistines.

David in his lament sang truly: "The beauty of Israel is slain in thy high places." The bitterness of defeat and death was all the greater because the Israelites were not slain on the hostile plain, but on their own familiar and beloved high places. Looking up at the barren brow of Gilboa as we ride past it would seem as if David's words were predictive and had been fulfilled: "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil."<sup>1</sup>

It is well-nigh impossible to exaggerate the defeat which Israel sustained. We have seen that Israel was driven back to Gilboa, pursued up the hills, and utterly routed. It was impos-

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. I: 21.

sible that it could have been otherwise. Saul was paralyzed by his sad forebodings and by the divination of the "mistress of the Ob." Although they fought bravely all day, defeat was as inevitable as it was terrible. We have seen that Saul would not flee, and that he would not allow himself to be taken. The flower of the youth of Israel lay dead, and the king's body-guard also was in the darkness of death on the slopes of Gilboa. There was joy unspeakable in the Philistine cities. All the Hebrew towns in the great plain of Esdraelon were deserted of their population, and were occupied by the Philistines. They were masters of the whole caravan route, to possess which they began the war. They might well give themselves up to rejoicing; nothing could be more satisfactory to them than was the condition of Israel. The Philistines marched south and west and took possession of all the towns, which they destroyed. They came to Gibeath, Saul's own mountain village, and their presence brought a new terror and another misfortune to the royal house. The Prince Mephibosheth was then a boy of five. He was on the shoulders of his nurse. She heard the report of the terrible defeat and of the approach of the dreaded Philistines. In her haste to seek a place of safety she stumbled and fell on the rocks. The unfortunate boy was thrown from her shoulder and he received a blow which resulted in the lameness of both his feet during his lifetime. He was then carried over the Jordan, and for long years was under

the care of a Gileadite chieftain named Machir. He afterward received distinguished kindness from David for the sake of his father, the beloved Jonathan.

The Philistines, as we have seen, were now masters of the whole country. At Saul's coronation they owned but a small part of the territory; at Saul's death they practically owned it all. There seemed no possibility of resisting their firm possession and their long continuance in the land. We shall see how the men of Jabesh-gilead came across the Jordan, mindful of a former deliverance from Nahash by Saul, and took down his body from the wall of Bethshan and gave it honorable burial. We see here, as everywhere, how terrible it is to disobey God, and to incur his deserved punishment. As I rode along the valley and gazed upon Mount Gilboa, the memories of Saul, of his brave and heroic son Jonathan, and of his other sons, was vivid and instructive. Again I seemed to hear the pathetic and poetic words at the close of David's matchless elegy: "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

## XXIV

### SHUNEM—"DOUBLE RESTING-PLACE"

WE have lingered for some time in the vicinity of Jezreel. We now make our way across the plain to Shunem. After recent rains and in the spring-time the plain at this point is often very swampy. Soon we are at the little village of Sulem, the Shunem of Scripture. This is a town within the limits of the tribe of Issachar. This village is on the southwest slope of Jebel Duhy, "the hill of Moreh." It is six miles south of Tabor, and about three and a half north of Jezreel. It is surrounded by grain fields and fruit gardens. One can look westward across the plain to Carmel. It is a much tidier and more prosperous place than many which we have seen in Palestine. The villagers have gathered to the threshing-place of the neighborhood; and the grain which has been threshed is piled up as we approach. There is an air of bustle and industry here seldom seen in this shiftless country. A thick hedge of the prickly-pear surrounds the village. There is an attractive grove of orange, lemon, and citron trees; and there are grassy hillocks, and through the grove flows from a spring a stream of delicious water. By this water we dismount and seat our-

selves on the ground beside the stream. It is approaching noonday, and the sun is hot. Some of the villagers, young and old, come out to look at us, and to earn, or at least get in some way, a little *backsheesh* from us. At eventide the village maidens come hither to draw water, and now they come to offer water to the travelers. It is a cool, shady, and pleasant spot to rest after our ride, and to think of the biblical scenes connected with the name of this comparatively industrious and thriving village. We are now realizing the meaning of the name Shunem—"double resting-place." Sit with me by this stream, while we pluck a lemon and make and drink some lemonade; enjoy the brook's music and the welcome shade, and take in the historical facts suggested by the name Shunem.

It was here at Shunem that the Philistines had their encampment when Saul pitched his camp close by the fountain of Jezreel, and perhaps on the very ground where Gideon gathered his men. The armies of Saul and the Philistines were in full sight of each other. It was then that Saul became sore "afraid, and his heart greatly trembled." We have already seen the result of the fierce fight which ended in the death of Saul and his three sons, and in the defeat of the Israelites.

Another and pleasanter incident is recalled—that of the Shunammite woman, the prophet Elisha, and the boy born and recovered to life through the intercession of God's prophet. This is a sweet, sad, natural, and beautiful story of

the olden time ; and all its elements are wonderfully real as we study the natural scenery about Shunem. There is a restored house at Shunem which may be such as this "great woman" lived in. Examining this house we readily see how the "chamber on the wall" was constructed. This house makes the present mud hovels seem all the more diminutive and unattractive.

Shunem was on the road between Samaria and Carmel, and this was a road which Elisha had often to travel. In Shunem lived a woman who was known as a "great woman"; her husband had a good estate and they lived in comfort. It was impossible that a man of the name and fame of Elisha could pass and repass without attracting the notice of a family so prominent in the town; and this pious matron desired him to dine at her home. Elisha was modest and humble, but finally he was induced to accept her invitation, and as often as he passed he enjoyed her generous hospitality. She consulted with her husband as to the desirability of giving this man of God a room in her house as well as a place at her table. She doubted not that they would be edified by his wholesome instructions as well as by his godly example. Current report may have taught her how well the widow of Sarepta was rewarded for her kindness to the prophet Elijah. She seems to have had no spare room in her house, or at least none sufficiently private for a guest who spent presumably much time in contemplation and in secret communion with God. She, therefore,



had a little chamber constructed for him on the wall.<sup>1</sup> It was plainly furnished; it had simply a bed, table, stool, and candlestick. But here he might find repose and opportunity for reading, thinking, writing, and praying.

Elisha's gratitude for her kindness was great. He therefore urged Gehazi, his servant, to ascertain whether she wished to be spoken for to the king or the captain of the host for an office, civil or military, for her husband. But she had no petition to present, no complaint to make, no ambition to gratify. Her answer is full of quiet dignity, "I dwell among mine own people." Later, as we shall see, she had occasion to be spoken for to the king, but now she has no such request to make. But Gehazi calls the attention of Elisha to the fact that the music of a child's voice has not been heard in this home. Blessed in so many ways as this woman had been, this joy has not been experienced by this dwelling. If Elisha may not use his influence on her behalf in an earthly court, he can offer his prayers for her to the court of heaven. Soon she stands modestly in the presence of the prophet and learns that the birth of a son would in due time gladden her home.<sup>2</sup>

After the advent of the boy the prophet's welcome must have been doubly warm. To Elisha this boy must have been very dear. Touching is the glimpse which we thus get into this homelife, so far removed from us both in time and

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 4 : 8-10.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 4 : 16.

space. Three years pass. The boy is grown sufficiently to go out with his father to the fields where the reapers are at work. The perils of the child's infancy are past, but not those of his boyhood. He is the joy of his father's and his mother's heart we may be sure. Great grain fields are still there near Shunem, lying on the south slope of Little Hermon. Here this very day as we rode up we saw little boys bareheaded, running about in these fields. To-day also the sun was hot; so it was on the day when the son of the Shunammite woman had a sunstroke in the field where the reapers worked. We can almost hear his feeble, plaintive cry,<sup>1</sup> "My head, my head!" We can see the perplexed, sorrowful, anxious, and helpless father, as he said to the attendant lad, "Carry him to his mother." The mother's arms and heart are the place for a sick boy or girl. Fathers can pity; but mothers can comfort. God pity and comfort children who have no mother! Thank God, he offers to us a father's pity and a mother's comfort. See this mother in the quietness and coolness of her home as she holds that sick boy in her lap until noon. What moments of anxiety are hers. The father seems to have had little conception of the serious nature of the boy's illness; he knew that "mother" would somehow help; that the boy would probably fall asleep in her arms and awake refreshed and recovered. How she watches him! How her heart heaves and almost breaks!

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 4 : 19.

Can it be that this child, perhaps of their old age, this child of prayer, this child of such tender love, must die? Yes, he must sleep the sleep of death. The noon hour draws near; his strength is failing. It is noon; he is dead. Perfectly well in the morning, he is dead at noon. This child of prayer, of promise, of love, is taken away! How a few hours may change the whole course of one's life! Draw the curtain for a moment over the scene and leave this mother alone with her dead boy.

HER APPLICATION TO THE PROPHET.—Glance again at the brave mother. Her conduct deserves our approval. She utters no word of complaint under this terrible blow. It would seem as if she had a strong belief that this child should be raised to life. She is a true daughter of Abraham's faith. Did she know how Elijah had called back to life the son of the widow of Sarepta? She makes no preparation for burial. God gave this boy once as if from the dead; he can do so again. So she seems to have believed, and on that belief she acted. Observe her preparations. It was most fortunate that Elisha was at this time visiting at Mount Carmel, only about ten miles away. She laid the dead boy on the bed of the man of God, shut the door, and went out to lay her plans to communicate with the prophet. She is a beautifully self-controlled woman. She asks her husband's co-operation in her plan to visit Elisha. The husband, not knowing the cause of her desire to make the

visit, objected. It was neither the new moon nor the Sabbath; had it been either he would have seen cause for the proposed journey.

See the preparations in the saddling of the fleet ass, and then the hasty journey across the plain of Esdraelon to Elisha at Carmel. We can easily picture the whole scene, after the lapse of these thousands of years. What an anxious journey, and yet what hope her strong faith gave her in the midst of her sorrow! Blessed are they who can trust God when the darkness is deepest! To them evermore there ariseth light even in the deepest sorrow. See the servant running by her side, and driving the ass at full speed across the plain!

Elisha sees her approaching and sends Gehazi to make kindly inquiries; but it is not he she wishes to consult. She, therefore, puts him off with a general but a true answer. It was indeed well with her, with her husband, and with her child. Here is the answer of a sweet faith, a faith powerful to-day when our beloved ones die in the Lord. See her now at the prophet's feet; see Gehazi attempting to thrust her away! But Elisha knew that her soul was troubled. Listen to her recital of recent personal history regarding this child! Hear her pathetic appeal! See Elisha sending Gehazi with the prophet's staff to lay on the face of the child! We listen to her determined declaration to the prophet: "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." Elisha must go. How wonderful are the instincts, as well as the love, of the

mother! Now behold Elisha hurrying back over the plain. The servant meets him. The means have been used, but the child still sleeps in death.

ELISHA ALONE WITH THE DEAD.—See the prophet enter the silent chamber.<sup>1</sup> There is stillness throughout that home; there is a mingling of sorrow and joy in that mother's heart. How still it is! What is Elisha doing? He prayed unto the Lord as probably did Elijah. Christ raised the dead to life by a word; but Elijah and Elisha only after prayer and effort. Then he stretched himself on the child, his mouth to the child's mouth, his hands on the child's hands, communicating something of his vital warmth. This he did until the flesh of the child waxed warm. He put mouth to mouth as if in God's name he would breathe into him again the breath of life. Then he walked violently to and fro to increase his own warmth; then he stretched himself again on the child. Life is returning; the child sneezed seven times; then, God be praised, he opened his eyes.<sup>2</sup> Think of the anxiety in the mother's heart! Did she hear the sound of what was going on in the upper chamber? Joy awaits her. Hear Elisha telling Gehazi to call the mother! She comes. Hear Elisha say: "Take up thy son." No wonder she bowed herself to the ground, took up her son and went out. Heaven was then in her soul.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 4 : 33.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 4 : 35.

Sorrow comes to the greatest houses as to the humblest homes. God had but one son without sin, but God did not have even one son without sorrow. Christ had to drink his bitter cup in Gethsemane and bear his cross toward Calvary. Gethsemane and Calvary lie evermore this side of Olivet. We may not expect God's people to be free from sorrow when God's divine Son had to bear earthly grief.

But in all times of sorrow we can betake ourselves to God. It was a wonderful blessing to the woman of Shunem that the "man of God" should have made his home in her dwelling. It is worth much to us all to be in close touch with men of God. It is greatly wise in us to entertain God's servants, and often in our doing so we shall entertain angels unawares. The old-fashioned grace of hospitality is somewhat dying out in our city life. Some of us can look back to the visits of Christ's ministers in our quiet country homes as times of a special family uplift, of intellectual inspiration, and of divine benediction. The visit of Elisha to the home in Shunem was the bringing of a direct and marvelous blessing from God.

The manner in which this miracle was performed teaches us that in helping men we must come into close touch with them. It is difficult to understand what was Elisha's thought in sending Gehazi with the staff. This act has been interpreted in many ways, but no satisfactory explanation is given. We know that Gehazi afterward proved to be covetous and false, and

that he was finally punished by the infliction of a perpetual leprosy; but perhaps the failure in this case was not due to any fault in the character of Gehazi. It certainly is true now that if we are to bless men we must come close to them. One of the beautiful things recorded of Christ in connection with his miracle of healing the lunatic child is that it is said, "Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and he arose." This sufferer was in a painfully sad condition; many thought he was dead. The evil spirit had been commanded to leave him, but so fearful was the paroxysm that all the powers of the child's life were exhausted; but the touch of the hand of Christ gave him life anew. Christians are the salt of the earth, and if salt is to manifest its preserving qualities it must be mingled with that which it is to preserve. It will not do to put the salt and the meat into separate barrels. We must still take men by the hand. Many are ready to give a check to help the poor, but they will not give their presence, their hand, and their word in the poor home. They are willing to use charitable societies as a slot machine, they putting in the money and the poor taking out the benefit in some form. But we need that the rich come close to the poor in bestowing their gifts.

The greatest men, even prophets of God, are powerless without God. Elisha must wait and pray, and pray and wait, before life can return to the dead boy. This restoration is prophetic of the conversion of our children now to God, and of their final recovery to life from the grave and

their eternal joy in heaven. This sweet instance is full of tender family suggestions and of important spiritual significance. Long will the memories of the visit to Shunem abide. Sitting by one of its streams under the shadow of a tree, and thinking of its spiritual lessons, I realized the significance of the name Shunem—"double resting-place."



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## XXV

### NAIN AND ITS WIDOW ; ENDOR AND ITS WITCH

**M**OST refreshing was our halt at Shunem, with its beautiful grove, its musical and delicious streams, and its tender memories of Elisha and the family in which he found a hospitable welcome. We resumed our journey, and turning the western part of Little Hermon, as this part of the mount has been called since the time of Jerome, and which is probably identical with the hill Moreh, we were in less than an hour at Nain. The word Nain, according to some, means green pasture ; but according to others, and with better reason, fair or graceful. The name is mentioned nowhere in the Old Testament and not elsewhere in the New. The name has always been preserved ; and it was often tenderly mentioned in the time of the crusaders, and the place is frequently visited by travelers of the present time. It is near Endor and about four miles southwest of Tabor. It is picturesquely situated on a low mountain spur, the northwest edge of Little Hermon, where the hill descends into the plain of Esdraelon. It commands a fine view of the hills of Galilee. Once it was a town of considerable extent, but now it is a poor village of wretched mud huts

with heaps of rubbish and many old ruins. Its dwellings are few, only about twenty in number, and the population is correspondingly small. Its modern name, Nein, is identical with the ancient name, Nain. Its fountain has done much to perpetuate its existence. As the traveler approaches the village, he observes that above the town there are holes in the face of the hills; these are, doubtless, rock tombs, and this was the old burial place. This fact gives remarkable interest to the tender, beautiful, and divine incident in our Lord's life which occurred here. That incident has made the place memorable forever; and that incident is recorded with sweet simplicity and tender suggestion by the evangelist Luke, the only evangelist who does record this miracle. There is now no doubt as to the identity of the location, with the tombs a short distance east of the village. It was in this direction that our Lord approached, and it was probably to one of these tombs that the mournful procession, which he met at the gate of the town, was journeying with the bier on which lay the young man, who was "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow."

Let us look for a little time at the account of the raising of the widow's son, as given in Luke 7 : 11-15. Our Lord now was probably going to Jerusalem to keep the second Passover of his ministry. It was a beautiful coincidence that our Lord should have met the funeral procession as it was going out of the town; and yet it was quite in harmony with the custom of the Jews

who did not bury within the walls of towns and cities. "Much people" followed the bier. The case called forth general sympathy. Dean Trench calls attention to the fact that sorrow for an only son has passed into a proverb. In Jer. 6 : 26 we read, "Make thee mourning as for an only son ; most bitter lamentations" ; and in Zech. 12 : 10, "They shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son."

Her case instantly aroused our Lord's compassion. He said to her, "Weep not." She must have wondered at such words from a stranger ; but the tones of his voice and the glance of his eye must have revealed the pity of his heart. Christ's words are not empty exhortations. He can even now anticipate the time when God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Behold him arresting the progress of those who carried the bier. Hear his words, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." Then we read that "he that was dead sat up, and began to speak."

There are three cases of raising from the dead in connection with our Lord's earthly life. It is as easy for Christ to raise up men from the bier as for us to arouse men from the bed. In the case of Elijah and Elisha, much labor and prayer must precede the miracle. Christ spoke the word and the miracle was wrought. Blessed moment was that when Christ delivered him to his mother ! Think of her joy ! This act was prophetic of the time when he shall deliver those who have fallen asleep in him to their beloved friends, and when fellowship shall be renewed

and joy shall be universal and eternal. The effect on the people was marked. They experienced a degree of fear, they recognized that a great prophet had come, and they glorified God, saying that "God hath visited his people."

ENDOR, "SPRING OF DOR."—A ride of three-quarters of an hour from Nain brings us to Endor. The word means "spring of Dor," or "home spring." The place, with its dependent towns, was within the territory of Issachar, and yet it was possessed by Manasseh. The town is mentioned in connection with the victory of Deborah and the death of Barak.<sup>1</sup> But it is chiefly memorable because it was the abode of the sorceress consulted by Saul in his dark despair on the eve of the fatal battle with the Philistines. Nowhere is the name mentioned in the New Testament. In the time of Eusebius and Jerome it still existed as a large village, and is spoken of as being four miles south of Mount Tabor. Its connection with the victories over Sisera and Jabin may be one reason which drew Saul to the place, when he was about to engage with an enemy as much hated and feared as were the Midianites over whom Gideon, Barak, and Deborah had won decisive victories.

The rock on the slope of which Endor stands is hollowed into caves, one of which may have been the abode of the witch and the place of the incantation. There is little to be seen here

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. 83 : 10.

except the caves, and they are to all travelers the chief object of attraction. Perhaps this place was the scene of the death of Jabin and Sisera. One cave is roomy; in it is a spring to which the women of to-day go to fill their pitchers. Its walls are old and the whole picture has a weird aspect. As the women came out of their huts or holes to gaze on us, it was easy to imagine in some of them the features of the witch that has given this place its fame, a fame which will endure to all generations. There are here in all only a few squalid people living in mud huts or in the caves which abound in the vicinity.

THE WITCH AND THE APPARITION.—Saul's visit to this woman who had a familiar spirit, literally, "a mistress of the Ob," is represented as the crowning act of Saul's wickedness. He was in a state of despair. He had driven David from him, Samuel was dead, and God refused to answer by any of the ways in which he had formerly made known his will. To consult with such a woman was an act forbidden by the divine law,<sup>1</sup> and that law Saul had recently enforced. How shall this weird story of the olden time be explained?

As was to be expected, many explanations have been offered. Some have endeavored to resolve the whole narrative into a case of imposture, and they make out a reasonably good

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<sup>1</sup> Lev. 20 : 6.

argument in support of that view. They say that Saul was naturally a weak and excitable man; that he was subject to times of great depression amounting to melancholia, and verging on, if not passing over into, insanity. He was now in a state of great alarm. He commissioned his servants to seek out this woman; he went to her by night, the time most favorable for making him the victim of an imposition. He saw the woman alone; his servants may have agreed with the woman that one of them would personate Samuel. You will observe that Saul did not see, though he addressed, the spirit. The spirit told him nothing but what his own attendants could have told him, except that he would die to-morrow; and the word translated to-morrow is very indefinite, often meaning simply the future. Her whole manner may have been part of her skillful imposition. The objection to this view is that the narrator not only represents the woman as affirming that she saw Samuel, but he himself states that she saw Samuel; and also that Samuel spoke to Saul.

Some have attempted to explain the story on the ground of ventriloquism; but a similar objection holds to this view as to the one just given. Others have supposed that the woman induced Satan to personate Samuel, but this view attributes to Satan a power inconsistent with the general representations of the Scripture regarding him. The devil would scarcely be engaged in reproving Saul for his impiety and open rebellion against God.

There is another view which seems reasonable in itself, and in harmony with other scriptural narratives. Might not the whole scene be actual, so far as the impression upon the mind alike of Saul and the woman is concerned? May it not be a representation brought about, not by the magical arts of the woman, but by divine power, to warn, to rebuke, and to exhort Saul? The narrative seems to imply that Samuel appeared before the woman had performed any of her rites, before she had practised her magical arts, before she had introduced her tricks of *legerdemain* and her skill as a juggler. So soon as Saul asked to have Samuel brought, Samuel was present to her vision. The appearance of Samuel seems to have been an event contrary to all her expectations. She seemed to be as much surprised as was Saul when she told him. She learned also in the same unexpected way of the royal dignity of her nocturnal visitor. God seems to have interposed before the woman used her arts. Thus God interposed to overrule the mind of Balaam, so that he was obliged to bless those whom Balak, the king of the Moabites, wished him to curse. There are other instances in Scripture of the same general method adopted by God. As God can make the wrath of man to praise him, so he can overrule the intentions and plans of even witches, so-called, so as to make them aid in his purposes of rebuke and warning. The vision to the woman was also a warning to her; it taught her the presence of a power far beyond her control.

Terrible was the impression on the conscience-stricken Saul ; he fell with his face to the ground in the presence of the vision of Samuel coming up clothed in his prophet's or royal mantle.<sup>1</sup>

Turning for a moment to the later incident connecting itself with Nain, we find in the raising of the widow's son a striking illustration of our Lord's sympathy. This woman's case was touching in the extreme. This young man was not only her only son living, but the words in the original imply that he was the only son she ever had. The evangelist Luke, with two touches of his brush, gives us a portrait of this woman. With one stroke he shows her to us as a widow, and with another stroke as now deprived of her only son. She had, doubtless, expected to lean upon him for support, but now he was taken from her. Our Lord's heart grew tender as he thought of her multiplied griefs. This miracle of love and power has made Nain immortal. Great cities have passed away, but this Galilean village will abide. When Nineveh, Babylon, Athens, and Rome are forgotten, Nain will live. Christ glorified the entire land of Palestine. Its villages with which he came in special contact are still vocal with his words and radiant with his presence. His sympathy is as real toward those who sorrow to-day as it was toward the widow of Nain in that day. He can still be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 28 : 11-14.



Saul's terrible moral downfall abounds in lessons to men of to-day. These narratives of the olden time are as appropriate for to-day as they were for the men of that early day. Saul's downward course was gradual. There is much about him which we all must admire. When he first comes before us he awakens our enthusiasm and evokes our admiration. Magnificent in stature, he was magnanimous in spirit. His first trial and transgression revealed elements of weakness in his character which only close students of his life would suspect. He refused to obey God as God's will had been revealed by the words of the prophet Samuel. Saul ordered sacrifices to be offered contrary to the divine law. When men take the first step in the downward way the subsequent steps are taken with ease and rapidity. God gave Saul another opportunity before his final rejection. He was commanded to extirpate the Amalekites. These enemies of God long merited severe punishment from the people of God. No one may say that this command was unworthy of God, unless the critic knows all the principles on which the Ruler of the universe acts. Here again Saul was disobedient to the divine will. His conduct toward David is also worthy of reprehension. At times he sank into a condition of deep melancholy; at times he was scarcely responsible for his acts. He became a monomaniac. His treatment of David was unworthy of him as a man and as a king; but the measure of his iniquity became full when he forsook God and repaired

to the woman of witchcraft, necromancy, and divination.

One cannot but be conscious of some degree of tenderness as he thinks of the fearful condition in which Saul found himself. The Philistines were upon him; the morrow was a day of destiny. What shall he do? He is forsaken of God and of men; he sinks into despair. It is a terrible thing to forsake the living God. God's punishment came on apace, and came in harmony with natural law. When men turn away from the living God they will seek after witches and every form of superstition. It is a remarkable fact that no men are so credulous toward the superstitions of witchcraft, spiritualism, and atheism, as the men who are most incredulous regarding the existence, authority, and providence of God. When men refuse to believe in the living God they are ready to adopt the most unthinkable fancies and the most groveling superstitions. History warrants these strong statements. Caligula mocked at the existence of the gods, but he would hide himself under a bed when it thundered. Infidelity and superstition are evermore twin brothers, conceived and born in sin. Faith in God is truly rational. The unbeliever is not worthy to be called a rationalist; he is an irrationalist. He who follows God, follows reason, truth, righteousness and holiness. True religion is sanctified common sense, which, unfortunately, is often the most uncommon sense.

## XXVI

### BETHSHAN—"HOUSE OF REST"

A RIDE of less than three hours from the fountain of Gideon takes us to Bethshan, which was afterward known as Scythopolis, and is now called Beisan. The ancient name Bethshan and some remains of the town itself appear in the modern name and town of Beisan. The situation of the town is unusually attractive. It commands a grand view of the Jordan Valley, or, more strictly, the valley of Jezreel, where it opens into the Jordan Valley. The village contains only about fifty or sixty houses, and the people have a doubtful reputation. They are mostly Moslems and are described as being inhospitable, fanatical, and lawless to an unusual degree. The ruins of the town are said to cover a space of more than two miles. The ancient town was built on the banks of the stream flowing from the Ain Jalud, which is by Jezreel, and is in all probability the spring by which the Israelites encamped before the battle of Gilboa, in which Saul was slain. It also watered the valleys through which its various branches flow. Three other large brooks passed through or near the town.

Amid the ruins are the remains of a hippo-

drome, west of the village; there are also fragments of columns which must have belonged to a temple of some sort, perhaps to the mosque finished in 1404; and scattered among these remains are large heaps of black hewn stones, foundations of houses, and portions of pillars. There are also remains of the amphitheatre in the bed of the valley which are well preserved. Roman arches and many traces of a massive wall remain. The amphitheatre must have measured across the front at least one hundred and eighty feet, and it had twelve tiers of seats. It is said to have possessed three oval recesses half way up the building, and these three recesses are supposed to have contained the brass sounding tubes. There are also remains of tombs which lie to the northeast of the Acropolis. The sarcophagi still exist in some of them. There are also triangular niches showing where lamps once were placed, and the places where doors once were hung are indicated in the stones. All of these ruins are in a wonderful state of preservation. The Tel, or Acropolis, is two hundred feet high. It is a nearly circular hill, on the top of which are traces of the walls which surrounded it. Two streams run through the ruins of the city. Travelers competent to judge tell us that Hebrew, Canaanitish, Roman, Christian, and Saracenic fragments may be distinguished among the ruins of Bethshan. The waters flow in great abundance, gushing from perennial fountains, and the fertility of the soil and the luxuriance of the vegetation are re-

marked by many travelers. It is said that it affords the finest panorama next to that of Gerizim in all central Palestine.

**EARLY MENTION.**—Bethshan was a city belonging to the half-tribe of Manasseh west of the Jordan, situated in the valley of the Jordan. It was bounded on the west by the range of the mountains of Gilboa. It is about three miles from the Jordan and twenty from the Sea of Galilee. It lies three hundred and twenty feet below the level of the Mediterranean. David conquered Bethshan; but it never became really a Jewish town. In the time of Josiah certain Scythians settled there, and because of their presence and influence it came to have the name of Scythopolis. The ancient rabbins did not consider Scythopolis as really a Jewish town; they regarded its people as an unholy people. Kitto observes that if the dwellers there were descendants of the Scythians the reference in Col. 3 : 11, where the Scythian is named with the Jew and the Greek, becomes more intelligible than otherwise could be the case. It was at Bethshan that Alexander Jannæus met Cleopatra. Pompey marched through Bethshan on his way from Damascus and Jerusalem. It is stated that in the Jewish war thirteen thousand Jews were slain by the Scythopolitans. Bishops of Scythopolis are mentioned in connection with various church councils, and for a time during the Crusades it was an archbishopric, but this honor was afterward transferred to Nazareth.

The name Scythopolis was received after the exile and under the Greek dominion, but the name has not survived; the old name of Bethshan, as already remarked, appears in the modern name of Beisan. The instances are but few in Palestine in which Gentile names survive the old Semitic names. We have an instance in the case of Neapolis, the modern Nablus. In the time of the Crusades both names were given to Bethshan. The site of the town is just at the descent where the great plain of Esdraelon runs into the valley of the Jordan. The ability of using their chariots, because of the level condition of the ground, enabled the old Canaanites long to retain their hold on this place. But although the Israelites were not able to drive the Canaanites out, they had power enough to place them under tribute.<sup>1</sup> Saladin after much effort reduced the town and destroyed it by fire.

When the Philistines came to strip the slain on Mount Gilboa, after the battle which had been so disastrous to Israel, we read that: "When the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them. And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head,

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<sup>1</sup> Josh. 17 : 12, 13.

and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people. And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan."<sup>1</sup> The armor of Saul was finally deposited in the temple of Astarte, in this Canaanitish city of Bethshan. It is plain that the head of Saul was deposited at Ashdod in the temple of Dagon. The Philistines found it difficult to forgive the Israelites for the death of their great champion Goliath. The contempt thrown upon Saul was also in accordance with the customs of ancient warfare. The Philistines, however, paid a compliment even to the dead Saul. Their fierce joy showed how great had been their fear of Saul and how powerful had been his influence in breaking their yoke from the necks of the Israelites. It was most unfortunate for Saul that he had previous to this battle broken with David, for if David had been with him, the Philistines might not have triumphed, and Saul would not have committed suicide. The men of Jabesh-Gilead heard of the indignity which had been inflicted upon the body of Saul. They had formerly received kindnesses from him when besieged by Nahash, the king of the Ammonites. Their town lay beyond the Jordan in the land of Gilead; they belonged to the half-tribe of Manasseh, and once were banished by the Israelites because they refused to assist in the war against

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 31 : 7-10.

Benjamin. One of the first exploits of Saul after he had been elected king was to raise the siege which Nahash laid against Jabesh-Gilead. The inhabitants, seeing no hope, had agreed to surrender. They also accepted the terrible conditions of having their right eyes put out, in order that they might be unfit for all forms of military service. They were, however, allowed seven days in which to ratify the treaty. Saul heard of their pitiable condition. He hastily collected a large army, and immediately went to the relief of the besieged town. Saul was then in the heroic period of his life. The elements of nobility in his soul were aroused and this act of generosity was the result. The people never forgot his kindness and bravery in delivering them from their horrible fate. Forty years passed, and the opportunity came for the men of Jabesh-Gilead to show their gratitude to the memory of Saul and his sons. Their bodies, as we have seen, were fastened to the walls of Bethshan, and now the men of Jabesh-Gilead came heroically over the Jordan by night to carry off the bodies, which they partly consumed by fire, burying them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh. They then fasted seven days.<sup>1</sup> They deserve all honor for this forced night march, and for their desire to give the bodies honorable burial. Saul certainly once possessed the power of attracting men. Bad men often have good qualities which call forth gratitude and affection.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 31 : 11-13.



We have noted that these men partly cremated the bodies of Saul and his sons. Cremation was highly honored among some of the heathen nations. It is, however, here mentioned for the first time in the Bible. It was here resorted to, without doubt, to ensure the bodies against further maltreatment. If they had buried the bodies, the Philistines might have inflicted additional contempt upon their dead foes. In the Talmud, cremation is condemned as a heathen practice. The prejudice which exists against it to-day doubtless existed in the minds of many Hebrews at that time.

It was deemed a great dishonor to the body, and an irreparable injury to the soul, when proper burial was denied the dead. To be unburied was the greatest conceivable indignity, according to the popular belief in the ancient East. Many passages of Scripture could be cited in proof of this statement. The hero of the apocryphal book of Tobit has his highest praise, because of his devotion to the solemn duty of burying the bodies of Israelites, when they were found unburied in the streets and other public places. The Assyrians were under the influence of this commendable principle, or popular superstition, whichever we may choose to call it. When an Assyrian king wished to inflict the greatest humiliation and indignity on a fallen foe, he refused his body burial. The popular conviction was that the soul of a person unburied wandered about seeking rest and finding none. When these Orientals wished to inflict vengeance

upon a foe after his death they left the body unburied. A somewhat similar idea prevails to-day among the natives of India. According to the popular belief, if a body is left unburied, or is mutilated at death, the soul also is mutilated and in a sense unprotected in the spiritual world. This superstition led the British government to the awful punishment of tying the rebellious Sepoys to the mouths of cannon and blowing them therefrom. The design was not simply to visit the body with punishment, but to take advantage of the popular superstition regarding the relation between a mutilated body and an injured spirit, and so strike unspeakable terror into the hearts of the rebels. A similar superstition controls the Chinese to-day in their desire to be buried in the soil of China. Every Chinese returning to his own country makes a contract with the steamship company that, in the case of death while on board the ship, his body shall be carried back to China. It was this principle, coupled with the memory of Saul's kindness, which governed the men of Jabesh-Gilead in giving Saul honorable burial.

It is interesting in this connection to see how kindness, exercised in time of prosperity, may be repaid by its recipients in the time of adversity to their former benefactors. This thought is a gleam of light in the dark story and time which we have been studying. It is delightful to see that Saul's former kindness was not forgotten when the day of his terrible misfortune, defeat, and death came. It often seems to us as if our

best labors for the good of others were utterly unappreciated. Here is a striking instance of gratitude for former favors when their donor was silent in death. Let us give the men of Jabesh-Gilead all honor, and let their example stimulate us to acts of benevolence to-day.

It is interesting also to see how David appreciated the heroism and gratitude of these men. He seems to have made inquiry concerning the body of Saul. When he learned that it had received honorable burial from the hands of these men on the opposite side of the Jordan, he asked the Lord to show them kindness for the kindness they had shown to Saul. This may have been a bit of good policy on the part of David; but it was not that alone. Doubtless he wished to win the good will of all the adherents of Saul; but the act was consonant with the spirit of David's pathetic and powerful lament over Saul and Jonathan. The men of Jabesh-Gilead incurred danger of punishment at the hands of the Philistines when they took down from the walls of Bethshan the headless trunk of Saul. David honors their valorous conduct. He assures them that now that he is king he could render them aid, should their brave act subject them to danger.

It is always noble to be loyal to friends and especially to show gratitude for former favors. Past all earthly friends our thoughts should go up to Christ as the Friend who died that we might live. There is a sense in which we now can stand beside his cross, sharing his reproach

and glorying therein. His cross is really his throne; and those who now rejoice in his sufferings, shall one day assuredly share in his triumphs. This thought gives life one of its noblest inspirations.

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## XXVII

### MOUNT TABOR—"HEIGHT"

PRESSING on our way to Nazareth, we rode for hours in sight of beautiful and historic Mount Tabor. Its configuration and location are peculiar; they are unique among the mountains of Palestine and, indeed, of the world. It rises like a dome, suddenly and alone, from the northeastern arm of the plain of Esdraelon. It is one thousand eight hundred to two thousand feet above the sea, and nearly one thousand four hundred feet above the plain. So striking is the mountain that it is a rabbinic saying that the temple ought by right to have been built there, but a special revelation required it to be built on Mount Moriah. The mountain stands isolated, except that on the west a narrow ridge connects it with the hills of Nazareth. Its appearance is truly beautiful, it is so symmetrical in its proportions, and so like a hemisphere in its form. Seen, therefore, at different angles it presents various aspects. It is studded with oaks, syringa, and other trees and bushes; it has thick foliage on the sides, and a level tract on the summit. These trees afford shelter for wolves, wild boars, and lynxes.

Mount Tabor lies six to eight miles nearly due

east of Nazareth. Its name probably meant "height." The Greek and Roman writers called it Itabyrion and Atabyrion; its modern name is Jebel-et-Tur. In shape it is like a sugar loaf, flattened at the top. From whatever point it is viewed, it is graceful and beautiful to an unusual degree. The dew is very heavy on the mountain; it seems in the early morning as if a shower of rain had fallen in the night. Glorious is the panorama from its top; there is nothing more beautiful in the Holy Land. Objects of natural beauty and of sacred interest abound. Take a glance about you as you there stand. Fifteen miles distant is the Sea of Galilee, glittering in the sunshine; still looking east, the course of the Jordan for many miles can be seen; still farther east, the mountains of Gilead and Bashan; on the west, is the Mediterranean; on the northwest, Carmel lifts its head. On the north and northeast, are the ranges of Lebanon, and still farther beyond the snow-capped Hermon, and nearer the Horns of Hattin, the reputed mount of the Beatitudes. On the south is Gilboa, made famous because of David's elegy. We can see Endor and Nain. Tender memories will ever cluster about this beautiful mountain, even though we cannot believe that it was the place of our Lord's transfiguration; of that I shall speak a little later. With such views before us, the language of the psalmist<sup>1</sup> appropriately suggests itself:

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. 89: 11, 12.

The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine :  
The world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.  
The north and the south, thou hast created them :  
Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

The history of the mountain is deeply interesting. Tabor is not mentioned in the New Testament, but it fills a large place in the old. It was here that Deborah commanded Barak to assemble his army. The words of Scripture, in Judg. 4 : 14, 15, are : "So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak." The incidents thus summarized well deserve our more careful study. About one hundred and sixty years after Joshua's death, the people turned very generally to the worship of Baal. God punished them by letting loose an enemy among them. He designed in this way to drive them back to himself. A century and a half before Joshua had overrun the petty kingdom of Hazor, but now it had recovered itself ; another Jabin reigned. He acquired a force of chariots even to the number of nine hundred. Thus he was able to overpower the Israelites of the north, and for twenty years he kept them in subjection. He had fortresses at Taanach, Megiddo, and Bethshan. These cut off help from the southern tribes, and he held the northern in his grasp. Trade ceased ; the people went into hiding ; the highways were neglected ; and men who had to make journeys went by secret mountain paths.

The people were cowed and fearful. They were an unarmed multitude; they could scarcely boast of a spear or shield among forty thousand men.<sup>1</sup> Their enemies were numerous, well-armed, and confident of continuous victories over their feeble foes.

In this crisis a woman comes forward as the deliverer of the oppressed people. She was the Joan of Arc of the time. She was fired with a noble patriotism and a lofty religious enthusiasm. She had long pondered over the sorrows of her countrymen; she had mused until the fires of her zeal burned into a flame. Her heroic soul was aglow for God and country. She was indignant that cowardice kept the people from bravely striking for liberty. She lived in the south in the hills of Ephraim, between Ramah and Bethel. She dwelt there under a palm tree. Her name, Deborah, is significant, it means a bee—and as a bee she gave honey to her friends and a sting to her foes. She was the wife of Lapidoth, whoever he may have been. His name means, "the torch." She was a poet as well as a patriot; and her songs seem to have aroused the spirit of the people to a great pitch of natural enthusiasm. Her fame for wisdom was so great that she exercised a sort of judicial power, sitting, for the sake of its shade, under a palm tree, which afterward bore her name.

The whole country, from Benjamin to Naph-tali, caught the inspiration of her great soul, but

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<sup>1</sup> Judg. 5 : 8.



she needed a leader for the movement. On the shores of the lake of Galilee, south of where Tiberias stands, was Kedesh; here lived the chief whom she chose. His name was Barak, meaning, "the thunderbolt," or perhaps "lightning." She was the ruling spirit; she commanded him to march to Tabor, and she promised that God would deliver Sisera, Jabin's commander, with his horses and chariots, into Barak's hand. But still Barak hesitated. He needed Deborah's faith, hope, and zeal. He insisted that she must go with him; she was ready to go. But her going would take from him the victory; it would be hers and not his. Ten thousand men answered the messengers sent far and near. They assembled at Tabor. Issachar, from the plains of Esdraelon, sent bands of volunteers; Ephraimites gathered from their hills; valiant crowds of Benjamites, fierce, warlike, skilled with the bow, and so famous with the sling that they could throw stones to a hair-breadth and not miss, and able to use either hand with equal skill. Manasseh, on both sides of the Jordan, sent her chiefs. The national spirit was aroused again, as in the old days when Joshua was the chosen leader. But the cowardly people of Meroz refused to help; the clans of Reuben stayed among their sheepfolds. Gad refused to go; and Dan stayed among the boats at Joppa. Asher did nothing; and of Judah and Simeon there is silence. Haughty Ephraim remained aloof, but Zebulun and Naphtali are to earn an illustrious name.

To Tabor came the patriots. No place could be more wisely chosen. The people here were safe from the chariots of the Canaanites. The summit furnished a view, as from a watch-tower, of all the movements of the Canaanites in the plain below. Sisera collected his forces in the plain of Esdraelon; this was really the only place in Northern Palestine where chariots had space for their maneuvers. He was about sixteen miles from Tabor, his headquarters being at the town and fortress of Taanach. We have already seen that in all ages the plain of Esdraelon has been the battlefield of Palestine. All was ready. Deborah cried to Barak, "Up, this is the day." Bravely down the mountain-side poured the ill-armed Hebrew host. The two forces were about to meet. Just then a terrible storm of sleet and hail from the east burst over the plain. It was in the backs of the Hebrews, but in the faces of the Canaanites. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." The rains descended, the floods came, the winds blew and beat upon the plain. The deep, red soil was soon turned into a quagmire. The rushing torrents filled the dry watercourses. The chariots were mired. The day was lost to the Canaanites. Sisera leaped from his chariot and fled on foot to the northeast, to the slopes of Tabor, and finally sought refuge in the tent of Jael Heber, who for the time was his master's ally. Jael, the sheik's wife, gave him *lebben*, a preparation of curdled milk, which is refreshing and which soon produces sleep. See him asleep! See her

standing over him! Shall she violate all the laws of Arab hospitality? He lies down with a feeling of perfect safety. He is, doubtless, in the part of the tent reserved for the women. She covers him with a cloak. Terrible thoughts are in her heart. She is his ally; but his race was the foe of her race. There he sleeps before her. Shall she smite him? Could she not thus render a great service to her kindred? See him as he sleeps. See her as she takes up one of the tent pegs; in her other hand is the mallet. She stands over the weary sleeper. She raises her hand. The tent pin is at his temple; the mallet is uplifted. She gives the pin a terrible blow. It goes crushing through his temples and enters the ground. One convulsive bound and Sisera lies dead at her feet as she strode over him. Terrible was her treachery!

Deborah's victory was great. The Canaanites were defeated with overwhelming disaster; and no battle afterward was necessary to keep them in subjection. Israel also learned the great advantage of national union. This was Israel's first great victory since the days of Joshua. The national degradation of Israel was ended when their idolatry was abandoned. God was recognized as the author of their victory. The magnificent song of Deborah, worthy to be ranked with the song of Miriam, on the shores of the Red Sea, gives God the glory. It is for us also a two-fold record of the great battle and the sublime triumph of Israel. It scorches Meroz for not coming to the help of the Lord against

the mighty. We cannot praise the act of Jael ; it was a treacherous murder. But we must not judge that remote time and those rude nations by the standards of morality by which we now conduct wars and judge civilized peoples. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ has greatly exalted the standards of judgment on all questions of morals. The Bible really does not endorse Jael's deed ; although in the exaltation of victory and in the enthusiasm of poetry Deborah sings of the act, but only as it bore on the freedom and the fortunes of Israel.

Tabor is referred to in the wars of Gideon. It is mentioned in the Psalms, as we have already seen, and elsewhere with beautiful figurative allusions. The Prophet Jeremiah refers to Tabor ; so does Hosea.

Tabor, as has been said, is not mentioned in the New Testament, but a tradition, believed in for centuries, made it the holy mount, the mountain of our Lord's transfiguration. It is now clearly shown that the great event took place on one of the spurs of Hermon. Just before the transfiguration Christ was at Cesarea-Philippi, and after coming down from the mountain, he departed thence, and passed through Galilee in order to get to Jerusalem. In our Lord's day the top of Tabor was occupied by a strongly fortified town which had been there for more than two hundred years, and was there for sixty years after Christ's day, and probably much longer both before and after the birth of Christ. But the conspicuous position of Tabor led the

pilgrims to select it, and many visitors still cling to the old tradition.

On the summit the broad plateau is covered with the ruins of buildings of many centuries; there are remains of houses, towers, cisterns, and vaults; the last have been used as chapels and altars. These probably belonged to the time of the crusaders. Efforts are now making to erect a church on the summit. Latin priests come from Nazareth once a year to celebrate the mass. The Greeks also hold various services. Some monks and other religious enthusiasts have spent many years on the top of the mountain waiting for the second coming of Christ.

In the gallery of memory Tabor will ever live as a beautiful picture. I still see it rising in its unique symmetry from the plain. It is a majestic witness to the truth of Scripture. It has looked down on the wonderful history enacted in that historic plain of Esdraelon. Its dews have moistened the battleflags of nearly all the great nations under heaven. It has seen glorious victories and terrible defeats; it has heard the shouts of the victors and the groans of the vanquished. The eyes of some of the world's greatest soldiers have been lifted to its summit. But most of all, is it beautiful to us because Christ saw it, perhaps rejoiced in its beauty, and drew inspiration from its sublimity. His presence gives beauty and glory to Palestine. His relation to our world as its Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer gives our planet its chief dignity and charm. We do not know what honors may have

been given to other worlds, but it is enough for us to know that in this world Jesus Christ was born, that here he lived, here he died, and from it he ascended to the vacant place by his Father's side. These great truths have made the whole world vocal with Christ's name, resplendent with his glory, and prophetic of his triumph.

Superb, majestic, unique Tabor! Thou wert beautiful to sight, instructive to faith, and inspiring to hope, and thou shalt be forever fragrant in memory. Regarding Christ we shall ever say: "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name."

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## XXVIII

### NAZARETH—"THE GUARDED ONE"

VERY tender thoughts come into our hearts as we ride toward Nazareth. The origin of the word it is extremely difficult to determine. Some have supposed that it is from "Netser," meaning a *sprout*, but Dr. Selah Merrill, in his monograph entitled, "Galilee in the Time of Christ," gives quite a different interpretation. Admitting that none can decide definitely as to its meaning, he proceeds to reject the explanation which derives it from the Hebrew word meaning *consecrated* or *devoted* to God; also that which derives it from the word meaning *my Saviour*; and likewise the popular interpretation which derives it from a *shoot* or *sprout*. He believes that the hill behind the present town must always have had a name. This hill commands a wonderful prospect. He inclines to the interpretation of the word which makes it mean "one guarding." But the word may mean, as applied to the town, "the watched or guarded one." He takes very strong ground against what is so often said regarding the absolute seclusion of Nazareth as the home of Christ; and he is also warmly opposed to the idea that Nazareth, or Galilee, was really regarded with con-

tempt by the people of Jerusalem. He interprets the language of Nathanael, and other references to Nazareth, in such a way as to relieve the town of the unfavorable opinion which has so frequently been associated with the name. He calls especial attention to the fact that Nazareth was not called a village, but a city; and he endorses the opinion of Josephus regarding the extent of Galilee, and the great number of inhabitants to the square mile. He supposes that Galilee may have supported a population of three millions, and that it was a region of great natural fertility and richness. He claims that the Sea of Galilee was a focus of life and activity, and that the Galileans were truly a Jewish people, and that religion, education, and morals, as well as poetic talent, had reached among them a high degree of development. He also makes the province notable for its material prosperity and wealth. If he has not entirely proved his points, he certainly has done something toward silencing his opposers.

It is an interesting fact that the drift of scholarship in our times is in the direction of giving Nazareth a prominence long denied the town, and so greater honor as the place of our Lord's home in his boyhood. Dr. George Adam Smith, in his really great book, "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land," endorses the idea that Nazareth was not the secluded and dishonored village that many suppose; and he quotes Mr. Walter Besant's lecture on the "Work of the Palestine Exploration Fund," as taking the



same ground. Mr. Besant says: "Palestine was not an obscure country. . . He who wandered among the hills and valleys of Galilee was never far from some great and populous city. . . It was not as a rustic preaching to rustics that our Lord went about." He shows how Christ was often in the midst of busy and populous cities and always surrounded by evidences of Roman civilization. It is likely that the investigations of the next few years will give new interpretations to many Scripture references to Nazareth and to Galilee, and thus give honor to places long under the ban in popular opinion.

None can read of Nazareth, and certainly none can visit the town, without emotions of great interest and tenderness. The chief interest attaching to the place is that it was for thirty years the home of Jesus Christ. It is a city of lower Galilee about sixty-five miles north of Jerusalem, and belongs to the territory of the tribe of Zebulun. It is nearly six miles northwest of Mount Tabor, and about midway from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. Mention is not made of it in the Old Testament, nor is it found in the writings of Josephus. The city overlooks from the northwest a rich and fruitful valley, while it is surrounded by hills between which there is a narrow opening to the plain of Esdraelon. The city clings to the eastern slope of the hill, which is one of the fifteen hills encircling it, and almost hiding it from view until the traveler has actually come upon it. Some one has called the city a rose, and has spoken of

the mountains around it as a part of the rounded leaves of the flower. The vale in which Nazareth nestles is about a mile long by one-half wide, and resembles a circular basin shut in by hills, along the lower edge of which lies Nazareth. The hills vary from four to five hundred feet in height; and the valley is a rich and beautiful spot in the midst of barren hills. The town, especially as seen from the enclosing hills, is very picturesque. It is difficult to arrive at a correct estimate of the population. Some make it about five thousand; while others say that it is at least ten thousand. Perhaps three-quarters of the population belong to various Christian communities. Its houses are white, and present an appearance of industry and prosperity rare in Oriental towns. Its streets are narrow and winding; convent buildings are numerous, the tall minaret of the mosque being conspicuous. Gardens of figs, olives, oranges, and pomegranates surround the village thus beautifully nestling among the sturdy hills, whose people certainly are more remarkable for kindness, intelligence, industry, and prosperity than are those of any other town or city in Palestine. The women are proverbial for their beauty, being with those of Bethlehem the handsomest women in Palestine. In this respect they are quite marked; their complexions are fairer, their forms more graceful, and their whole address more attractive than those of any other women to be found in the land. Approaching Nazareth we notice the village of Iksal. This is supposed to be the Chis-

loth-Tabor, meaning "flank of Tabor," mentioned in Josh. 19 : 12. The hill here is precipitous, and there is a tradition that it was from this point that the people wished to cast Christ down headlong ; but this is one of the most worthless traditions connected with any place in the vicinity of Nazareth.

The history of Nazareth dates from the time of Christ, but until the time of Constantine it attracted but little attention. The modern name is En-Nasirah. Until the time of Constantine the town was inhabited chiefly by Samaritan Jews ; later it fell into the hands of the Greeks, Franks, and Arabs, and in it crusaders built churches which the Arabs destroyed. The Christians did not really get a foothold until the eighteenth century. Pasha Jezzar laid a plot to murder all Christians as soon as the French under Napoleon had evacuated the place, but an English admiral defeated his Satanic scheme.

Here lived Joseph and Mary, and here was the scene of the annunciation.<sup>1</sup> From Nazareth Joseph and Mary went up to Bethlehem to be taxed, and after their return from Egypt it was their home until Christ entered on his public ministry.<sup>2</sup> From Nazareth Jesus went to the Jordan to be baptized of John when he entered his public ministry,<sup>3</sup> and here he returned after these events.<sup>4</sup> When the people of his own city rose up to thrust him from the brow of the hill,

<sup>1</sup> Luke 1 : 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 2 : 23.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 3 : 13.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 4 : 16.

he passed through the midst of them and went to Capernaum.<sup>1</sup> Ever after his rejection by his townspeople he considered Capernaum as his own city; and so far as we know he does not seem ever again to have visited his early home, although he must often have seen it in the distance while on his journey to Jerusalem.

PLACES OF INTEREST IN NAZARETH.—The Latin convent is enclosed with high walls and contains the church of the Annunciation. The high altar is dedicated to the Angel Gabriel and below the altar is the chapel of the Angels, and near it is the chapel of the Annunciation. There is in this chapel a memorable altar with the inscription: *Hic verbum caro factum est*—"Here the Word was made flesh." Columns mark the supposed places where Mary and the angel stood. The column marking the spot on which Mary stood is broken; and tradition affirms that this was the work of enemies, and that the column in a miraculous way retains its position. A doorway leads to the chapel of Joseph, and then a stairway to the kitchen of the Virgin. This kitchen altar, however, is a mere cave, the mouth being pointed out as the chimney. The Holy House of Nazareth is not here. Tradition tells us that it was carried to Loreto in Italy. This tradition affirms that the Casa Santa, or Holy House, was brought by angels to a spot on the coast of Dalmatia, that there it rested for three

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 4: 29-31.

years, and was then carried off at night by angels, to the property of a certain widow named Laureta, hence the name Loreto. This tradition was so generally believed by ignorant and superstitious Romanists, that a church was built and a village collected at the place, and Pope Sixtus V. gave it the rights of a town. It is estimated that a half-million pilgrims annually resort to this place; which is thus one of the most frequently visited places in Christendom. The legend, however, fails to tell how the white stone of Nazareth was changed into the red stone of Loreto; but if the transportation occasions no difficulty of belief he should not stumble at the change of color.

The workshop of Joseph is in the Moslem quarter, but is in possession of the Latins. The most credulous people, however, claim only a small part of the wall as that of the original workshop. What is called the table of Christ, where he ate with his disciples, is also pointed out. The synagogue where he is said to have taught is in the possession of the United Greeks. I went up with my dragoman the winding way which led to the top of the mount of Precipitation, and there is almost no doubt but that this is the true location. The moment one sees this place he feels that it corresponds to all the descriptions given in the gospel narrative. The other place pointed out is at least two miles from the heart of the town, and is altogether an improbable site.

There is no place in Nazareth more sacred in

all its associations than the fountain of the Virgin, where is still a plentiful spring pouring out its water from three mouths. Above it there is another church of the Annunciation, which is the property of the Orthodox Greeks. Arriving at Nazareth soon after noon, I had time for needed rest before visiting its places of interest; and I went several times to this fountain. A beautiful sight it was in the evening to see the mothers with their children, both boys and girls, gathered in large numbers, and in their strikingly picturesque costumes, at this well. Groups were waiting while others were filling their jars, which were then lifted to the head, while the women walked off with ease and grace, carrying their heavy load. Others then step forward to fill their pitchers, and so the process continues. The sight was most impressive and beautiful. As one looked at these graceful women accompanied by their children, he could not help feeling that often Mary and the infant Saviour had come to this well, had filled their pitcher, and had gone back to their home, as we saw mothers and children doing that evening. It was easy to feel that often the boy Christ stopped at this well on his way home after a day of rambling on the adjoining hills. Perhaps at no time thus far during my visit in Palestine was I conscious of coming into closer touch with the life of Christ than as I sat at evening's holy and beautiful hour at the fountain of the Virgin.

Much excellent Protestant religious work is going on in Nazareth, the church being a hand-

some building under the direction of the Church Missionary Society, while the number of Protestant communicants is considerable. The Girls' Orphanage is in a flourishing state, and the Christian atmosphere of Nazareth is favorable to the development of the nobler qualities of manhood. Mohammedanism and heathenism take the crown from every woman's brow. Christianity is the one faith which gives her true dignity and becoming reverence and she is honored just in proportion as it is believed and its precepts obeyed.

I have had occasion frequently to speak of some of the grand prospects in Palestine. One of the most magnificent is from the summit of the hill on the eastern slope of which lies Nazareth. Never shall I forget the commingling of tender emotions as I thought of Christ's home in the town, and of the glorious view stretched out on every side. This view, doubtless, our Lord often enjoyed. His nature was open to appreciation of the beautiful in all departments of his own creation. How his soul must have drunk in the beauties stretching out before him! On the north were the ridges of Lebanon, and above all the majestic top of snow-crowned Hermon. On the west was Carmel, with glimpses of the Mediterranean. East and southeast were Tabor and Gilboa. To the east of the Jordan were the heights of Bashan. On the beautiful plain were Nain, Endor, and Jezreel, and at our feet lay the town in which the divine Redeemer spent his boyhood.

No one can mention the name of Nazareth in connection with the life of Christ without being reminded of the lesson of obedience which he rendered to his parents. For eighteen years the curtain does not lift upon his experiences in the quiet home in this city. One often wishes to know more than is revealed to us concerning his quiet life in Nazareth, but the hints which are given are profoundly suggestive. They teach us that he was willing to subject himself to the authority of his earthly parents. Here in this secluded home he had opportunities for studying the Old Testament Scriptures, for communing with nature, and for developing a life of self-reliance as he toiled at the carpenter's bench. We cannot overestimate the value in the spiritual life of these years of retirement and silence.

He sets before us an example of a life of humble industry. As he left his Father's house in heaven for earth, so after his visit to Jerusalem, when twelve years old, he left his Father's earthly house for his humble home at Nazareth. For eighteen years after his visit to the temple he lived there in obscurity until he came to the Jordan to be baptized of John. His was a perfect childhood, and an obedient youthhood, as well as an ideal manhood. There is in many respects a greater charm about Christ as the perfect boy than as the perfect man. He, no doubt, learned his father's trade and humbly worked at it with his father, and possibly helped to support his mother after his earthly father's death; for it is altogether likely that Joseph died before Jesus



entered upon his public ministry. It is worth much that Jesus was born poor, and lived under the necessity of performing daily toil for daily need. This thought of Christ gives him power in the world to-day. He is the poor man's best friend. Had he come into the world rich he would be shorn of much of his power. He teaches us also to bide our time and thoroughly to prepare ourselves for our public duties. During all these years he performed no miracle,—that fact alone is almost a miracle. He learned much from his mother. It was his habit to attend the school of the synagogue, and on the Sabbath to participate publicly in its services. He learned most from the immediate knowledge he had of his Father's will. In the depths of his soul he heard his Father's voice as truly as Adam in his innocence heard the voice of God in paradise. We are in too great haste to begin our work, and so we neglect proper preparation. Evermore Nazareth shall speak to me with a voice of tenderness regarding all the relations of husband and wife, of father and child, and of both to the great God in heaven, Christ's Father and ours.

## XXIX

### CANA OF GALILEE

WE left Nazareth early in the morning. Now, as in the early days, travelers in the Orient are accustomed to start early, before the sun reaches its great heat. The first village which we pass is Reineh, but it has no special historical associations. Near the roadside, however, there stands an old sarcophagus; once it was richly ornamented and traces of its former superior workmanship yet remain, although now it is used as the common water trough of the village. On the top of a hill on our left, as we ride toward Cana, is the village of Meshad, as it is now called, supposed to be the ancient Gath-hepher. It belonged to the children of Zebulun, and was the birthplace of the prophet "Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher."<sup>1</sup> It lay not far from Sepphoris on the road to the south of Galilee, and here tradition locates the tomb of Jonah; but of this there is no certainty.

We soon reached Cana, so supposed, where Christ performed his first miracle by turning water into wine. Some travelers, and among them Drs. Robinson and Porter, object to this

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 14 : 25.

village as the site of the ancient Cana. They located it at Kana-el-Jelil near Sepphoris, and about nine miles north of Nazareth. It is by no means certain which is the true site. The name Kana-el-Jelil has the stronger probability; but the location is in favor of Kefr Kenna. For some time after Dr. Robinson's day the other town was generally accepted; but the former opinion is fast reasserting itself, and Kefr Kenna is coming to be very generally considered as the true Cana of Galilee. It is about three and a half to four miles east of Nazareth on the road to Tiberias. The tradition connecting this spot with Cana of Galilee is very ancient, it having been found in the eighth century. It is a small, neat-looking village, pleasantly situated on the descent of a hill looking to the southwest and is surrounded by olive and other fruit trees, such as figs and pomegranates. There is in the vicinity a large spring enclosed by a wall; and, if this is the true Cana, as I think it is, the water used at the marriage feast at the time of our Lord's visit was almost certainly drawn from this spring. Water-pots of compact limestone are still used in this neighborhood. There is a small Greek church, and it is declared that one of the very waterpots used at the marriage feast may be seen here. A house said to be that of Nathanael, who was a native of Cana, is pointed out. The church is said to stand on the site of the house in which the miracle of changing the water into wine was performed. The Christians of the village are mostly of the Greek

Church. It is said that in the time of the Crusades six of the waterpots were brought to France, where one of them is said still to remain intact in the Musée d'Angers.

Here it was that our Lord performed his first miracle,<sup>1</sup> and here also,<sup>2</sup> he healed by a word the nobleman's son. This nobleman was, in all probability, a Jew. He came not as did the heathen centurion, pleading for his servant, but for his son. By the record in John 4 : 46-54, we see that the nobleman himself came to plead for his son. He limited Christ's power to his actual presence. Some suppose that this nobleman was a civil or military officer in service of Herod Antipas. It has been suggested that he may have been the "Chuza, Herod's steward," whose wife Joanna afterward ministered to Jesus. His son was sick at Capernaum, on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, about fifteen miles away. The man was very earnest as he said, "Sir, come down ere my child die." In Christ's answer there was a mingling of rebuke and encouragement. Christ tried the nobleman's faith, but in the trial sent him away with this sweet assurance, "Go thy way, thy son liveth."

The man's imperfect faith was answered, but in such a way as to humble him and honor Christ. Jesus answered this man of rank with calmness, dignity, and authority. He gave him no flattery; he showed no obsequiousness. Jesus

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<sup>1</sup> John 2 : 1-11.

<sup>2</sup> John 4 : 46-54.

would not leave his appointed sphere or place of duty. He could and would heal the sick boy without seeing his face. Happy father, he believed! happy boy, he was healed! See the father going home, and his servants meeting him! Hear them saying, "Thy son liveth." He learns upon inquiry that at the same hour at which Jesus said, "Thy son liveth," the fever left him.

This miracle at Cana was, as we are here informed, "the beginning of miracles." It is a remarkable thing that Christ did not perform miracles until now. The Apocryphal Gospels represent him as having performed many miracles during his boyhood and early manhood. One has only to compare the accounts of those miracles with the true to see the difference between inspired and uninspired writings. They are frivolous, puerile, and often ludicrous. They lack the majesty, dignity, and divinity of the gospel narratives. Christ bided his time. This miracle began the series. This inauguration was as significant in its prophetic meaning regarding his earthly ministry as was his first parable. The first parable was that of "The Sower." It suggests the whole work of our Lord in his public ministry. He came to sow "the good seed of the kingdom." Not less prophetic is this first miracle. It suggests the whole purpose of Christ's earthly life. He came to ennoble, to transmute, to glorify, to divinize. As he now turned water into wine, so his entire ministry was to be the turning

of the water of earth into the wine of heaven. It is profoundly significant that he should have inaugurated his miracles with one which is so prophetic of his entire earthly work. The mother of Jesus was at this marriage feast, while it is altogether probable that Joseph was dead. He has at this time entirely disappeared from the history. He was last mentioned on the occasion of Christ's visit to the temple, now more than eighteen years before. The disciples who were present on this occasion were probably Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, and John himself. They had recently become attached to Christ as their Lord and Master. It is instructive that they should be witnesses of this first miracle.

It is not at all surprising that Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding feast. He was not an ascetic; he was a man among men; he came to sanctify and glorify all forms of true and noble life. He was not a John the Baptist, secluding himself from the social festivities of life. He loved the homes and the innocent joys of the families with whom he associated. Jesus was for all times and all civilizations. He is the contemporary of all generations and individuals. This element in his life is absolutely unique. He belongs to the close of the nineteenth century as much as he did to the opening of the first century. He sanctifies our joy as truly as our sorrow; but it is especially significant that he should have performed this miracle at a marriage feast. His example in this respect rebukes

the teaching and practice of the Roman Church to-day. He foresaw that the time would come when in the church called by his name men would despise marriage. It was most important that he should rebuke this unchristian doctrine. All who so teach find no authority in the words or the example of Jesus Christ. He nowhere gives undue emphasis to celibacy. No church has a right to represent the marriage state as being less holy and beautiful than that of celibacy. By anticipation he rebuked many of the other doctrines also which are taught in the Roman Church to-day. It would seem as if he distinctly foresaw them and took pains to put upon them the stamp of his disapproval.

It cannot be denied that he here seemed to put a certain slight on his mother. Romanist interpreters have striven in vain to remove from his words, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" the element of rebuke which they contain. The mere word, "woman" has in it no suggestion of severity. When he was upon the cross and when he committed his mother to the care of the beloved John he said, "Woman, behold thy son." But when he said, at the marriage feast, "What have I to do with thee?" he distinctly gave his mother a slight rebuke. The words mean that now there was not the common ground between them which had characterized their former relations. She must understand that she is not to control his acts in this new sphere on which he has entered. Entire essays have been written on these words; but no

amount of exegetical acumen will remove from them the tone of gentle and needed rebuke which they suggest. His mother seems to have understood, partly at least, their meaning. She gave a right command to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

Christ beautifully supplies the wants of others. This thought is clearly suggested by his entire conduct on this occasion. Perhaps he was influenced by the fear that the hosts might be humiliated by the discovery that their supply of wine was exhausted. He also made most abundant provision for the wants of the waiting guests. It is not my purpose to go into the discussion of the question as to the kind of wine which Christ here made. It is sufficient to say that it certainly was wine, and it was such wine as the governor of the feast considered remarkably good. I am well aware of the various interpretations that are given to these words; but it does not seem necessary to go into the matter in detail. We are safe in saying that Christ did not make the poisonous stuff which is so often sold to-day as wine. The quantity was certainly very great. It is said that it was not less than one hundred and twenty-six gallons, or about four barrels. Perhaps this great quantity was needed to supply the wants of the company which probably was very large, as the fame of Jesus would doubtless bring the people from many parts of the country. If any wine were left over, this abundant provision would be in harmony with God's usual course, as he always



gives bountifully. Wine is not now extensively made or used in Palestine, and the influence of Mohammedans and Mohammedanism is distinctly against the making or drinking of wine.

Nature is always changing water into the juice of the grape; and all that Christ did on this occasion was to hasten the process. This remark will apply to all of Christ's miracles. Health is the normal condition of the human body; sickness is abnormal. Christ came to restore physical and spiritual normality. Religion is the restoration of spiritual normality. It is most interesting to see that in one sense miracles are not miraculous. Christ introduced in the performance of a miracle a higher law which for the time being held the lower law in check. It is a beautiful line given us by Craslow:

The conscious water saw its God and blushed.

There was here, as in all of Christ's miracles, an acceleration of processes which are continually going forward in the ordinary operations of what we call natural law. There is a sphere known fully to God, but only partially to us, in which all natural law is supernatural and all supernatural law is natural law.

Christ always gives the best last. This is a most sweet lesson which we learn from this miracle. This element in the miracle illustrates the essential difference between all earthly things as compared with heavenly things. The devil gives his best first. The world smiles, and

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then it stabs; the world has honey in its lip, and death in its heart. Religion may now have temporary sorrow, but it will soon have unspeakable joy. The first miracle of Moses turned water into blood; the first miracle of Christ turned water into wine. Those who enter into the life of Christ shall find all human experiences transformed, by the alchemy of divine grace, into divine blessings, and earth itself shall at last be exchanged for heaven.

### XXX

#### MOUNT OF BEATITUDES

JOURNEYING from Cana of Galilee to Tiberias, we first enter a beautiful plain, pass a few villages, one of which is Lubieli, at which there are some ruins and rock tombs, and then on our left is the mountain known as Kurun Hattin, or Horns of Hattin. Its name comes from the fact that it consists of two peaks, or horns, Kurun meaning "horns." The two horns, or mounds, are supposed to resemble a camel's saddle, with its two horns or knobs. It rises with some suddenness from the fertile plain. We speak of the place as a mountain; but it is really only a hill, as it rises only one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight feet above the level of the sea, and but about sixty feet above the level of the surrounding plain. It is distant about three miles from the Sea of Galilee, and is about one-third of a mile in length. It is a conspicuous object in the view, as one looks back after he has gone far beyond the head of the Sea of Galilee and is near the waters of Merom.

A more careful view of the hill shows that on it there are two elevations, those which I have already called horns. It seems as if one of these was the place chosen by our Lord as a place of

prayer. He then probably stepped down into the open space, called in Luke 6 : 17 the "plain." This is a natural platform between the knobs, and capable of seating many hundred people. Here it was our Lord spoke his immortal words; here it was also that he made his final choice of his disciples, although it is true that this place was not selected as the mount of Beatitudes until the time of the crusaders. Some interpreters make this the place of the feeding of the five thousand, as recorded in Matt. 14 : 15-21, but a better location can readily be given.

Is this the true site of the delivery of our Lord's wonderful sermon? While, as we have said, the tradition goes back only to the time of the crusaders, much may be said in its favor. It is quite certain that none of the other mountains in the neighborhood so well answers the descriptions given of the entire event. This mountain, to a noticeable degree, stands apart; it rises at once from the fertile table-land. The other mountains form a part of the range of hills which stand about the shore of the sea. This hill is uninhabited; it might well, because of its isolated position, claim a distinct name, as separate from neighboring barriers of hills. So far as its separateness from any range of hills is concerned, Tabor might be the mountain of Beatitudes; but it is too remote from related events to answer the requirements which would give it the honor that attaches to the pulpit of our Lord when he delivered the most memorable sermon ever heard or read by mortals.

Dean Stanley calls attention to the fact that the situation of this mountain so strikingly coincides with the gospel narrative as to oblige us to believe that this is the true place of the Sermon on the Mount. From the Sea of Galilee no other height is seen in this direction. The table-land from which it rises is easily accessible from the lake, and the walk from the plain to the top of the mount can be taken in a few minutes. The platform on the top is well adapted for the accommodation of a multitude; and from one of the horns he could readily come down to address the people on the level place called the "plain," as already suggested. The mount is located so as to be central between the peasants of the Galilean hills and the fishermen on the lake. No place, as Dean Stanley suggests, could more fittingly furnish a solitary retreat for Christ and his disciples when they retired from the shore of the sea; and no place could be more convenient for the crowds which gathered from "Galilee, from Decapolis, from Jerusalem, from Judea, and from beyond Jordan."<sup>1</sup>

The place, or its neighborhood, is famous because of the battle fought between Sultan Saladin and the crusaders, July 3 and 4, 1187. This is called the battle of Hattin. It was the death-blow to the power of the crusaders in Palestine; and virtually crushed all their hopes of being able to conquer the land. It was their last struggle. Dr. George Adam Smith has given a stir-

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 4 : 25 ; 5 : 1 ; Luke 6 : 17-20.

ring description of this great battle. The crusaders had neither shade nor water. It was a hot July day. Their enemy set fire to the scrub. The smoke blinded and choked the Christians. Their armor was heavy and hot. The foot-soldiers broke their ranks, dropped their weapons, and were finally ridden down by the Moslem cavalry. He also adds: "A militant and truculent Christianity, as false as the relics of the 'True Cross' round which it was rallied, met its judicial end within view of the scenes where Christ proclaimed the gospel of peace, and went about doing good." With the coming of night-fall the captive princes were brought to the tent of the victorious Saladin. Among them were Guy of Lusignan, Raynald of Chatillon, the grand master of the Knights Templar, and the bishop of Lydda, bearing the holy cross. Saladin received all but Raynald with the respect due their rank and their misfortunes. The knights were sold as slaves; the Templars and Hospitallers were executed. On Raynald he looked with scorn and hate; and he himself slew him, as it was claimed that he had frequently broken faith with Saladin. This was a day of triumph for the Moslems. The power of the crusaders in the Holy Land was broken forever. A mighty army of noble knights and valorous soldiers, whose brave deeds have been honored in song and story, was captured and then imprisoned or slain. Nearly all Palestine, with the city of Jerusalem, soon helplessly yielded to the Moslem yoke.

Wonderful was the contrast between the fierce battle of Saladin and the delivery of our Lord's sermon on this mountain. Let us now study for a little this latter event which makes this mountain famous, and will make it immortal. The discourse recorded by Matthew in chap. 5, 6, and 7, and that recorded by Luke in 6 : 20-49, are supposed by some to be distinct discourses and to have been uttered on different occasions. Those who hold this view affirm that they were delivered in different places, that by Matthew being on a mountain and this by Luke on a plain. They also hold that they were delivered at different times, and also that they differ so materially in themselves as to give sufficient grounds for supposing them to be different in time and place. It is true that both seem complete and connected throughout; that the one in Matthew has one hundred and seven verses, while the one in Luke has only thirty, and that about one-quarter of the latter is not found in the former. In Luke four "woes" are connected with four "beatitudes"; and while many points are similar, there are often marked differences. I frankly admit that Jesus might have delivered two discourses so nearly similar on quite different occasions. We know that a comparison of many passages shows that he often repeated his great sayings; and it certainly would be remarkable if he had not often repeated the central truths and the heavenly thoughts contained in this great discourse. All wise and great teachers often repeat themselves; it would be a reproach to a great thinker

if he did not consider his best thoughts worthy of frequent repetition in various forms of expression adapted to different occasions.

But I believe that the discourse recorded by Matthew and that by Luke are identical, or, at least, are two accounts of the same sermon. Augustine, and following him many writers of the Latin Church, held that they were distinct. Most of the writers of the Greek Church hold that they were identical. Perhaps a middle view can properly be held. May not Christ have delivered the longer discourse given by Matthew on one of the horns of the mountain, and then after descending into the level space a little lower he may have given a synopsis of that discourse to the people gathered there? This latter group may have been composed, in part at least, of different people. This summary of the longer discourse seems to have been followed by the selection of the twelve apostles, and also by the healing of the centurion's servant.

I well know that some regard our Lord's Sermon on the Mount as a summary and sample of his teaching during the course of his public ministry. It is admitted that Matthew was in the habit of combining historical events and other matters which were of one kind, whether or not they were consecutive in time. It is readily admitted also that many of the sayings of this great sermon are found elsewhere in Christ's teachings. Christ spoke usually to shifting groups who were in need of substantially the same kind of truth. He was not obliged, so



much as a settled pastor or lecturer, to utter new sermons or addresses on all public occasions; he was neither ashamed nor afraid to repeat himself. But he did not follow a slavish uniformity; on the contrary, he introduced new matter as his wisdom suggested, and gave new forms to the truths he had already spoken. But the natural presumption is that Matthew is here recording what our Lord spoke on some particular occasion. Perhaps we might regard it as the "ordination sermon" of the apostles. The simple historical form of the discourse, all information to the contrary being wanting, confirms us in the idea that it was delivered on some one special occasion.

In this sermon we have a discussion of the nature, subjects, and principles of the kingdom of God. The time had not yet come for a statement of the full development of all these principles. But they were admirably adapted to produce repentance. They set up the high, the divine standard of conduct. They receive their full lustre from the light which shines from the cross. The sermon is not a full system of Christian doctrine—such a system must have had the death and resurrection of Christ as its basis. Neither are we to find in it specific rules for every form of moral duty. It is a statement of great principles clothed in figurative and paradoxical forms of speech. We must not suppose that it is in contradiction to the fuller statements of doctrine given by the apostles. Many errors were current as to the nature of Christ's

kingdom. Christ teaches that the moral requirements of law were not to be set aside, and the standard of duty was not to be lowered, but rather to be raised. He carries us back to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. Doctor Alexander, in his commentary on Matthew, has well suggested that Christ corrects the ideas of the bigoted Jews, who thought the Gentiles could not be saved; and of the revolutionary Jews, who thought all distinctions would be destroyed; and also of the censorious Jews, whose religion consisted in criticising the faults of others and in obeying outward forms of righteousness. Chapter five shows for whom the kingdom is designed. Chapter six shows us that great religious duties must be performed as unto God and not unto men; and chapter seven rebukes Pharisaical hypocrisy and exhorts us as to true self-denial.

Here the Christ of the throne stands conspicuously forward. The old law took cognizance of outward acts; this interpretation of the law takes cognizance of inward thoughts. He is a foolish man who says, thinking by so saying to despise the doctrine of the atonement, that he wishes simply to live by the Sermon on the Mount. He was a wiser man who said: "God save me on the day of judgment from the Sermon on the Mount." Who can live up to it? Rightly understood, this sermon is an exhortation to repentance, an exhortation to trust Christ, an exhortation to follow him in self-denial and finally to glory.

Marvelous sermon! It will outlive all other literature. Even that of the twentieth century will not come up to it. So we think and feel as we drive on with the Horns of Hattin behind us, and soon have before us our first glimpse of the sacred Sea of Galilee.

Striking are the contrasts between the work of the crusaders on the one side, and that of Christ and his apostles on the other. The crusaders have gone from the sphere of activity, and are obscured in the shadows of legend and history. They never really accomplished the purpose which their fanatical zeal inspired. God, however, overruled their fanaticism and ignorance for the progress of humanity. The mingling of many civilizations and peoples resulted, in many indirect ways, in the advancement of civilization and Christianity. But so far as its primary purpose was concerned, the Crusades were a gigantic failure. In Christ and his words, and in his apostles and their words, there is what has been finely called a "perpetual contemporaneousness." Christ spoke for all centuries and climes. He and his apostles are more thoroughly living to-day than when they were on the earth. They are now moving irresistibly to the conquest of the world for truth and God. Christ spoke apparently unmeditated words to Galilean peasants on this Galilean mountain. Great orators, philosophers, and historians, have labored long on a few sentences that their words might be endowed with immortality. Christ spoke for the hour, the place, and the audience,

simple sentences; but they will live when all other literature has perished. Never did man speak as Jesus Christ spoke in the Sermon on the Mount. To-day social scientists are striving to bring their systems up to the level of this marvelous discourse; they are striving to incarnate the teachings of this divine sermon in their systems of social philosophy. To-day a coarser grade of socialists, rightly or wrongly, hiss at the mention of the church; but to-day this same class of socialists will cheer the name of Jesus Christ. He is the world's Prophet, Priest, and King. He sways the sceptre of unlimited power. That mountain in Galilee was a throne of potency and splendor. The most advanced thought of to-day has not come up to the simple and profound teaching of that discourse. In it Christ formulated some of the deepest principles that have ever occupied the mind of man. Because of that sermon we crown him as the foremost thinker the world has ever known. Amid the smoke of the battle of Hattin we see Saladin and the crusaders; the smoke of battle clears away and Saladin and the crusaders, with all their pomp and glory, disappear. Looking to that mountain now, we see "no man save Jesus only"; and when the smoke of all the battles of the world shall have cleared away we shall see Jesus Christ on his throne, regnant and glorious for evermore.

## XXXI

### THE SEA OF GALILEE

**M**OST deeply interesting was the ride from the mount of Beatitudes to the Sea of Galilee. There is not a sheet of water on the globe which I so greatly desired to see as the Sea of Galilee. It rejoiced in the presence and submitted to the power of Jesus Christ. In its waters were mirrored the face and form of the Son of God. The hope of seeing it was in my thought for years, and it now gave zest and charm to this trip over the hills of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. And yet, as I knew I was approaching it, there was a sort of unwillingness to have the sight for which I had long waited. I refused to look up until a spot was reached where the view would be the finest. "Look now," said Abdallah, my excellent dragoman. At his words I looked with strangely mingled emotions, and had the magnificent view of the sea and its surroundings which all travelers in the Holy Land get who approach it by this road.

Some describe the view in terms of great extravagance; others equally depreciate it. The truth lies between the extremes. Many having in mind only the desolate wastes, the barren

hills, and the extent of the water, will tell you that lakes in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Switzerland, far surpass this view. In several respects they are quite right. But the thought of Christ's presence glorifies mountain, shore, and sea, and makes this the most interesting and transcendently beautiful place on this globe. This lake, with this thought in mind, is not to be compared to any other water, nor this vicinity with any other region in the world. Much depends upon the traveler's point of view; but even apart from the association of the lake with the name and work of Christ, its intrinsic features are such that one cannot but be charmed with them, or at least not disappointed, simply for their own sake.

Permit me to paint the picture as seen from this vantage point. The lake, from the town of Tiberias on the right to the ruins of Capernaum on the left, is distinctly seen. This clear blue expanse of water is very beautiful. Receding from the shore are banks, sometimes steeply and sometimes gently sloping. On the opposite shore are the irregular hills, now presenting precipitous cliffs and now rolling backward more gently. They are, for the most part, bare and barren; but they are variegated in tone and tint. Here are the mountains of Galilee, and away to the north, as the glorious limit to so many pictures in Palestine, is the magnificent Hermon, now looking grander, kindlier, and statelier than ever before. In the evening light this combination of water, verdant slopes, bold

hills, and the snow-clad Hermon, makes a picture of loveliness rarely surpassed. Everywhere the thought of Christ is present to the Christian heart. He trod those waters, and they were as a pavement of adamant beneath his feet. He commanded these waves, and they obeyed his voice. He preached on these shores. Yonder the wretched maniac was healed, and down these rugged hills the swine ran into the lake. All about these shores are some of the most sacred scenes in our Lord's ministry. The very air seems charged with his words. Hill and valley seem to be written over with memories of his blessed presence. A whole volume might be written in giving an account of his heavenly ministry along the shores of this divinely honored sea. Never shall I forget the moment when my eyes first took in this sweet picture. I could almost see the King in his beauty; I really saw one part of the land which to me so long had been so far off.

The ride to the town of Tiberias was marked by the steep descent and by the sudden and great change in the temperature familiar to all travelers; and soon we were within the old and walled town of Tiberias on the shore of the historic Sea of Galilee. Let us get a clear conception of the Sea of Galilee, or Kinnert, a name derived from the supposed likeness of the form of the lake to a lute.

ITS VARIOUS NAMES.—It is called Sea of Galilee because situated in the province of Gal-

ilee. It is called Sea of Tiberias, because so important a city as Tiberias is on its shore. Its more ancient name was Sea of Chinnereth or Chimeroth (Num. 34 : 11; Josh. 12 : 3), probably from a town or district of this name on its border. In Luke 5 : 1, we see that it was also called the Lake of Gennesaret. This word means "Garden of the Prince"; and was applied to the crescent-shaped plain on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was about three miles long and over one mile wide. Now it is surrounded by barren and rugged hills; but in Christ's time it was a fertile region, producing many varieties of fruits, and was the scene of many of Christ's miracles, and perhaps of the parable of the Sower. In Isa. 9 : 1, the Sea of Galilee is referred to simply as "the sea." Its local name now is Bahr Tabariyeh. It is about thirty-five miles south of Mount Hermon, twenty-seven miles east of the Mediterranean, and sixty-five in a straight line north of the Dead Sea.

ITS DESCRIPTION.—I saw it both at noonday, sunset, sunrise, and moonlight. In the morning the surrounding hills were brilliant in color; in the evening the shadows deepened until sea, hills, and sky were seen in the softest, sweetest tones; and in the moonlight all inequalities were harmonized and the peace of God rested on mountain and sea. Once I saw it ruffled in a slight storm and all the memories of Christ and his disciples filled my soul. Perhaps the best views are at Tiberias, looking toward Caper-



naum. This view I had for hours in the soft evening light as I sat alone by the shore near the center of the town of Tiberias. The lake is pear-shaped, the broad end being toward the north, or we may say that it is harp-shaped, with the bulge to the northwest. It is between twelve and thirteen miles long, and between six and seven miles wide, and is almost embosomed among the hills. The Jordan flows into it on the north,—a muddy stream,—coloring the lake for a mile from its mouth, and out of it on the south, being then pure and bright. It has been called "a sparkling diamond suspended by a silver thread." Its depth is about one hundred and sixty to two hundred and thirty feet; its level varies at different seasons, but its depression below the surface of the Mediterranean Sea may be put at six hundred and eighty-two feet, although often it is said to be seven hundred feet. Dr. George Adam Smith calls attention to the remarkable fact that the greater part of our Lord's ministry was accomplished at what may be called the bottom of a trench six hundred and eighty feet below the level of the sea. The lake was really the center of the trade of the province. Here then was the touch with the commerce, the industry, and the powerful Greek influences of the time. Near Tiberias the water is polluted with sewage, but elsewhere it is entirely fit for drinking purposes, although it is somewhat brackish, which brackishness is due to the salt springs on the shore. A bath in the lake is very enjoyable, as in it are many warm

springs. Earthquakes here are not so frequent as in Japan, but they are not uncommon. In 1837 there was one which did much damage to the town of Tiberias. Storms are still frequent; the mountains and valleys on the shore give the wind the opportunity to sweep down and still to strike the sea with as much violence and as little warning as in the days of the disciples. The sea winds blow over this basin, and the sun beats down with great power. Cold currents, as they pass from the west, are drawn to the sea through the funnel-like gorges that open on the lake. Thus come the sudden storms which literally smite the lake, as they are described in the Gospel narrative. The region is famous for such storms.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
The tumult of a tropic sky.

THE SHORES.—The hills which enclose the sea are of limestone, basalt, and volcanic rock, and are from five hundred to seventeen hundred feet high. Often they come near the water, leaving only a pebbly beach between their base and the water. On the northwest they recede so as to form the beautiful plain of Gennesaret, of which mention has been made. The outline of the hills, especially on the east side, is not broken by any prominent peak, and the eye sweeps north to Hermon which stands out so sharply in the clear atmosphere as to seem but a dozen, instead of thirty-five miles away. On the north the shore line, which usually is regular, is broken

into a series of bays of remarkable beauty, but especially so at Gennesaret, where the white beach is covered with its myriads of shells. The town of Tiberias is in a recess of the hills on the western shore; near the mouth of the Jordan is the swampy plain of El Batihah, now frequented, Captain Wilson informs us, by wild boars. This place was the scene of a naval battle between the Romans and the Jews, fought on the lake after the taking of Taricheæ by the Romans, when Vespasian and Titus were victorious over the Jews, and in which Josephus was so injured as to necessitate his removal to Capernaum. The depression of the lake causes the tropical heat here experienced; it also accounts for the semi-tropical vegetation on the shores. Excellent fish abound in the lake, including several tropical species which now, as in Christ's day (Luke 5:6), are seen in large shoals. Great interest attaches to *Chromis Simonis*, as they are called, the male of which carries the eggs and the young in its mouth; and also to the *Coracinus* of Josephus and the *Barbur* of the Arabs, which gives out a sound.

Boats abound on the lake. Many travelers, partly because of the sacred associations, prefer to go by boat from Tiberias to Capernaum. Boats can be had large enough to hold from ten to twelve passengers in addition to the rowers. Both sides of the lake can, of course, be best seen from a boat; and in this way the gospel scenes also can be made more real than when one rides or walks on the shore. But a careful

bargain ought to made as the charges are apt to be exorbitant.

LARGE POPULATION IN EARLY DAYS.—In Christ's time the ships and boats on the lake were very numerous. Josephus uses the phrase "Climbing up into their ships," indicating that some of their vessels were large. At that time there were nine considerable towns on the shores of the lake. Among these were Bethsaida, Capernaum, Chorazin, Tiberias, and Magdala. These towns contained a large and busy population. Dr. Selah Merrill endorses the strong statements of Josephus regarding the great size of the population of Galilee as a whole, and also the statement mentioned above, that many vessels then enlivened the lake. Tiberias is now the only town visible, and there are only three or four small villages on the coast. Dr. Merrill also endorses what Josephus says of the beauty and fruitfulness of the plain of Gennesaret. Josephus gives Galilee two hundred and four towns and villages, the smallest of which had fifteen thousand inhabitants. But nearly all these towns are now indistinguishable masses of ruins. Galilee was only from fifty to sixty miles long and from thirty to forty wide, but it is believed that at least three millions of people lived there. The lake was then white with sails and plowed with thousands of keels. The shores of this sea were vastly different in Christ's day. Then there were great woods on the banks; now there is not a tree. Then there were noble gardens;

now there are only marshes. Then there were prosperous towns and cities; now there are only nameless ruins. This beautiful lake charms every sense. It "is at once food, drink, and air, a rest to the eye, coolness in the heat, an escape from the crowd, and a facility of travel very welcome in so exhausting a climate. Even those who do not share its memories of Christ feel an enthusiasm for it. The rabbis said: 'Jehovah hath created seven seas, but the Sea of Genesaret is his delight.'"

CONNECTION WITH CHRIST.—Christ's presence hallows the sea and its shores. He looked on its quiet beauty; he stilled its wild waves; he glorified its rocky shores. On its bosom several apostles were called to be "fishers of men"; in its waters Peter sank until Christ saved him from a watery grave; and on its shores Christ met his disciples after his resurrection, in the gray dawn of the morning, while a miraculous meal was prepared on the shore. My heart, especially one evening as I sat alone on a housetop in Tiberias, after all others in the hotel had gone to bed, took in the sweet and sacred associations of this hallowed spot. There was no spot in Palestine, excepting Gethsemane, I more longed to see, and I can sympathize with the pure-souled McCheyne as he sings:

How pleasant to me thy deep blue wave,  
O Sea of Galilee!  
For the glorious One who came to save,  
Hath often stood by thee.

Graceful around thee the mountains meet,  
Thou calm reposing sea ;  
But oh, far more the beautiful feet  
Of Jesus walked o'er thee !

O Saviour, gone to God's right hand,  
Yet the same Saviour still,  
Graved on thy heart is this lovely strand  
And every fragrant hill !

## XXXII

### TOWN OF TIBERIAS

THE fact that Christ probably never visited Tiberias, takes from the town much of the interest which it would have if it were more closely associated with his name. The town is nowhere mentioned in the New Testament. The name is given but as applied to the sea and not to the town. It is interesting to observe that the name is given by John only. I was particularly fortunate in having arrived in Tiberias on the first day of the feast of Tabernacles, which chanced to be October 3, 1895. I saw houses and yards decorated with branches in readiness for the observance of the feast. Booths were erected in many yards and courts in memory of the booths in which the children of Israel lived while in the wilderness. While in Shechem, Nazareth, and other places, I saw similar preparations in progress; but here I was in the midst of the actual celebration of the feast.

Travelers who have tents generally pitch them on the bank of the lake to the south of the town. Accommodations can be had in the Greek monastery, and also in two or three fairly good hotels. All Palestine and Syria are noted for the num-

ber and virulence of their fleas, but Tiberias bears a specially bad reputation. The Arabs say that here the king of the fleas resides; but I can, with many other travelers say, that if he resides in Tiberias it is certain that he has a vigorous viceroy in all parts of the land. With the great numbers of dogs, camels, and donkeys, living practically as one family with the people, and with the filth of centuries mingled with that of the present, it could not be otherwise than that fleas should abound.

THE HISTORY OF TIBERIAS.—Probably Galilee attained the height of its prosperity about the time of Christ. For a time its chief town was Sepphoris, but the splendor-loving Herod Antipas determined to build a new and splendid capital. His dominions then included Perea and also Galilee, which was famed for its fertility, its rich pastures, and its luxuriant forests. Herod, therefore, built Tiberias and named it in honor of the Roman Emperor Tiberius. It has been remarked that the Herods generally rebuilt old towns, but Herod Antipas was an exception. He selected this site probably, in part at least, because of its proximity to the baths, then famous in all parts of the Roman Empire. For a time it was the capital of Galilee, and many Greeks and Romans here resided. Some rabbinical writers say that Tiberias occupies the site of a place called Rakkath, an ancient town of Naphtali; but others affirm that this statement is without foundation. But as Rakkath



means a "strip" or "coast," the statement may be true. Josephus tells us that the building of the city began between A. D. 16 and 19, and was completed A. D. 22. Its ancient name is still preserved in the modern name Tabariyeh, given both to the town and the lake. In digging for the foundations of the town a burial place was discovered; this fact prevented Jews from living there in large numbers in the early day. According to their law, contact with graves made the persons unclean for seven days. Herod, therefore, was obliged to people the town with beggars and foreigners of many classes, and as a result the people of Tiberias were of a very mixed character.

Græco-Roman predominated in the architecture of the town; even its municipal laws were Roman. It had a race-course and a palace adorned with figures of animals. Its decorations were thus an abomination to the Jews. During the Jewish war Josephus, as commander-in-chief of Galilee, fortified Tiberias. But, as Bædeker says, the inhabitants surrendered to Vespasian and the Jews were permitted to live in Tiberias. Northwest of the town were the headquarters of the Romans, and from that part they undertook the siege of Tarichææ and defeated the Jews, as we have already seen, in a naval battle. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Tiberias became an important Jewish town. The Sanhedrin was transferred from Sepphoris to Tiberias; and the school of the Talmud here developed in opposition to Christianity. About the year A. D. 200,

the famous Jewish scholar, Rabbi Juda Hak-Kadosh, published here the ancient traditional law known as the Mishna, and also the Masorah, or body of traditions as to the Old Testament text. Here in the first half of the fourth century the Palestinian Gemarâ, known as the Jerusalem Talmud, came into existence, and between the sixth and seventh centuries the western, or Tiberian, and received pointing of the Hebrew Bible. St. Jerome learned Hebrew from a rabbi of Tiberias. Christianity struggled hard for a foothold here; but bishoprics of Tiberias are mentioned in the fifth century. The Arabs conquered the town in 637; but under the crusaders Christianity was recognized and bishoprics re-established. It was the attack of Saladin on Tiberias which made his great victory at Hattin possible; and the day after that battle the countess of Tripoli was obliged to surrender the castle of Tiberias. The town has been at different times in possession of the Persians, Arabs, and Turks.

The modern town lies on a narrow, undulating plain, two miles and a quarter wide, between the high table-land and the shore of the lake. It was largely destroyed on January 1, 1837, by an earthquake, but it still has a population of about four thousand, one-half of whom are Jews, who have thirteen synagogues, two of which I visited. There are about one thousand Moslems, two hundred orthodox Greeks, a few Latins, and some Protestant mission stations and churches. The Free Church of Scotland has a hospital,

with one of whose physicians I formed a pleasant acquaintance. The church of the Greek Catholics was remodeled in 1869, and it is claimed to be on the site of the miraculous draught of fishes. It is situated on the northern side of the town and near the bank of the lake. The town is unhealthful; fevers abound, as does also filth of all kinds, the former being a natural consequence of the latter. The walls are in great part heaps of ruins, the castle is much shattered, and the whole town has an aspect of filth and wretchedness, though of late its appearance has improved. South of the town are many remains of the ancient cities which once stood there.

Attention has already been called to the large number of Jews in Tiberias, perhaps two thousand, or one-half of the entire population. The fact that there are thirteen synagogues is proof of the great number of Jews. There are especially two classes of Jews, those from Poland and those from Spain. The former are called Asliknazim and the latter Sephardim. Most of these Jews lived on alms sent from Europe. They wear large black hats; many also wear their hair in ringlets. The Spanish Jews particularly are pale, effeminate, and sickly looking. It would be an unpardonable act of politeness, at the expense of truth, should one say that they are handsome. Two synagogues are on the bank of the lake. It is an interesting fact that the study of the Talmud still flourishes in Tiberias. A visit to this city gives the traveler in

many ways a breath of ancient and foreign life such as he can get in no other part of Palestine, or perhaps of the world. Here one is brought face to face with ancient habits and thoughts, and with peoples usually for the most part outside of our ordinary relations with our fellow-men.

The burial ground of the Jews is regarded by Jews in all parts of the world as peculiarly sacred ; and there is good cause for this sanctity. Here are buried two of their most celebrated men of what may be called modern times—Jochanan and Maimonides. The latter was a scholar and philosopher whose learning is acknowledged by all intelligent Jews and Christians throughout the world. His name, if given in full, would occupy a line on a very wide page. He was born in Cordova, March 30, 1135. His father was a very learned man and the author of important works in Arabic and in Hebrew. He was his son's first instructor. Later, under the most distinguished Arabic masters of the time, Maimonides studied Greek philosophy, the science of medicine, and theology. In 1148 Abd-al-Mumen took Cordova, and soon afterward subjected all Andalusia, and all Jews and Christians were forced either to profess Islam or to leave the country. For more than sixteen years Maimonides outwardly observed the Mohammedan faith, but was still secretly a Jew. But, finally, the family went to Cairo. Soon the great medical knowledge of Maimonides gave him influence *with* the reigning sul-

tan of Egypt. Maimonides finally became the founder of a rational scriptural exegesis. Terrible contests between rival schools of religion and philosophy arose; but Maimonides only witnessed the beginning of the fierce conflicts. He was named "The Great Eagle," "The Light of Two Worlds," and the "Light of the Age." He founded a college in Alexandria, in which he delivered lectures on philosophy and the Jewish law. He died in Egypt, December 13, 1204, and was sincerely mourned in the East and in the West; and here in this town of Tiberias he is buried. His tomb is a little north of the town, beneath the new road to Nazareth. Near it are the tombs of Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Jochanan, and farther up the hill is the tomb of Rabbi Akiba, whose name is known in connection with the revolt of Barcohab. The tomb of the celebrated Talmudist, Rabbi Ineir, is near the school of the Ashkenazim, which is beyond the baths.

**RUINS OF BATHS.**—Along the shore stretch the ruins of the ancient town, which are now mostly heaps of rubbish. The spacious castle is now entirely in ruins; but from this point a fine view is obtained of the town, the beautiful lake, and the mountains stretching away to the north. Attention is called by some writers to the fact that here we first meet with the black basalt as building material, which was invariably used beyond the Jordan.

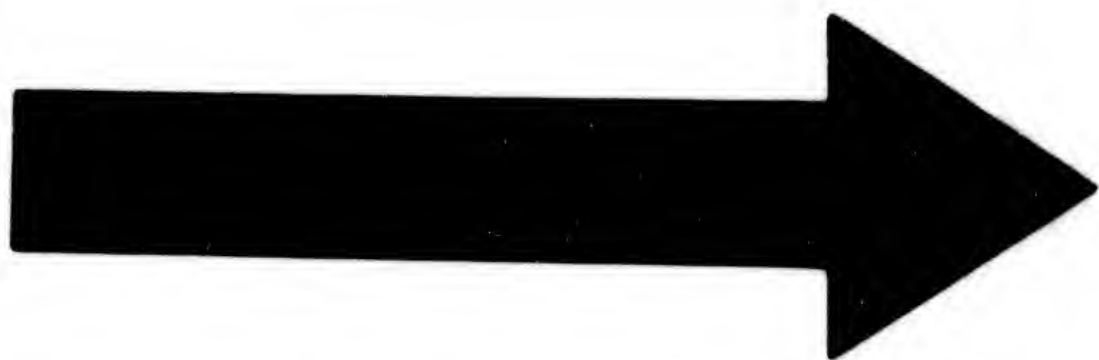
The hot baths are nearly three miles to the

south of the town, lying about a mile from the south end of the ancient city wall, with its remains of walls, buildings and aqueducts, and broken columns. These baths are supposed to be an infallible cure for rheumatism and cutaneous diseases. Amid all the wrecks of the neighborhood, these baths alone have preserved their name and fame. They have ministered through the changing ages to the changeless sorrows of humanity. Patients still come to them from all parts of Palestine and Syria. June and July are the months when the greatest numbers are present. But for these baths probably the Jews would never have been reconciled to this banned city. It is now one of their four sacred cities in the world. The temperature of the most famous spring is from  $131^{\circ}$  to  $142^{\circ}$  Fahr. Patients sometimes tent near the springs. Several springs flow off unused into the lake, leaving a greenish deposit on the shores. The water smells of sulphur and is bitter to the taste. During the earthquake of 1839 the springs were extremely hot and the supply of water was unusually abundant. Most of the patients bathe in a common basin, and when the steam subsides sufficiently to permit the patient to see the filth of the place, he will need all his nerve to take a bath, even if he were sure that he would be cured of whatsoever disease he might have.

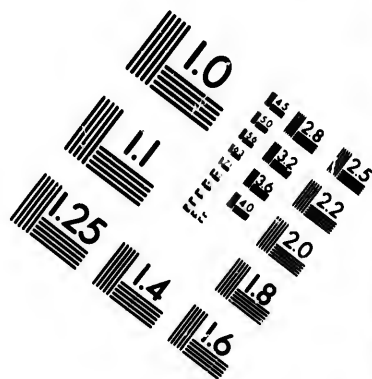
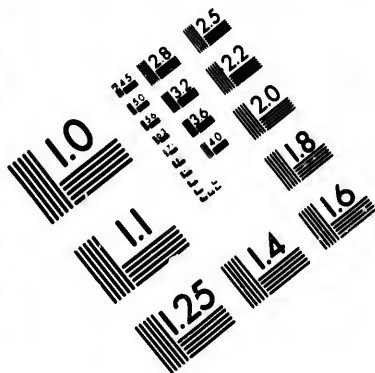
The books tell us some of the legends connected with Tiberias. The Jews love to repeat the one which declares that when the Messiah comes he will emerge from the lake, gather his

people at Tiberias, and then go in triumph to Safed, where his throne will be established and he will reign forever in great glory and splendor.

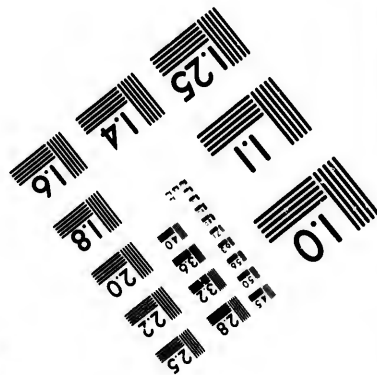
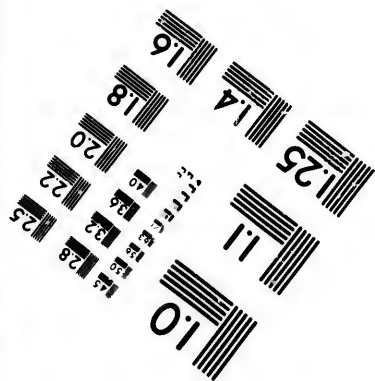
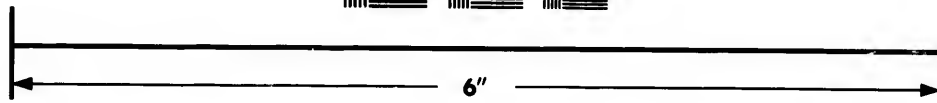
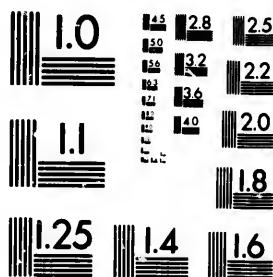
Perhaps the reason why Christ avoided Tiberias is that it was a favorite residence of the crafty and unscrupulous Herod Antipas, who saw Christ only a little time before his crucifixion. We know that he generally avoided these half-Greek cities. He was more at home with the common people than with officials and courtiers. Capernaum and Bethsaida must have been far more healthful than Tiberias. But Tiberias abides while these other cities have perished. Although Christ paid no visit to the baths at Tiberias, as he did to the pool of Bethesda, there is no doubt but that many patients brought to the baths at Tiberias and who were not healed, were finally laid at Christ's feet and from him received healing to body and soul. Because of Christ's life and spirit there is now a hospital and a staff of physicians in Tiberias. Christ is still the inspiration to all noblest deeds in blessing men and honoring God.







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### XXXIII

#### FROM TIBERIAS TO TEL HUM

WE left Tiberias before the break of day. Soon it broke over the Sea of Galilee and its waters and surrounding hills were aglow with the splendors of the morning sun. We could go to the upper end of the lake either by boat or by the road, which is on the side of the hills, and is about thirty to forty feet above the level of the water. At times the space from the path to the shore is very steep and rocky. Soon Tiberias was hidden behind a rocky corner of the elevated shore; but from our saddles, as we rode on the edge of the bluff, we enjoyed a superb view of the opposite shore, the head of the lake, and the country both to the north and the south. The twin peaks, or horns, of Hattin were visible on our left as we rode along. On our right were several warm and saltish springs, and we observed also arrangements for irrigating portions of the land in the vicinity. Almost opposite Tiberias are Wady Fik and the ruins of Gamala. A fortress once stood here which was garrisoned by Josephus, but taken by Vespasian, A. D. 69; and not fewer, it is said, than ten thousand perished when the garrison was captured, many of whom leaped from the

walls and fell down the precipice. We reached on our left, about three miles from Tiberias, the peculiarly miserable village of Mejdal, which is identical with Magdala, the birthplace of Mary Magdalene, Mary of Magdala. Perhaps also it is identical with Migdal-el of the tribe of Naphtali.<sup>1</sup> Some place Taricheæ here, a town already mentioned as playing an important part in the war with Rome; but others, and perhaps with good reason, place this town near the south end of the lake of Tiberias.

Taricheæ was almost of equal importance with Tiberias. In Pliny's day it gave its name to the lake. It was a center of industry and commerce. In the days of Josephus it was famous for its Jewish patriotism. The only echo of the name now is found at the south end of the lake. It is a Greek word, and is said by Doctor Smith to mean "pickling places." It was a place famous for curing the fish which the lake supplied. These fish were sent all through the Roman world; great quantities were taken to Jerusalem to the feasts, and were sent in barrels round the Mediterranean. Taricheæ is not mentioned in the Gospels, but neither is Tiberias, nor other places south of Gennesaret. It would seem that neither Christ nor the disciples ever visited this region at the south end of the lake.

Mejdal, or Magdala, is now a wretched hamlet of some twenty mud or stone huts. On top of

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<sup>1</sup> Josh. 19 : 38.

these huts we saw the booths built of poles and branches of trees, and placed about three feet from the roof of the huts, in order to protect the wretched peasants from the well-nigh ubiquitous fleas and other vermin. Nowhere else in Palestine did I see more wretched-looking people than in this hamlet. But its connection with Mary has made the name immortal. It is most unfortunate that the name Magdalen now suggests elements of character, or want of character, which ought never to be associated with the name of this woman. There is not a word in the Gospels to justify this association with the name of Mary Magdalene, which simply means Mary of Magdala. A cruel wrong to historic truth and to womanly honor has been done to this woman and her place on the pages of the New Testament.

There is a small plain below Magdala to whose vicinity our Lord probably came when in Matt. 15 : 39 it is said, after the record of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, Jesus "sent away the multitude, and took ship and came into the coasts of Magdala." The connection of Mark 8 : 10 with the passage just quoted, would seem to indicate that the village named Dalmanutha was near Magdala; and about a mile distant are copious fountains and ruins which probably mark the place where Dalmanutha stood. The lake attains its greatest width at Magdala, being about seven, some say nearly eight, miles wide, and opposite Magdala is Khersa or Gergesa. A few ruined buildings are

here on the shore of the lake. About a mile south of this place the hills approach within a few feet of the shore, although generally they are recessed from one-half to three-quarters of a mile from the water's edge. There is here the "steep place down which the herd of swine ran violently into the sea, and so were choked." It was at Gergesa that the men possessed with the devils, coming out of the tombs, met Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Of all our Lord's miracles but two were destructive, those connected with the destruction of the swine and the fig tree. A careful study of both fully justifies our Lord's acts; especially is this true in the case of the swine, the miracle which has excited the sharpest criticism. Near here Christ fed the five thousand, and from near this point seeing his disciples toil in rowing on the lake, "Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea."<sup>2</sup> The different readings in the three Gospels regarding the locality of Gergesa have occasioned harmonists considerable difficulty; but the similarity of the name Khersa to Gergesa gives us a strong reason for accepting Matthew's record as correct, when he speaks of Christ as coming into the country of the Gergesenes, while Luke and John say into that of the Gadarenes. Eusebius and Origen are authority for the statement that there was once a village called Gergesa on the shore of the lake. It has also been suggested by several writers that the apparent discrepancy may be removed

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 8 : 28-34.<sup>2</sup> Matt. 14 : 25.

by the supposition that Gergesa was under the jurisdiction of Gadara.

A short distance beyond Magdala, and still on the left, the hills recede westward from the lake, and here is the Wady Haman, or "valley of the doves." It descends from Khan Lubiyeh and from the Horns of Hattin, and it is crossed by the caravan route between Nazareth and Damascus. A mile and a half farther on are the ruins of the castle of Kal'at Ibn Ma'an, near which were the strongly fortified caverns of Irbid, the ancient Arbela. The cliffs here are nearly one thousand two hundred feet high. The castle consisted of caverns in the rock; here were connecting passages, protecting walls, and several cisterns. This unique castle was long a haunt of fierce robbers, and it was to them an inaccessible fastness. These robbers were long the terror of the whole vicinity. Herod the Great finally overcame them by letting down with ropes cages filled with soldiers, and the caverns were afterward occupied by hermits. Irbid, or Arbela, is probably the Beth-Arbel, meaning "house of ambush," of Scripture. It seems from early times to have been famous as a stronghold. In Hosea 10:14, we read: "All thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shalman spoiled Beth-Arbel in the day of battle."

LAND OF GENNESARET.—Shortly after leaving Magdala we enter upon the tract of land now called El-Ghuweir, the "Little Ghor." It

is ancient Gennesaret. The name is supposed to mean "valley of the flowers"; or, as I have elsewhere suggested, "gardens of the prince." The plain is about three miles long and one mile wide. The soil is extremely fertile and the entire plain is copiously watered; but the greater part of the plain is now overrun with rank weeds. The cultivated parts supply the markets of Damascus and Beyrut with the best melons and cucumbers grown in Palestine. The banks of the lake and the brooks were fringed with oleanders and nubb; and in some places these shrubs, and the cignus cactus, grow in such profusion that traveling among them is well-nigh impossible. In the brooks there are tortoises and crayfish, and mussels are found in the lake. There are many large springs; the most noted is that one whose name in English is "the Round Spring." It is partly concealed among the bushes, but its basin is thirty yards in diameter and its water is abundant, clear, and cold.

Many writers on Palestine quote the description given by Josephus<sup>1</sup> of this plain. He calls it the "ambition of nature," and goes on to give a truly glowing account of the plain. He also informs us that "the people of the country call it Capharnaum," a remark which helps us as to the identity of the site of Capernaum. Probably it was on the beach of the plain of Gennesaret that in the gray dawn of the morning the disciples, having toiled all night and caught nothing,

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. III., Chap. X., Sec. 8. !



saw a dim figure on the shore. Then a voice, strange and yet familiar, called to them: "Children, have ye any meat?" Then it was that the loving John recognized the Lord, and the impetuous Peter leaped into the sea to reach the Master; and there on the shore the mysterious fire burned, the meal was spread, and the Lord bade the disciples to come and dine. Then and there it was that Peter made his three-fold confession, and was reinstated in the apostolic office. Beside a fire in the dawning of the morning he had thrice denied his Lord; and at a fire in the dawning of the morning he thrice makes his confession, is thrice tested, and is restored to his old place of love and service.

We ride along across the plain of Gennesaret; our horses now plunging in mire and now able to go forward at a brisk trot. Small flies annoy them and almost blind and choke the riders. We reach Khan Minyeh which is now a ruin, but which dates from the time of Saladin, and was doubtless built for the convenience of travelers from Damascus. Doctor Robinson considers that the ruins near here are the remains of Capernaum, and MacGregor, of the "Rob Roy," agrees with Doctor Robinson. Later we shall more fully examine this whole subject. We walked our horses in the ruins of a comparatively modern aqueduct which ran from Ain et-Tabiyah to Khan Minyeh. Near here is Ain et-Tin, or the "Fig Spring," and a little beyond is the copious Ain et-Tabiyah, just mentioned. This name is equivalent to "Seven Springs," and the

neighborhood was once supposed to be the scene of the feeding of the five thousand.<sup>1</sup> South of this spring there is a small German colony, once under the auspices of the German Catholic Palestine Society. This is by far the most copious spring in the vicinity; its water is brackish, and it rises to the surface with great force at a temperature of  $86\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ , although this is not considered warm in this climate. Some of its water is carried off by an aqueduct to a mill owned by a man of Safed, the only one now in use of five built by the great chieftain, Dhaer el-Amr. It is certain from the remains of remarkable works that once the waters of this spring were raised high enough to irrigate many parts of the plain of Gennesaret. The piers of arches can still be seen showing that the aqueduct crossed the beds of two water courses; it is evident that by an excavation in the solid rock, along which we rode, the water was carried around the cliff of Khan Minyeh. The remains of this great aqueduct arrest the attention of all travelers.

We are now treading ground trodden by Jesus. There is the hallowed lake. It was the scene of the opening of our Lord's ministry. Its neighborhood was often his chosen retreat from the wrath of his foes. His sublime miracles and gracious parables have consecrated its waters and its shores. From a ship on its waters he spoke the many parables recorded in Matthew thirteen. Its waves obeyed his voice; its waters became a

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 6 : 44.

pavement beneath his feet. When cast out from Nazareth, he made his home at Capernaum on its shore, which then became "his own city." Here he called Peter, James, and John, the three chosen for the inner circle of his disciples. Hallowed lake! Christ-visited shores! The charm and glory of his presence are still on the land and sea. The parable of the Net, of the Lost Sheep, and of the Sheep-fold, carry us back to these sacred shores. If anywhere this side of heaven we may see Jesus as he is, surely it is here by the Sea of Galilee.

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## XXXIV

### CAPERNAUM, CHORAZIN, AND BETHSAIDA

WHAT can be said of the sites of these famous cities? That question all travelers in Palestine try to answer. Probably it will never be answered with absolute certainty. We speak first of Capernaum. This name has a conspicuous place in the records of our Lord's life. It is not plainly mentioned in the Old Testament, but the passage in Isa. 9 : 1 is applied to it by the evangelist Matthew. We know from the New Testament references to it that it was on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee ; but they do not enable us to determine its exact location, although we know that it was in the plain of Gennesaret, which all authorities of the time agree was one of the richest and most prosperous places in the entire land. It is called in Matt. 9 : 1 and in Mark 1 : 33 a city ; and in its synagogue our Lord often taught.<sup>1</sup> We are distinctly informed that this synagogue was built by the Roman centurion who was quartered in the city ; there were also stations there for the collection of the customs, both by stationary and by itinerant officers.

Capernaum, as we have seen, became our

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 1 : 21 ; Luke 4 : 33, 38.

Lord's "own city." Perhaps while Jesus was walking on the the beach near the town he called Peter and Andrew to become his disciples, and they heard the call and followed him as their Lord and Master. In Capernaum,<sup>1</sup> Christ wrought the miracle of healing on the centurion's servant. It was here that Simon's wife's mother was healed of her fever.<sup>2</sup> Other notable miracles were here performed; and the son of the nobleman was a resident of Capernaum, although Christ was at Cana of Galilee when he spoke the words which brought the cure. And in the synagogue at Capernaum was spoken the wonderful discourse recorded in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel.

Against these cities our Lord spoke words of fearful solemnity; and his predictions have been remarkably fulfilled. Dean Stanley twice visited the region and studied it with the utmost care, but he says, "The disputed sites of the cities of Gennesaret must still remain disputed." It is not important topographically or spiritually that we should settle the question; but, of course, a place so connected with the earthly life of our Lord as was Capernaum we would be glad to locate, if it were possible so to do. Some would place it at Khan Minyeh, as already suggested. This mound of ruins takes its name from the old khan of which I have spoken. It is close to the seashore, at the northwest extremity of the plain. The spring of the Fig Tree, Ain et-

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 8 : 5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 8 : 14.

Tin, which takes its name from the fact that it is overshadowed by a fig tree, is north of these ruins. Robinson, Porter, and MacGregor, of the "Rob Roy," favor Khan Minyeh as the site of Capernaum. But recent excavations of the English Exploring Expedition have brought to light nothing at Khan Minyeh but fragments of "masonry and pottery of comparatively modern date." Doctor Robinson gives his arguments at length, but most recent investigations seem to weaken and not to strengthen his reason for choosing this site. My dragoman favored this site, and Dr. George Adam Smith favors Khan Minyeh, on the northern edge of Gennesaret. His words I do well to quote:

The evidence is greatly in favor of the latter site (Khan Minyeh), and one may fix the house of Jesus, as Mark calls it, the birthplace of the gospel, at that northeast corner of fair Gennesaret, where the waves beat now on an abandoned shore; but once there was a quay and busy town, and the great road from east to west poured its daily stream of life.

Doctor Smith claims that 'Tel Hum is an impossible contraction from Kephlar-Nahum, the village of Nahum, and that there is no Tel at the place, and that Guerin is right in deriving the name from Tanhum, a Jewish rabbi buried there.

The Round Fountain certainly answers better the description given by Josephus than does the spring of the Fig Tree, which is so close to the shore. We have already seen that the Round Fountain is near the southern end of the plain

of Gennesaret ; it is so named because enclosed by a circular wall of mason work. Canon Tristram claims that the Round Fountain furnishes more authoritative marks of identification with what Josephus calls the fountain of Capernaum than does either of the other springs which have been named in this connection. He calls attention to the fact that fever is very prevalent even now in the neighborhood of the Round Fountain, and that the dry, rocky ground near Tel Hum is comparatively free from it. This would make it the more natural that we should read, "Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever" at Capernaum.<sup>1</sup> But on the other hand, old itineraries of pilgrims, Doctor Thomson, Mr. Dixon, Captain Wilson, and the English explorers, favor Tel Hum. This place is between two and three miles southwest of the Jordan. It consists of about a dozen miserable huts, and is otherwise now a mass of ruins. On the bank of the lake is the principal ruin, which is still partly preserved, which was, probably, once a Christian church ; and on closer inspection it is seen to bear marks of being composed of still more ancient materials. Some suppose that it enclosed the house of the Apostle Peter, described by Antonius, A. D. 600. There are also traces amid the ruins of another building. It was composed of white limestone, resembling marble, and was about seventy-five feet long and fifty-seven feet wide. It is called the "White Syna-

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 1 : 30.

gogue," because of its white material. Some of the stones which enter into its structure are very large. On the south side there are three entrances. Beautiful fragments of corner capitals and bases are scattered amid the ruins. If Tel Hum be indeed Capernaum, these are doubtless the remains of the synagogue built by the Roman centurion,<sup>1</sup> and this is surely one of the most sacred places in the world. It was in this synagogue that our Lord uttered his great discourse on himself as the Bread of Life,<sup>2</sup> which discourse marked an era in our Lord's life. Captain Wilson tells us that on turning over a large block he found a pot of manna engraved on its face, and remembered the words of Christ, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead." These ruins occupy a space a half a mile long by a quarter of a mile broad. It is thought by some that Tel Hum is a corruption of a place mentioned by some Jewish authors as Tankhum or Nakhum; but is not safe to make any affirmation on that point. It is, however, thought that the ruins show that this was originally a place of great importance, and would thus be in harmony with a city where there were custom houses, garrisons, and other prominent public buildings. It is certain, at least, that Christ and his disciples often looked out on the scene which greeted our eyes that morning as we rode among these ruins. How terribly were our Lord's pre-

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 7 : 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> John 6.



dictions regarding this city fulfilled! Read again his solemn words: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."

CHORAZIN.—This is also one of the cities in which our Lord's mighty works were done, and which came under his righteous denunciation: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."<sup>1</sup> And, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes."<sup>2</sup>

Doctor Robinson makes Khan Minyeh, Capernaum; and et-Tabiyah, Bethsaida; and Tel Hum, Chorazin. But it is now more common to find Chorazin about two and a half miles north of Tel Hum. We ride along a steep and very bad path until we come to the ruins of Kerazeh; the name is nearly the Arabic for Chorazin. These ruins cover a larger extent than those at Tel Hum. They comprise the remains of a synagogue with Corinthian capitals in black basalt. There are also remains of private dwellings in a state of fairly good preserva-

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 23 : 23.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 10 : 13.

tion, the walls being still standing. The houses were generally square, the broadest measuring about twenty-seven feet. Some of the buildings had Ionic capitals. The walls were two feet thick, and traces are found of the columns in the center of the houses which supported the roof, while in the middle of the town there are found the remains of a richly ornamented synagogue. Evidences that once there was a paved road to the town are seen. Tombs of Bedouin *sheiks*, overhung with colored rags, are seen near a large tree beside a spring of water.

BETHSAIDA.—This town was associated by our Lord with the two others which came under his just judgment. It was "Bethsaida of Galilee"; it was a city, was in the land of Gennesaret, and was the native place of Andrew, Peter, and Philip. It was evidently near Capernaum and Chorazin. The ordinary interpretation of the name, "house of fish," would indicate that it must have been close to the water's edge. A comparison of the narratives in Mark 6 : 31-53 and Luke 9 : 10-17, shows that there must have been a Bethsaida on the east as well as on the west of the Lake. In the narrative in Luke Bethsaida is named as the place where the miracle occurred; but in the narrative in Mark the disciples are said to have crossed the lake "to Bethsaida in the land of Gennesaret." It would seem that at the northeastern extremity of the lake there was a village rebuilt by Philip the Tetrarch and named Julias, after the daugh-

ter of the Emperor Augustus. Philip was buried here in a magnificent tomb. This was Bethsaida Julias and there, it would seem, the feeding of the five thousand occurred. It is remarkable that the two Bethsайдas should be mentioned in one narrative. This Western Bethsaida was the frequent residence of Jesus. The site long eluded the search of travelers. The ingenious Reland helped greatly to remove difficulties of interpretation by suggesting these two Bethsайдas, one on the east and the other on the west shore of the lake. If the name means a "house of fishing" nothing would be more natural than to give the name to more than one place, especially where fishing was so common a business as on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. It is only fair, however, to say that Doctor Thomson believes that there was only one Bethsaida, Bethsaida-Julias, and that it was built on both sides of the Jordan, and so was partly in Galilee. I am disposed, always, to attach importance to his opinion; but this view does not satisfactorily meet the conditions of the sacred narrative.

A day might well be spent in this vicinity if the tourist could spare the time. I was at times wearied with visits to improbable grottoes and to doubtful churches marking very doubtful sites; but here one was absolutely certain that he looked upon mountains, sea, and sky, as Christ and his disciples saw them, and one could feel reasonably sure that he was treading in substantially the footprints of the blessed Master. The rest which might be enjoyed here, if it were not

the season of flies, would be grateful indeed. The bathing also, in the bay of et-Tabiyah, is said to be better than at any other bathing-place in Palestine; and the moonlight on the lake, shores, and more distant hills, is delightful in the extreme. It would be difficult to find a place in any country where the moonlight effects are more pleasing than here. I can fully endorse the words of a recent writer who says:

Never will the night that closed that delightful day in the environs of "his own city" be forgotten by me. It was brilliant moonlight, and standing upon the cliff above our camping-place, the white houses of Tiberias were distinctly visible; the waters of the lake lay calm and placid as when he said: "Peace, be still, and there was a great calm"; the inequalities and want of coloring in the hills, which had been noticeable in the broad sunshine, were not perceptible now; around us were the "desert places" and the "mountain-tops" which had been the scene of his resting and his prayers. Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin—mounds of rubbish, tangles of thistles, heaps of ruins—these have been cast down, and have passed away; but the "mighty works" remain, still powerful in blessing; and the "gracious words" are as fresh, as beautiful, and as life-giving as when he uttered them.

Most solemn is the literal and terrible fulfillment of our Lord's words: "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not."<sup>1</sup> This was the dominant impression on mind and heart. Christ was a solemn preacher. He uttered fearful "woes," but he baptized them in

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 11: 20-24.

loving tears. All his other words must be fulfilled; not one jot or tittle shall fail. Let us be warned by his terrible threatenings; let us be sweetly inspired by his blessed promises. Palestine is indeed a fifth Gospel; the land illustrates the Book.

## XXXV

### FROM CAPERNAUM TO CÆSAREA-PHILIPPI

WE slowly climbed from the Sea of Galilee over the rough pathway; but horribly bad as is this road, it was the old caravan road between Egypt and Damascus. On reaching the height, we could look backward to the whole of the Sea of Galilee and to Lake Huleh, or the waters of Merom, and farther on to Lebanon and Hermon.

In due time we reach the Khan Yubb Yusef, or Khan of Joseph's Well. This name is given to this well because of the groundless tradition that into this well Joseph was cast by his brethren. The Khan is very dirty, and the well is not more attractive than the Khan. Safed is distant about an hour and a half from this Khan. Safed takes high rank among the places of interest in the Holy Land. It is one of the four holy cities in Palestine, regarding which it is said by the Jews that if prayer should cease to be offered in them the world would speedily come to an end; the other three are Jerusalem, Hebron, and Tiberias. In the Talmud of Jerusalem the name of Safed, or Safat, occurs; the place was also known by its present name to the Arabian geographers. In 1140 the castle here

was erected, and Saladin had great difficulty in reducing the fortress. The sultan of Damascus, fearing that the Christians might establish themselves here again, demolished the castle in 1220; but the Templars restored it. In 1266 it surrendered to Beibars, who massacred the survivors. An earthquake in 1759 proved very destructive, and in 1799 it was for a time occupied by the French. In the sixteenth century a Jewish colony was founded there, and a famous rabbinical school was organized. The earliest teachers were Spanish Jews. There were here eighteen synagogues, and all forms of learning of the time were pursued, and especially the cabalistic, which was much affected by certain schools. The town is still one of the chief seats of modern Judaism. It contains both the Ashkenazim and Sephardim Hebrews, the two divisions amounting to about four to five thousand. The majority, however, are Ashkenazim, or Polish immigrants, under Austrian protection. Polygamy is still practised among the Sephardim Jews. All the Jewish houses are very dirty, and the people are, in many ways, undesirable neighbors. But no earnest Hebrew visiting the Holy Land would fail to visit Safed as one of the sacred shrines of the land. The whole population is about twenty-five thousand, of whom eleven thousand are Moslems. The Greek Christians have a church; and there are here stations of the English and the Scotch missions to the Jews. The houses are built in terraces rising in succession above one another. To

reach the higher tier the roofs of the next lower are used as a pathway. The lofty situation of the city makes it very healthful, especially when compared with the temperature of Tiberias; its situation also has led many to suppose that our Lord had it in mind when he said: "A city set on a hill, which cannot be hid."<sup>1</sup> But the reference is very doubtful, as probably there was no city here in Christ's day. The ruined castle built by the Franks during the Crusades stands on the highest part of the hill. The Turkish governor of the town had his quarters here as late as 1837, when the terrible earthquake occurred. To the west rises the beautifully wooded Jebel Zebud, three thousand six hundred and fifty-six feet, and also Jebel Jermak, three thousand nine hundred and thirty-six feet. This is said to be the highest mountain in Palestine on the west side of the Jordan. The town itself is two thousand seven hundred and forty-nine feet high, being the highest in Galilee. Owing to the method of constructing the houses the earthquake, mentioned as having taken place in 1837, was fearfully destructive. Doctor Thomson gives the thrilling account. It occurred at the same time as the one in Tiberias. Safed was dashed to the ground in half a minute. Each successive row of houses was buried deeper and deeper by the accumulated masses of the houses in the higher tiers. Doctor Thomson exclaims:

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 5 : 14.



O God of mercy ! my heart even now sickens at the thought of that long, black winter's night, which closed around the wretched remnants of Safed in half an hour after the overthrow, without a light or possibility of getting one, four-fifths of the population under the ruins, dead or dying, with frightful groans and shrieks of agony and despair, and the earth trembling and shaking all the while, as if affrighted at the horrible desolation she had wrought.

It is believed that not fewer than four thousand Jews and Christians and one thousand Moslems perished, being more than one-half of the population of that time.

SOME OTHER TOWNS.—It is not necessary to speak at length of other places in the neighborhood. Meiron is famous in Jewish literature and also as containing the tombs of celebrated Talmudists. It is supposed that Hillel, the grandfather of Gamaliel, at whose feet the Apostle Paul sat, is buried here. His tomb is cut out of the solid rock ; it is about twenty-five feet long, eighteen feet wide, and ten feet high. There are also many niches for bodies ; but no trace of any remains of the dead is now to be seen. There are here the ruins of a synagogue, one of whose walls is nearly perfect. Kefr Birim is about two hours distant toward the northwest. It is largely occupied by Maronites. Here also there are remains of a synagogue ; and here also came the Jews once, as this was a place of pilgrimage. Tradition asserted that Barak, Obadiah, Queen Esther, and others were buried here. But some of these historical per-

sonages have had several burial places, and one is puzzled to know how they furnished a body for each. Not far distant is Kedesh, the ancient Kedesh-Naphtali; another place on a hilltop is pointed out as the site of the ancient Hazor; but this location is the subject of sharp controversy. It is affirmed that a rocky hilltop was not a suitable place for the development of its power, which consisted largely in war chariots. We know that it was somewhere near Kedesh and the Lake Huleh, this much being clear from the narrative in Joshua 11, 12. Joshua took Hazor, smote the king with the sword, and burned the city. Hazor was rebuilt and finally became the residence of Jabin, the captain of whose host was Sisera, whom Deborah and Barak defeated and whom Jael slew.

LAKE HULEH.—If we were to go back to Khan Yubb Yusef and resume at that point the journey direct from Tiberias to Banias, we would reach the beautiful stream Nahr Hendah, and see on the hill above it the ruins of Kasyun, including, as it is supposed, remains of a temple, a synagogue, and two reservoirs. A charming spot for luncheon and *siesta* is Ain Mellahah; this vicinity has been called "a land of springs and fountains." Here there is grass in abundance; here an old mill, which was busily at work as we passed; here welcome shade and many other attractions. But we pressed on to Huleh. In the Old Testament<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Josh. 11 : 5-7.

this lake is called "the waters of Merom." Some have supposed that it is connected with the Aramæan Hul,<sup>1</sup> but better authorities deem this questionable. Josephus called the neighborhood Ulatha and the water Lake Samachonites. But some doubt whether this lake is identical with Huleh and whether it is identical with Merom; all these points are still in dispute. The lake is a triangular basin, about five miles long, three to four broad, and ten to fifteen feet deep, and lying high above the sea level. The size of the lake differs much at different seasons of the year. In certain seasons much ground about the lake is swampy. Waterfowl, including pelican and wild duck, here abound; but marshes often render it difficult to approach the lake on the north side, especially as on this side there is a dense jungle of papyrus. Much of the bed of the valley is a place in which the buffaloes of the Bedouins delight to wallow. The Bedouins spend much time in hunting and fishing in the vicinity of the lake, and are among the most peaceable of their class. It was at these waters that Jabin, king of Hazor, gathered all the kings of the surrounding peoples; they were numerous as the sand of the seashore, and their horses and chariots were many; and it was here that the Lord delivered them into the hands of Joshua.<sup>2</sup>

We spent the night in the new and prosperous town near the lake. This town is chiefly com-

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 10 : 23.

<sup>2</sup> Josh. 11 : 4-8.

posed of Russian Jews, who through the kindness of Baron Hirsch and other benefactors have been able to secure land here, to build houses, and to organize various industries. The Turkish government is very jealous of these Jews; and it has forbidden them to come except in comparatively small numbers. But still they come. Here they are irrigating the soil, planting vines, and engaging in the manufacture of silk. There is pleasure in seeing new buildings in this land of ruins. Here are signs of vigorous industry. In its newness and prosperity this town reminds one of some western town in the United States. The people we found to be intelligent, industrious, and ambitious. Many of them speak French and German, and a few of them English. I cannot recommend the hotel at which we stopped. Too much in certain ways is given for the price charged; there is unavoidably too much "bodily exercise" at night, and we have apostolic authority for saying that such exercise profiteth little. The black bread and other table luxuries, except the grapes, I cannot recommend. But improvements are constantly going forward; and, doubtless, one may before many years travel all over Palestine in a palace car on a good railway, and put up at first-class hotels. These improvements will be welcomed by many, but they will take away something of the archaic charm of this ancient land.

TEL EL-KADI, OR DAN, "A JUDGE."—Before daylight, after a night's battle which made get-

ting up a luxury, we started for Baniyas by way of Dan. Along the shores of Huleh we saw a large caravan approaching, men, women, dragomans, servants, horses, and donkeys. From many we were soon saluted with a "Howdy," which led me to recognize the party as Americans from the Southern States. I was expecting to meet a party of Southern Baptists, and I assumed this was that party. Soon my dragoman called out my name and residence, and we were shaking hands and exchanging Christian greetings and fraternal salutations. Meeting with this company of Americans, Christians, and Baptists in that far-off land, as I was traveling alone, was like a gleam of sunshine on a cloudy day. My heart responded with sincerity to the good wishes extended. Some of this party I have since welcomed in the Calvary Church, New York.

So we pressed onward, and soon we were at Tel el-Kadi, the hill of the judge. No doubt this mound corresponds to the Dan of Scripture and the Laish of the Phœnicians. The mound is nearly fifty feet above the plain; it is about one-quarter of a mile in diameter. On the top, under a fine oak, is a Moslem tomb. Descending a rocky slope on the west side of a hill a basin is reached from which bursts a copious and crystal spring. It is large enough at once to form a considerable river; it flows off through the plain, and several sparkling rills soon join it, the course of the stream being marked by abundant vegetation. I dismounted, and leaning

over the blocks of basalt I drank out of the pool. I was drinking the clear, cold water of one of the sources of the Jordan. The union of these various streams is called El-Leddan. Josephus calls it the "Little Jordan." Of the sources of the Jordan I shall speak more in detail in the next chapter; but here I may say that this is popularly supposed to be the chief source of the historic river; it certainly is much larger than the stream which rises under the rock at Banias. The stream at Dan is five hundred and four feet above the sea level.

The Arabic word Kadi and the Hebrew word Dan are synonymous and mean, judge. On this mound, and on the other behind it, stood the ancient city and citadel of Dan. It marked the north boundary of the Holy Land. This fact gave rise to the expression "From Dan to Beer-sheba." Laish was the name of the place before its conquest by the Danites,<sup>1</sup> later it was conquered by Ben-hadad, King of Syria.<sup>2</sup> A hurried glance at this history will give reality to this place. When Abraham followed the captors of Lot, he "went even unto Dan." This, as we have seen, was the most northerly city of Palestine. Painful is the story of the conquest of the Danites; too often might made right in those lawless days. At Dan Jeroboam set up one of the calves of idolatrous worship, the other being at Bethel, as substitutes for the true worship of the true God. At the southwest corner of the

<sup>1</sup> Judges 18 : 27.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings 15 : 20.

mound is pointed out the spot where the image was placed.

In three-quarters of an hour, after passing many clumps of bushes, crossing many murmuring streams, and looking out over the hills of Bashan and the glorious mountains of the north, we reached Banias, or Cæsarea-Philippi, so romantic in itself and so fragrant with the memory of Christ and his apostles.

image

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## XXXVI

### BANIAS—THE ANCIENT CÆSAREA-PHILIPPI

HAD I been with a camping party, doubtless we would have selected a place near the beautiful stream which flows from under the rock, and which is one of the sources of the Jordan, upon which to locate our camp. But as I was alone and without a tent, we sought the house of the chief man of the town. We were cordially welcomed and given the whole of the "upper room"—the entire upper story, which was all one room. Mats were placed on the floor and rugs on the mats; the sweet fresh air was cool and most welcome. But notwithstanding the interesting secular history, and the most tender associations of Christ and his apostles which cluster about this town, I shall never forget the trials of the night spent there. Occasional twinges of toothache did not sweeten the hours as I lay awake in vigorous and generally fruitless "bodily exercise" during the hours of what seemed to be the most trying night I ever spent.

The whole town was in a state of feverish excitement over the expected outbreak of war between the Druses and the Metawilehs. This latter tribe possesses many villages in Lebanon.



They have long been at war with the Druses, who for centuries have held themselves aloof from the other inhabitants of Syria, although they are of mixed Syrian and Arabian origin. Did space permit, it would be interesting to give an account of the history and beliefs of these two tribes; but those especially interested can elsewhere examine the subject. Terrible tales were being circulated through Baniyas at the time of our arrival. It was said that a party of three Englishmen had just been robbed of money, watches, horses, mules, and everything which they had on their journey, and that their lives were saved with difficulty. Other stories were told of a traveler who had been robbed and murdered, and his murderer had recently been discovered, but was not likely ever to be punished. It is well known that the Turkish Government has never been able to exercise more than a nominal authority over the wild tribes east of the Jordan and in the Lebanon district. It was said that thousands of both tribes were assembled near and that a great battle would probably be fought the next day. That day was Sunday, and we expected to spend it here; but it seemed best to get a *sheik* of the Druses as our protector and to continue our journey that day. Protesting against the imposition, my dragoman secured that evening the man to lead us over the mountains. We had to allow him to rob us of a considerable sum that he might keep his fierce people from robbing us of a greater sum, or perhaps taking all we had, if not our lives also. With

this preparation, and not in the best of temper or spirits, we went out in the beautiful afternoon to see Banias and its truly beautiful environs.

**HISTORIC GLANCES.** — Names are things. Whence comes the name Banias? It is just the Greek Paneas. But whence came the name Paneas? The town was so named because here there was a sanctuary of Pan. This sanctuary adjoined the cavern whence flows one of the sources of the Jordan. When Herod the Great received from Augustus a territory which included Paneas, he erected over the spring a temple in honor of Augustus Cæsar. His son, Philip the Tetrarch, inherited a district of which Paneas was a part, and he enlarged the town and called it Cæsarea, in honor of Tiberius Cæsar; but as there was on the Mediterranean a town of this name, he added, as the distinguishing appellative, the word Philippi. Agrippa II. named it Neronias, but this name soon passed away, and it came to be known as Cæsarea-Philippi, or Paneas, now Banias. Perhaps this place corresponds with Baal-gad, if Baalbek is not on that site, the northern boundary of Joshua's victories. It is also probably the most northern point which our Lord ever visited.<sup>1</sup> Almost without doubt Banias is in the immediate neighborhood of our Lord's transfiguration, and it was here that the Apostle Peter made his great confession of Christ. By a misinterpretation of this the Roman Church

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 16 : 13 ; Mark 8 : 27.

has given him a place which our Lord never intended, and which Peter would have been the first to reject. After the capture of Jerusalem Titus here celebrated that victory by great gladiatorial shows, in which many Jewish captives were obliged to contend, now with wild beasts and now with one another. In the fourth century a bishopric was founded here. Banias was surrendered, after various changes in its ownership, to the Christians during the Crusades in 1230, and also the lofty fortress of Subeibeh, of which fuller mention will soon be made.

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION.—The situation of the town is exceptionally beautiful; one will travel far before he will find a more delightful combination of mountains, groves, streams, rocks, and plains. It is in a nook of Hermon, one thousand one hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level, between two valleys, while a third valley opens to the north from a deep-wooded ravine. Streams flow in every direction, making the air cool and giving it the melody of their murmurs. The abundance of the water gives luxuriance to all forms of vegetation; and the water is borne off in many channels to irrigate the fields far down the valleys. The villages consist of between fifty and sixty houses and a few shops. Into the walls of many of these houses are built materials representing a former civilization and giving evidence of classic beauty; this is especially true of the house of the *sheik* of the village, although it did not boast a table

or chair or bed. Most of the houses are within the ancient castle wall; there are remains of columns which show that the ancient city was much more extensive than the modern village. There is a rough bridge over the Jordan, composed of antique pillars. The parts of the ancient citadel, which can still be seen, show that its walls and towers were massive indeed. Parts of the corner towers of the walls are still preserved, which show that they were round and constructed of great blocks. As in Magdala and elsewhere, we saw here on the roofs of many houses booths of green branches, raised several feet on stout posts, to protect the people from lizards, scorpions, and vermin of many kinds. From the bridge, the citadel, and other parts of the town and the vicinity, many most picturesque views can be had.

But the most attractive spot in Banias is the rock from beneath which flows the copious stream which is one of the sources of the Jordan; indeed, the water bursts forth in a series of streams which finally make a copious brook. The mountain is immensely interesting. It ends here in an abrupt cliff of limestone; perhaps it has been broken away by convulsions of nature through many centuries. In the face of this cliff is a cave or grotto which was once the sanctuary of Pan; it was the *Pancum*, hence the name of the town, Paneas. On the face of the cliff are several votive niches, which doubtless were once much higher from the ground than they now are. The largest of these is the most

northerly, and a smaller one farther up is seen. Some of these are hallowed out in the form of shells; over the smaller one to the south is the inscription in Greek: "Priest of Pan," while other inscriptions are now illegible. On the top of the cliff Herod built a white marble temple, and from this point a superb view of Banias and its environs is gotten, and one secures an accurate idea of the great extent of the ruins, and also of the beauty of the surroundings. Let us look once more at the cavern of the Spring, as it is called. Once it was much larger than now. A mass of broken rocks partly chokes the entrance to the cave, and from the midst of these rocks bursts forth the stream as a source of the Jordan, of which I have spoken. I knelt and drank of its cool, clear water, and it was an experience for which I had often longed. Shortly before going I wrote a paper which is contained in "The People's Pictorial Bible," and I had occasion to describe the sources of the Jordan, and nearly every foot of the country over which I have now gone. How I desired to have the trip now taken before that work was begun; now that pleasure and profit were mine.

No Christian can visit this rock and grotto, where perhaps Baal was worshiped in the time of the Phœnicians, and Pan certainly in the time of the Greeks, who always associated his worship with caves and grottoes, without recalling the words of Christ in Matt. 16: 13-18: "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea-Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men

say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There came to me standing by that rock new significance in our Lord's question, a significance which I have not noticed as given with sufficient fullness by any writer. Did not the rock dedicated to different deities have some influence in giving form to our Lord's question? That rock once stood for the worship of Baal; it later stood for the worship of Pan. It seemed to me as if Christ asked, "Who, therefore, do you say that I am?" Perhaps this rock had some connection in Christ's mind with Peter's name; on Peter's confession and on Christ himself as the chief corner-stone, the church would be built. Behold this great rock, Christ seems to say, which has stood for ages as the symbol of false faiths. But here is a rock which shall stand forever as the symbol of the true faith; and the powers of hades shall be powerless against the church which I found. The thought here suggested may have in it an element of truth.

This place stands closely connected with our Lord's transfiguration. The best students are now virtually a unit in placing it on a spur of Mount Hermon. Immediately afterward Christ came into the parts of Cæsarea-Philippi, somewhere in this vicinity, "On the next day when they were come down from the hill, much people met him." Here he cast out the demon, although the disciples could not; here also "he took a little child and set him in the midst"; here he told the disciples of the end that before long would be his; and soon his work in this most northern limit of his earthly labors being completed, and feeling the pressure of his approaching baptism of suffering, he hastened to the inevitable end: "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem."

THE HUGE CASTLE.—All travelers ought to visit the extensive ruins of the great castle of Subeibeh, *Kul'at es-Subeibeh*. The hill on which it stands is above Banias, and is about two thousand five hundred feet above the sea level; it is, therefore, a most conspicuous object. It commands a marvelous view, certainly one of the most magnificent in Syria, taking in the hills of Bashan, the hills of Galilee, the slopes of Hermon, and the plain of Huleh, with its many waters, and the village of Banias at its base. If an excursion can be made to it in the early morning the best results will be realized. The castle is one of the best-preserved ruins in Syria; an

examination shows that it represents the architecture of nearly every age from the time of the Phœnicians down to the seventeenth century. Its origin is lost in obscurity; but it is known that much of it was built by the Franks, who held possession of it from 1139 to 1164. The building follows the irregularities of its site. It is said by Bædeker to be four hundred and eighty yards long, and at each end about one hundred yards wide, but much narrower in the middle. In speaking of it, Dean Stanley says: "The largest of its kind in the East, and equal in extent even to the pride of European castles at Heidelberg." The eastern part of the building was meant to be used for a distinct citadel, having several cisterns and being separated from the western part by a wall and a moat. The precipice at the southwest angle is of a dizzy height. The masonry is massive, the stones are beveled, and some of the arches and niches are extremely rich in their ornamentation. On some of the walls Arabic inscriptions are found, but they probably go no farther back than to some of the restorations of the remarkable structure. Many of the walls which once enclosed the castle are broken, and some of them have fallen over the precipice, hundreds of feet below. On the southwest overhangs a precipice, going sheer down a thousand feet into the wild valley. This glorious view is a memorable experience.

THE SOURCES OF THE JORDAN.—Allusion has been made several times to this subject; it is



worthy of more careful statement. The Jordan means "The Descender," and it is rightly named. It is well known as the chief river of Palestine. Running from north to south it divides the whole country into two parts, the most important part being on the west. Two streams are its chief sources, this one at Banias, and the other which we saw at Tel el-Kadi, about three miles west of Banias. These two unite and so form a considerable river. There are also several mountain brooks on the west, many of which we crossed in coming to Dan and Banias. But there is especially a third and longer stream, the Hasbany, which rises beyond the northern limit of Palestine, near Hasbeiya, on the west side of Mount Hermon, one thousand seven hundred feet above the Mediterranean. It flows twenty-four miles to the south, and unites with the other streams shortly before they enter the Lake Huleh. Issuing from this marshy lake, the Jordan flows about ten miles, during which space it falls six hundred and ninety feet, and enters the Sea of Galilee. Through it the river flows for twelve to thirteen miles, leaving there its impurities, as does the Rhone in Lake Geneva, and issues thence clear as crystal. For a distance of sixty-six miles, in a straight line, it pursues its sinuous way, making a distance of two hundred miles, and then it falls into the Dead Sea, which has no outlet, visible or invisible. From the snows of Hermon to the valley of Jericho the distance in a straight line is about one hundred and forty miles, and during that distance the river makes

a descent of nearly three thousand feet in its journey from the mountains of perpetual snow to the lake lying in one of the hottest valleys on the earth. The Jordan Valley is the most remarkable feature in Palestine. There is nothing like it in the world; it is a distinctive characteristic of the whole country.

This river is associated with much that is grandest, most majestic, and most divine in the history of Israel. Its waters again and again felt the power and obeyed the voice of God and his servants; and finally they were in Christian thought forever consecrated when Jesus Christ was baptized therein.

At few places in Palestine is the thought of Jesus more present, tender, and commanding than at Cæsarea-Philippi. The memory of its lofty hills, its murmuring streams, its luxuriant groves, its majestic hills, its thrilling historic scenes, but most of all, of its suggestions of Jesus the Christ, will never fade from the mind of the thoughtful traveler. Christ glorifies every place associated with his august and immortal name.

## XXXVII

### FROM BANIAS TO DAMASCUS

AS usual we started before dawn. We now had a *sheik* of the Druses as an additional guide. I felt humiliated in having to employ him, but it was certainly safer to pocket one's dignity and to unpocket some of one's money than to run the risk of being robbed by his tribesmen, or by some of the abominable Metawilehs. All along the way as we climbed the mountains, frightened peasants met us asking foolish questions amid their hopes and fears. The sun rose as we climbed the mountain near the castle of Subeibeh. The sight was unspeakably grand; no words of tongue or pen can do it justice. I rode along in silence drinking in the marvelous scene. Ever before us was glorious Hermon. It was one of the chief features in every picture of the Holy Land which I had for days. It is visible even from the depths of the Jordan Valley by the Dead Sea. One of its ancient names was "The Upraised," because it so grandly lifted its top amid the surrounding mountains; another was Sirion, "The Glittering," as it was called by the Sidonians. It is now called Jebel-esh-sheik, the "Chief Mountain," or the "mountain of the White-haired." Some-

times it is called Jebel-et-Telt, "the Snow Mountain." Twice in Scripture the name of Baal Hermon is given to it, doubtless because of the worship of Baal in its high places. The Hebrews extolled Hermon for its majestic heights; they valued it also as a collector of clouds. Its snow was used in ancient times, as now, for cooling the drinks of the rich.

It is rightly called the Mont Blanc of Palestine. Three separate heights form the summit, and they rise about three thousand feet above the main ridge. Around one of its peaks are large stones which once formed a circular wall. There is also the fragment of a column, and the form of a small temple can be traced. It was once a sanctuary of the Syrians, notwithstanding that for some months of the year the whole surface must have been covered with snow. We know that the Syrians selected the summits of lofty mountains as places for the worship of their gods. In summer the snow disappears from parts of the loftiest peak, and only a few white lines remain as the autumn arrives; but then it is covered again and lifts to heaven its mighty dome in its mantle of snow. Its chief glory will ever be its place in the Bible, and especially its association with the transfiguration of Christ, whose face was as the sun and whose garments were whiter even than Hermon's snow. These words of Dean Stanley, who more than any other writer catches the poetic, the historic, and the religious aspect of these scenes, are truthful:

So long as its snowy tops were seen, there was never wanting to the Hebrew poetry the image of unearthly grandeur which nothing else but perpetual snow can give, especially as seen in the summer, when the firmament around it seems to be on fire. And not grandeur only, but fertility and beauty were held up as it were on its heights, as a model for the less fortunate regions which looked up to it. "His fruit shall shake like Lebanon."<sup>1</sup> The "dews" of the mists that rose from its watery ravines, or of the clouds that rested on its summit, were perpetual witnesses of freshness and coolness, the sources, as it seemed, of all the moisture, which was to the land of Palestine what the fragrant oil was to the garments of the high priest, what the refreshing influence of brotherly love was to the whole community.

It was Sunday morning, but we were afraid to defer our journey lest we should be caught in the tribal conflicts of the two tribes already named. The paths up the mountain were very rough. We kept the castle in view until we passed the top of the hill, and soon were at the Druse village of Mejdal. Here we saw at the threshing-floor of the village large numbers of the Druses fully armed and preparing for the expected battle on the morrow. Constantly on our journey we met others hastening to the appointed place of meeting. We felt quite safe so long as we had their *sheik* for our chief guide; for they would not attack any one under his protection. Far up among the mountains we stopped beside an old winepress to which camels were carrying great loads of grapes, which the men and boys took from the backs of the camels while they knelt for that purpose. The old press

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. 72 : 16.

was being put in order for expressing the juice of the grape. Under the shadow of a rock we made a fire, cooked our breakfast, and ate it with a relish seldom surpassed by guests at any table. The supply of grapes was abundant, and a good appetite made all parts of the breakfast toothsome.

Soon we were off again. It was a long ride over a rough road and during several hours under a burning sun. The dragoman gave me credit for being an early and a tireless rider. The lofty plain named Merj-el-Hadr was crossed, then a wild glen with an abundant stream, then dreary and desolate stretches, with here and there an oasis. Then we came to a brook called Jenani, which when united to another stream becomes the historic Pharpar, which Naaman the Syrian general regarded as one of the waters superior to all the waters of Israel. New and superb views of Hermon were secured from quite different points from any we had hitherto enjoyed. Kefr-Hauwar is the usual camping-place; this village though surrounded by pleasure gardens and groves has little to commend it to travelers. The inhabitants are Moslems and not always friendly to Christians. There is a tradition that Nimrod is buried here. We now dismissed our Druse *sheik*, and my considerate Abdallah led as before. Possibly we might be able to reach Damascus, but to ride thither from Banias in one day was too much for the horses, even though the riders might endure so much hardship. On we pressed; the bleak desert was

behind us. Before us was Damascus. My heart beat fast at the thought of being near and soon being in the city of which I had so often read and spoken. A wearisome ride it was, over fearful roads, which once must have been much better, else the chariot of Naaman could not have made the journey. Now we reach the old Roman road—marvelous road-makers were these Romans—from Egypt and Palestine to Damascus. Glad are we to be on this road. We are near the spot where, according to well-founded tradition, the Apostle Paul saw the wondrous light, heard the divine voice, fell to the earth in deep amazement, and rose with blind eyes, but with an obedient heart, to be led like a child into Damascus. How the words of Scripture came to my mind! How real the story of Saul's conversion! How matchless the grace of Christ exalted to give repentance and remission of sins. Read again part of Acts 9: "As he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? . . . And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. . . And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus."

Yonder is the great plain of Damascus; it

is a sea of greenness and beauty. Soon we shall see the white minarets of the ancient city. On our left are the slopes of Lebanon. All about us are streams of water, long lines of trees, abundant groves and gardens compared with the desolate mountains and dreary deserts, and the waterless and treeless wastes we have passed. The city of Damascus and its environs will be beautiful enough almost to justify the exaggerated language of the Arabian prince who is often quoted as fearing if he entered this earthly paradise he might lose the right to enter the heavenly paradise; but to those who have seen the other places of beauty, Damascus may be something of a disappointment. We can, however, rejoice, and we do rejoice in the waters of Abana and Pharpar, which certainly are abundant and magnificent, while we linger for the night outside of Damascus, which, probably, is the oldest city of the world.

In this suburban town, as it may be called, there is a new khan; Abdallah will test it. In the court are the horses, the sheep, goats, and dogs; but around, and one story above the court, are rooms for human beings. The khan is new; it is not yet furnished. It never will be, as we understand that term. Here is a room; it has neither bed nor chair. Two chairs are found; perhaps they will bear one's weight. For a bed two tables are found and placed in order; our own bedding is carefully examined, beaten and shaken, and the bed is made. How high can fleas jump? Not so high, it is hoped, as these



tables. Blessed thought! We can outwit them; we can have a night of refreshing sleep—a luxury not enjoyed for several long nights. Was I thinking less of Paul's conversion and of God's grace than of my prospective repose? Well, one's thoughts will wander from historic events to present discomforts; but the higher and holier scenes, it may honestly be said, were not forgotten.

We had at this place an illustration of my dragoman's wisdom in securing the protection of the *sheik* of the Druses during the day. I was disposed to resent the apparent necessity of securing the services of this man. Was I not an American citizen traveling with an American passport? Did I not have a Turkish *tezkerah*, or permission to travel from one *vilayet* to another within the Turkish empire? Was not this *tezkerah* properly examined, and did it not have the necessary police *visa*? Had I not a right to demand the protection of the United States Government and also of the Turkish Government? But my dragoman reasoned that these bandits knew little of and cared less for the Turkish Government, and that they knew nothing of and so cared nothing for the government of the United States. No sooner had we reached the *kahn* than a local policeman appeared and examined our *tezkerahs*; he saw that mine was on an American passport. He immediately asked, "What is America? Where is it?" The dragoman replied that it was a great republic on the other side of the sea. The policeman

then asked: "To what country does it belong, to France, Italy, Spain, Germany, or Great Britain?" The dragoman informed him that it belonged to no country, but was itself a larger and mightier country than several other countries rolled into one. The policeman seemed still doubtful, but finally admitted that possibly he had once heard of that country. My American dignity was considerably decreased by such monumental ignorance; and I immediately saw that if a policeman in a suburb of Damascus showed such ignorance, I could expect nothing of the highwaymen of the deserts and the hills.

THE OLDEST CITY.—The night's repose was truly had, and early the next morning we were riding, at times galloping, toward Damascus. To enter this city is an experience which no one who has ever enjoyed it will forget. For miles we rode by groves and gardens, and soon the white minarets rose out of the green groves and I had my first sight of the famous city. I was reminded of the description of it which I read some years ago when it was compared to "a pearl surrounded with emeralds." Doctor Pusey says of it: "Its white buildings, embedded in the deep green of its engirdling orchards, were like diamonds encircled by emeralds." The Arabs say: "If there is a Garden of Eden on earth, it is Damascus; and if in heaven, Damascus is like it on earth." As already suggested, however, its beauty is great only by contrast with the bleak deserts near it, but in any

other light the descriptions of its beauty are scarcely pardonable exaggerations. We cantered through its gates. If there was a grateful man in Syria, I was that man. We made the trip from Jerusalem in seven and one-half days; usually it takes ten for the journey, and many persons occupy twenty days in making it. It might be made without much difficulty in six days—we would have done it in that time—but the fact that it is impossible to find stopping-places for the night at convenient intervals when one is traveling without a tent.<sup>1</sup> Welcome was the sight of Damascus; welcome its streams, groves, and gardens, and welcome its clean and excellent hotels. A good hotel is one of the high-water marks of civilization. What is even the oldest city in the world without a good hotel? Good hotels have made many places more famous than great battles, heroic endeavors, and knightly achievements. Were we grateful for a clean room, a good bath, and what, by contrast with the past few days, was an Epicurean table? We were; and no apology is made for the gratitude experienced. Any student of etiology, or of theology, will appreciate the reasonableness of being grateful for a good hotel.

All Damascus was stirred by the tribal trou-

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<sup>1</sup> It is customary for dragomans and the traveling agencies, like Cook and Gaze, to take much more time than is really necessary; and it is inevitable that they will all charge more than double what would be a fair profit on the expense they incur and the service they render. These remarks are made with absolutely certain knowledge of their truth.

bles of which mention has been made. In countries where law and order are the exception, where reliable information is impossible, and where superstition is dominant, the people are excitable and utterly unreliable. Here we found four Americans who were pastors of churches or editors of religious papers, and who were detained from going over the route by which we had just come. They entered Syria at Beirut, and so were reversing the journey I had taken, or was yet to take. Their dragoman would not start because of the rumors; and he was charging them eight dollars per day each, they being able to do nothing and he reaping an enormous profit. There ought to be a limit to the fleecing to which one will submit even in Syria and Palestine. There is a grand chance for some enterprising American to make a handsome profit and yet to carry travelers for half the usual rates. This clerical party tried hard to be happy and grateful, but they did not succeed to a degree which would warrant the veracious chronicler in giving them credit for either virtue; indeed a little wholesome indignation on their part was a virtue which they properly possessed and partly exhibited.

I had the opportunity of seeing a Syrian wedding party at the hotel. The hotel keeper, who was once, so rumor said, engaged to an American woman, had just been married at Beirut to a Syrian. The wedding party arrived in the evening. They left the railway at the station next to Damascus, and entered the ancient city

in carriages. The hotel was in a state of great excitement on their arrival, all parts of it being decorated with flowers and all the servants being in their gayest attire. The Christian women of Damascus were on hand to give their congratulations. The bridal party soon came, reminding one of the descriptions in the Bible and also in the many accounts of customs and manners in the East. I had the honor of being invited to give my congratulations in the hotel parlor. A goodly company was assembled. The language of the people among themselves was Arabic, but to outsiders it was French, and some in the company could speak English. Then there was a wedding dinner, congratulatory speeches, and vigorous cheering of the same. In this last exercise the clergymen mentioned and myself participated, assuming that the sentiments expressed were appropriate and the wishes cordial. Some Damascus people in the company, learning that I was from New York, immediately asked me about merchants of that city who deal in Oriental goods, and by me sent messages to some of them. The world is very small. Two men who were met in Damascus immediately called me by name; they had once lived in New York. In three cities visited on this journey some members of the Calvary Church are now living. Thus it came to pass that the first half-day in the oldest city in the world, in its wedding festivities, its business interests, and its fraternal greetings, was not unlike half a day in the largest city of the New World.

## XXXVIII

### DAMASCUS THE ANCIENT

**BITS OF HISTORY.**—Before going through the streets of this very ancient city, it is necessary that we familiarize ourselves with parts of its history and of the country to which it belongs. Damascus is well known as one of the most ancient cities of the world. It is first mentioned in Gen. 14 : 15 ; 15 : 2, and it has been frequently asserted that it is the oldest city on the globe. Josephus considers that it is older than the time of Abraham. Shakespeare locates here the murder of Abel by Cain. (King Henry VI.)

Nay, stand thou back, I will not budge a foot ;  
This be Damascus, be thou cursed Cain,  
To slay thy brother Abel, if thou wilt.

Its name in Hebrew is Dammesek ; in Arabic it is Dimeshk ; but natives of to-day call it Esh-sham. It was formerly the capital of old Syria, and now of a Turkish *vilayet* of Syria. There are many legends, both Jewish, Christian, and Moslem regarding its origin. Josephus supposes that it was founded by Uz, the son of Aran, and grandson of Shem. It seems at least to have been a Semitic settlement.

But little, however, is known about Damascus

until the time of David. He conquered the town after a bloody war, it being the ally of his enemy, the king of Zobah. David placed a garrison in the town. An adventurer called Rezin made himself the master of Damascus during the reign of Solomon. Its history during this period is closely associated with the lives of Naaman, Ben-hadad, Hazael, and Rezin. We see by 2 Kings 16 : 7-9 that it was subdued by Tiglath-Pileser. It occupies no small place in the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Amos, and we know that it became subject to the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Seleucidæ, and Romans. In New Testament times it was held for a short time by Aretas, king of Arabia-Petræa, under the Romans. At this period Josephus affirms : there were ten thousand Jews in Damascus put to death by the hand of Nero. We know that Jews so abounded in the city that the statement of Josephus does not seem to be improbable.

It is memorable to all Christians because of its connection with the conversion of the Apostle Paul. Civilization, it is very evident, reached an advanced position in the early day in Damascus. Its mercantile greatness is clearly indicated by Ezekiel in the words addressed to Tyre, which was then the port of Damascus, as Beirut is now. It was an important commercial and manufacturing city, and is the starting-point of the caravans in their traffic with the East, and especially with Persia. The language of the city in the early day was Syrian, and the religion seems to

have been the worship of Astarte. Damascus became important as the residence of Christian bishops, who ranked next to the patriarchate of Antioch. The Emperor Theodosius destroyed the heathen temples in Syria, and transformed the great temple of Damascus into a Christian church.

Of course one of the brilliant periods in the history of Damascus begins with the introduction of Mohammedanism. Damascus fell into the hands of the Arabs after the battle of Yarnuk, and under the great princes of the Ommyyades attained great splendor. These were the greatest princes that Arabia has produced. It is not possible, however, in this lecture to trace this history in detail; but it may be said that in 1126 the crusaders under Baldwin gained a victory over part of the city, but were finally obliged to withdraw. In 1148 Damascus was besieged by Conrad III., and in 1260 it was taken by the Mongols, who favored the Christians; but it was finally recaptured by Kotuz, the Mameluke sovereign of Egypt. The city was plundered by the Tartars in 1300, and in 1516 the Turkish Sultan Selim took possession of the city, since which time it has been one of the provincial capitals of the Turkish Empire.

**SLAUGHTER OF CHRISTIANS.**—In 1860 about six thousand nominal Christians were slaughtered in the city. A massacre of the Christians in Lebanon by the Druses took place, and many Christians in the villages near Damascus fled to



the city for refuge. The Mohammedans there, on a general signal, rose and began a general massacre. This is one of the most cruel tragedies of modern times, exceeded only by the recent barbarity of the Turks and Kurds in Armenia. The Christian quarter still bears traces of these awful cruelties. Colonel Churchill has graphically told the story as to how on the 9th of July the whole Christian quarter was in flames. The entire water supply was cut off, and the hopeless people were shut in by an enclosure of fire and steam. Abd-el-kader, the exiled chieftain of Algiers, then living in retirement in Damascus, heroically rescued all the wretched sufferers, so far as it was possible for him so to do. Hundreds were escorted to his house; and many repaired to the British Consulate; but all through the awful night, and during the whole of the following day, the terrible massacre continued. One reason for the massacre, it is believed, was an article in the treaty of Paris in 1856, which it was thought excluded foreign intervention in the affairs of Turkey, and by this interpretation placed Christians at the mercy of the Moslems. The insurrection against the English in India also inflamed the minds of the Moslems against Christians in Syria. It is said that Ahmed Pasha gave the Druse assassins the signal to begin their awful work; it is known that the Druses, the Turkish soldiers, and the populace of the town all united to murder the Christians and to devastate their quarter. The bodies of murdered Christians were piled up in

enormous heaps in the city. Some of the clergy were slain beside the altar to which they had gone for refuge. In the mountains a similar slaughter took place, when the Druses vented their wrath on the Maronites. The whole number of the slain in the country districts is said to have been at least one thousand four hundred. All Europe finally became aroused, and not until then did the Turkish government attempt to stop the terrible slaughter. A number of the leaders, including Ahmed Pasha and several Jews, were arrested at Damascus and beheaded; and ten thousand French soldiers were sent to Syria, and they succeeded in restoring nominal peace; but the relation between Moslems and Christians is still very insecure, and an outbreak at any moment would not surprise those who are familiar with all the facts.

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION.—Damascus is situated in a vast plain of extreme fertility, lying east of the great chain of Anti-Libanus on the edge of the desert. It is nearly circular, and is about thirty miles in diameter. Its shape and fertility are due to the river Barada, which is supposed to be the Abana of Scripture. This river rises on the western flank of Anti-Libanus, and finally turns suddenly its waters through the plain. Seen from the mountains, Damascus appears beautiful in the extreme. One can readily understand how it has come to have so conspicuous a place in the history, the traffic, the poetry, and the legends of Syria and the Orient. For a

long period it was the solitary place of civilization in Syria, and it will doubtless retain its great influence and power in all coming generations. In the midst of the plain, surrounded by trees of many kinds, this city rises from the mass of foliage. Its white minarets are in striking contrast to the rich green by which they are surrounded; snowy Hermon overlooks the beautiful scene, while many bare and barren mountains form a background the better to display the charms of the city and the plain. The Barada is carried by many streams into cisterns, baths, and fountains; it thus irrigates city and plain, turning a desert into a garden.

Damascus has always demanded and always received the homage of the Orient. She is a city of eternal youth, and many have striven to discover the secret of her perpetual vitality. Dr. George Adam Smith, in his volume to which I have several times referred, tells us that if we look eastward we can understand Damascus. He further remarks that we might as well question the site of New York, or of Sidney, or of San Francisco. Beyond and immediately behind Damascus there is nothing but deserts. The river Abana bursts full-born from the heart of Anti-Lebanon; after running a course of ten miles in a narrow gorge it flings itself in sudden streams abroad in the plain, and finally dies away in a large marsh. The river does not waste her waters, but expends them on a broad sweep of territory. This river transforms a desert into a garden of beauty, and it virtually

creates this marvelous city. Damascus endures, although often conquered. Nineveh, Babylon, and Memphis mastered her ; but, as she probably preceded, she certainly has outlived these cities. She is endowed with perpetual youth. She will ever charm the visitor, and will be a great city for trade, and also a headquarters of Islam in her pilgrimages to and from Mecca.

However fascinating the sight of the city is as one approaches it, a nearer view shows that, like most Oriental cities, it contains much that is offensive to every sense, as well as repulsive to every moral instinct. It is interesting chiefly because it is the most purely Oriental city still existing of all those mentioned in the Bible. The cloth still known as "damask" is believed to have originated here ; and the Damascus steel was long unequalled in any part of the world. The knowledge of this steel, and of the manner of manufacturing it into blades, was carried from Damascus to Toledo in Spain ; and the Toledo blade now probably surpasses the blades of Damascus in the earlier day. An extensive trade is still carried on in silks, fruits, sweetmeats, etc., and great caravans assemble here as in the olden time. It is also a point of meeting and departure of enormous pilgrimages to Bagdad and Mecca. As the meeting-place of so many nations of the East, Damascus is a peculiarly important station for mission work.

BAZAARS OF DAMASCUS.—The bazaars of Damascus are celebrated all over the world ; they

are perhaps more extensive and imposing than those of Cairo, although Cairo is a much larger city. Damascus supplies not only its own inhabitants, but also the population of the Hauran, as well as the Bedouins of extensive districts east of the Jordan and in many parts of Syria. Many of the bazaars are in the streets, carefully covered with wooden roofs, the light struggling through small windows. The bazaars are also classified, there being the Saddler's Bazaar, the Silk Bazaar, the Fez Bazaar, where all sorts of turbans, caps, and Oriental headgear can be bought; the Greek Bazaar, which is most attractive for its antiquities of many kinds and its Damascus blades; the Tobacco Bazaar, with all kinds of mouth-pieces; the Booksellers' Bazaar, where only Mohammedan books can be bought; the Coppersmith's Bazaar, with its wonderful dishes and culinary utensils; the Boot and Shoe Bazaar, where decorated slippers of marvelous shapes and colors can be secured; and still other bazaars of many kinds, with their proprietors seated behind their wares apparently indifferent to the intending purchaser, but ever ready to ask about four times as much as they will finally take for their goods.

In wandering through the streets at night, the old law, not yet entirely obsolete, requires you to carry a lantern. If found without one, arrest may follow. The lanterns are not unlike those of the Chinese, common among us to illuminate gardens and lawns. If a gate in a street is closed the traveler shouts: "*Ifta ya Haris*," which being interpreted it, "Open, O watchman." Here,

as in almost all other parts of the world, a little silver to cross the palm of the watchman secures at once the desired opening of the gate.

The population of Damascus has been placed at various figures. It is extremely difficult to be certain in a matter of this kind. Perhaps we are safe in saying that it is at least one hundred and fifty thousand; and perhaps one hundred thousand are Moslems, six thousand Jews, and about eight thousand are Christians of different varieties. There are also Armenians and Maronites, Latins, and a few Protestants; it is computed that the Moslems have nearly one hundred and fifty mosques and colleges in Damascus; seventy-one of these are the large mosques in which sermons are preached on Fridays. Others are chapels and schools for instruction in the laws and prayers of the Moslem faith. The Moslems of Damascus are notorious for their fanaticism.

This city was once a great resort for scholars, but now Cairo enjoys the fame which has deserted Damascus. The Jews are chiefly descendants of those settled in this vicinity in ancient times. Christians within the last few years have made great efforts to establish Protestant missions in Damascus. The efforts of the English missions to the Jews have not been very successful, but services are still held in English and Arabic. Our American missionaries have established schools in Damascus, and their labors are attended with considerable encouragement. Both the Franciscans and the Jesuits have schools, orphanages, and other religious establishments.

The Damascenes are, as is to be expected, very proud of their city. The pride of the Moslems is exceeded only by their ignorance. They vigorously oppose the spirit of progress introduced from the West, and consider themselves superior to all other nations. In walking through the streets one is constantly exhorted by street vendors to buy various meats and drinks. The street-boy mingles a strange sort of religious earnestness with his appeals for trade. As he rattles his copper cups, the drinkseller shouts, "O cheer thine heart," and the bread boy cries, "O Allah, who sustainest us, send us trade." Friday is the market day and then the crowds are enormous in size, and dangerous in their fanaticism. On these days especially one may see Persians in gorgeous silks, Nubians in black and white, Jews with and without ringlets, and also the Bedouin of the desert in his cloak of black and white, or of some gorgeous color; and in the fearful crowds occasionally strangely dressed pilgrims on their way to Mecca are seen. The confusion is indescribable—every one shouting at the top of his voice. Dogs are to the right of us and to the left of us; they are sweetly sleeping on the pavements during the day, and the traveler must step over them carefully. They largely sleep by day, and they howl and prowl by night. They are the scavengers of all Oriental cities; but for them many of these cities would be hotbeds of cholera and typhoid fever. They are, therefore, treated with a certain sort of kindness as friends of humanity. Through these

crowded streets caravans of camels and donkeys are driven, some of them carrying tourists or sailors who have just arrived from Beirut. In the midst of all this excitement, in the bazaars the richly robed merchants smoke their tchibouks and sip their coffee, or with endless chatter wait on their customers. In the khans wholesale trade is conducted. These khans are usually owned by wealthy merchants, and here carpets of Persia, muslins of India, and the prints of Manchester can be bought.

PLACES OF SPECIAL INTEREST.—The Great Mosque was recently burned. I could only gaze upon its majestic ruins. Until a short time ago, no Christian was permitted to enter its portal; but previous to its destruction by fire Christians could be admitted, going in parties not larger than twenty persons and by having made application to the consul. The mosque stood in a spacious quadrangle; it is larger than the mosque of Omar and has had a remarkable history. Once Christianity was a mighty power in Damascus. The metropolitan bishop of Damascus with seven of his suffragans attended the council of Nice in 325; but Islam gained power, and Christianity was placed under the ban. Once the temple that had been sacred to Jupiter was consecrated to Jesus, and dedicated to John the Baptist; but this Christian church became a Mohammedan mosque. Strangely enough, however, although the crescent usurped the place of the cross, until the recent fire this inscription was on a minaret:



"Thy kingdom, O Christ, is a kingdom of all ages, and thy dominion lasts throughout generations." That inscription seemed prophetic of a time when Christ shall reign over the hearts of the people of Damascus. In earlier days the pulpit, the court, and the minarets of this mosque attracted much attention. There was a minaret called "Madinet 'Isa," meaning the minaret of Jesus. This minaret was so named from the tradition that when Jesus comes to judge the world, he will appear first on this minaret. It is believed by some that this mosque was on the site of the temple of Rimmon. If this is so, then it was here that Naaman reared his own altar and deposited the "two mules' burden of earth," according to the account given in 2 Kings 5.

In the presence of the ruins of this mosque and under the influence of these traditions, one certainly feels that he is in the atmosphere of ancient history. It has also been suggested that it was in this temple that King Ahaz saw the altar which so pleased him that he had it reproduced in Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

All Christian travelers are especially interested in the localities which are connected with scriptural events. "The street called Straight," every traveler will wish to see, and to travel throughout its entire length. This is doubtless the street named in the New Testament. Mark Twain puns on the word "called" in connection with the name of this street. It must be admitted

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 16 : 10-12.

that the street is not very straight, neither is it architecturally beautiful; but traces are found of the colonnade which once adorned the street, and which perhaps gave it beauty in the early day. The natives called it the "street of Bazaars." The street is at least a mile long, and runs across the city from west to east. It certainly was much wider at one time than it is now. The house of Judas is also shown, but it is not in the "street called Straight."

The tombs and mausoleums are a marked feature of Damascus. The gates also attract the attention of all visitors. The "East Gate" bears memorials of Roman masonry; near the closed gate Bab Kisan,—it has been closed for about seven hundred years,—is the Christian cemetery. It is a matter of great interest that Buckle, the famous English historian, is buried here. His pathetic regret that his book was not finished as he felt the approach of death, has touched the hearts of all familiar with the circumstances of his death. Near the "Little Gate" is a great Moslem cemetery in which it is claimed that three of the wives of Mohammed are buried. One still sees houses upon the wall which will illustrate the story of the escape of the Apostle Paul as given in the Acts of the Apostles. The house of Naaman is pointed out. It is now appropriately a leper hospital. I visited the so-called house of Ananias. It is now used as a place of prayer, and is under the control of the Latins. The "suburb of Meidan" consists of a broad and badly paved street about a mile long.

Here motley crowds are constantly seen. The environs of Damascus are deeply interesting, and at least a day might well be spent in making them a visit. We know that at least four different places have been pointed out at different times as the place of the conversion of the Apostle Paul. One place is near, or a part of, what is now used as the Christian cemetery; but it is easy to see that this cannot be the place, as it is on the eastern side of the city, and we know the apostle approached the city from the north or west. It is much more likely to be the place outside of the city, near which the writer spent a night, and which is mentioned in the preceding chapter; but there is no special objection to the place pointed out in the walls as that where the apostle was let down by a basket.<sup>1</sup>

For two days I walked through the streets, bazaars, markets, baths, and other places of interest in Damascus. The visit to this ancient city will never be forgotten. It was the realization of a long-cherished desire. The streets are as thoroughly ancient as those of Cairo. In this city the traveler can thoroughly learn the characteristics of the Orientals. Two busy days may well be spent here; but thoroughly to enjoy the city, a larger stay would be necessary. I have striven to describe the city fairly, without the exaggerated appreciation of some travelers, or the equally exaggerated depreciation of others. It must be judged purely as an Oriental city;

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 9 : 25.

otherwise one's judgment would be conspicuously unfair. After the days spent in climbing barren hills, and the nights in wretched hotels, the beauty of the city was great by comparison, and judging by the same standard the hotel was excellent. Forever will the memory of Damascus, the metropolis of Syria, "the eye of the East," and the dream of the ages, live in my memory.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### BAALBEK—"CITY OF THE SUN"

EARLY in the morning we left Damascus by railway for Beirut, taking in Baalbek on the way. It was with reluctance that we took our last views of the ancient and beautiful, the romantic and dreamful, city of Damascus. The hope of visiting Baalbek led us to hasten our journey from Jerusalem to Damascus; and so having gained at least a day on that journey it became possible to take in Baalbek, and yet get to Beirut in time to take the steamer on the intended date. Travelers with great ambition and limited time learn largely to gratify the one, and correspondingly to economize the other. Trains had but recently begun to run on the railway between Damascus and Beirut; but one trip each way each day was made. The fares were high and the track was far from smooth; but one was glad enough to avail himself of more modern methods of travel for long distances than on the back of a horse. My contract with the dragoon ceased at Damascus; but, as I had to pay his fare to Beirut, he readily entered into a satisfactory arrangement to go with me to Baalbek. The morning was hot, and the air lifeless as we started from Damascus. We wound slowly up

the sides of Anti-Lebanon to its top, and slowly down its opposite side. Glorious views greeted us in whatever direction we looked. We passed many small villages, saw everywhere the transformations produced by the streams, which in the Orient are literally waters of life, and rejoiced in the charming vistas furnished by rocky glens and wild ravines.

The railway was still a novelty in these mountain regions, and the country people came in numbers to gaze upon this marvel of our time. Places of historic interest and ruins worthy of study were passed, and in about four hours we were in Zahleh. This is the largest town in Lebanon, as it has a population of nearly sixteen thousand, nine-tenths of whom are nominally Christians. A member of the Calvary Church lives here. The town has an air of comfort, cleanliness, intelligence, and prosperity very rare in Palestine. Christianity brings intelligence, and so prosperity. Here one saw women without the distinctive dress of the Mohammedan women, women of more beauty, intelligence, and character than those we had been seeing for weeks, women with hope in their faces and some degree of joy in their lives. Christianity is the one religion which really exalts woman. It was a joy to be in an atmosphere more Occidental than Oriental, more Christian than Mohammedan. Many of the people about us had been students in Protestant and other Christian schools in Beirut; and their appearance testified to the value of the instruc-

tion they had received. During the fearful massacre of 1860, of which mention has been made in the chapter on Damascus, the town of Zahleh suffered terribly. The Druses captured and burned most of it to the ground; but now it is rebuilt, and signs of prosperity are everywhere manifested. Miles of vineyards are seen, and in the town and vicinity there are many thriving manufactories.

In Zahleh we hired a carriage to take us to Baalbek. The numbers, volubility, and pertinacity of the drivers of carriages at this station are alarming to contemplate. Those of them who could speak English bombarded our ears with their badly fractured sentences, and they all surrounded us with almost threatening attitudes. But "cabby" is virtually the same fellow in all lands and languages; and those who remember the attitudes, and the "keb," "keb," of our New York cabmen will not be greatly astonished at the nearly equally good English, and perhaps little greater impertinence, of the Syrian Jehus. Some travelers engage in Damascus carriages for this journey; but they can be had at Zahleh for less than half the amount demanded by the hotel keepers in Damascus,—that is to say, for four to five dollars, with two horses and driver, going to Baalbek in the afternoon and returning to Zahleh the next morning, the driver "finding" himself and his horses in Baalbek.

Charming was the ride up the broad, rich valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. One

feels all the time that he is nearer Europe than he has been at any time since he entered the East. The valley is fairly well cultivated, and is smooth and for the most part level. Yonder on our right is pointed out the reputed tomb of Noah. Somehow it seemed strange to learn that Noah had a tomb; it had not occurred to us ever to think about his tomb. But really why should he not have a tomb? Worse men than he have several tombs. Now that a tomb has been given him it certainly is large enough to satisfy a reasonable ambition in that respect. It is said to be between fifty and sixty yards long. The most probable supposition, however, is that it is simply a disused aqueduct. As we ride we see here and there villages beautifully situated, surrounded by groves and orchards, and in the midst of fertile fields; off in the distance we see rising before us the world-famous ruins which we have come to visit; and here on our right as we approach the town, are the quarries, whence the great stones used in the enormous temple of the Sun and other gigantic structures were taken. We leave the carriage to examine one stone which has long been the wonder of all travelers. Mark Twain speaks of it as being as large as an American railway car; and his description of it is scarcely an exaggeration. It is put down in the guidebooks as being seventy-one feet long, fourteen feet high, and thirteen feet broad. Its estimated weight is one thousand five hundred tons. It still lies where the Phœnician workmen left it, perhaps four thousand years ago. It



bears locally a suggestive name, but one which our sense of propriety will scarcely permit us to quote and explain. We are now in the historical city, and are located with reasonable comfort at one of the several hotels, and are ready to master some historic facts before going out to visit the magnificent ruins.

NAME AND HISTORY.—The ancient Syrian name was Ba'aldach. The Græco-Roman writers called it Heliopolis, City of the Sun, and the modern name is Baalbek, spelled differently by different writers. "To the great gods of Heliopolis," is a part of the inscription in the grand portico of the temple still existing. John Malala, of Antioch, a writer of the seventh century, states that "Ælius Antoninus Pius built at Heliopolis of Phœnicia, in Lebanon, a great temple to Jupiter, which was one of the wonders of the world." The first part of this inscription shows that this temple was originally a Pantheon. It also stated that coins of an early date show that there were two temples at Baalbek, the smaller of which was probably the temple of Baal. In Hebrew this word means lord; it was the name, as we well know, given by the Phœnicians and Canaanites to their chief deity, the sun; this deity shared with Astarte, the moon, the honors of their worship. Baalbek in Arabic means "The City or Place of the Sun"; it has been suggested, with probability, that Baalbek corresponds with Baal-gad, "the troop of the sun," mentioned in the book of Joshua more than

once.<sup>1</sup> These references may locate this place where the ruins of Baalbek stand to-day. The Greeks naturally translated the word into their own tongue, hence the name Heliopolis, "City of the Sun," the name which Alexander the Great gave to the city of On, in Egypt. When the Romans were in possession of Syria, they would naturally dedicate this temple especially to the worship of Jupiter.

I had the good fortune to have here a local guide who has made a careful study of everything connected with the history of this famous place. He has published the results of his investigations, and has been in constant communication with learned men in different countries; but many problems are still unsolved, and some of them are probably unsolvable. There are certain evidences that Astarte, and later Venus, as well as Baal, were revered at Heliopolis. Constantine, it is believed, erected a Christian church here, and it is known that about his time Christians were persecuted here. Between 379 and 395 Theodosius the Great destroyed the Triliton Temple, and transformed it into a Christian church. The Arabs finally conquered the place. They attributed all the antiquities to Solomon. They soon converted the acropolis into a citadel, and as such it occupied an important place in the wars of the Middle Ages. In 1176 the crusaders, under Raymond, went to Baalbek, defeated Saladin, who came into possession of the

<sup>1</sup> Josh. 11 : 17 ; 12 : 7 ; 13 : 5.

city the preceding year, and returned with much booty. After many changes in its ownership the ruins of Baalbek were re-discovered by Europeans in the middle of the sixteenth century; it has suffered severely from earthquakes, and especially from one in 1759.

The town lies three thousand eight hundred and forty feet above the sea level. Its population is put down as two thousand, and at least one-half are Christians of some sort, many of them probably of a very poor sort. It contains two Greek and two Maronite monasteries. The English Mission conducts a successful girls' school, and there are other forms of Protestant mission work. The tourist in Baalbek is conscious of an atmosphere of antiquity and mystery as he gazes on the ruins of past civilizations, walks under the shadow of the trees and by the streams of this interesting city. The great temple is now a mass of ruins, but it is easy to see that it was a peristyle, a temple with columns running around it. Only six columns now remain, which are about sixty feet high and have Corinthian capitals. In order to secure the iron clamps the Arabs have greatly injured these columns, and it would surprise no one who had seen them to learn that they had fallen; and so the superb ruins of perhaps the grandest temple the world has ever possessed, would be entirely destroyed. It is clear that originally there were seventeen columns on each side of the temple, and ten at each end, thus making fifty-four in all. The building thus enclosed was two hun-

dred and ninety feet long and one hundred and sixty feet broad.

The temple of the Sun stands on a lower level than that of the Great Temple. Nineteen of its forty-six columns remain; these columns were sixty-five feet in height, including base and capitals, and they are six feet three inches in diameter. More than a century ago one of these columns fell against the cella, and in that position it has remained ever since. The portal of the temple is exquisitely beautiful, its door posts being monoliths, and richly ornamented with foliage and genii. With my guide I walked several times around the walls, and studied with wonder its Cyclopean masonry. The stones are of enormous size; everything is vast in conception and execution. The temple was called the "Trilithon"; a glance at this word shows that it means three-stoned, and probably the name was given because of the three vast stones on which I gazed with constantly increasing wonder. They are near one another and attract and chain the attention of every visitor. One is sixty-three feet long, another is sixty-three feet and eight inches, and the third is sixty-four feet long; each stone is thirteen feet high and thirteen feet thick, and their present position in the wall is about twenty feet above the ground. After all these years they fit to one another so perfectly that I had to look closely to discover the seams. The question is often asked, how they were raised to that position? My guide seemed to think that the ground was once suffi-

ciently high to bring these stones near the apparent foundation ; but the question may still be asked, how were they ever brought from the quarry ? That question the science of our day fails satisfactorily to answer. Some say a channel of water was dug to the quarry and they were floated on boats ; others that an inclined plane was constructed and that the stones were canted over and over by enormous "jacks," and perhaps partly by the aid of elephants or some other powerful animals. The fact is that we know nothing about the matter. Our boasted progress is brought to a condition of complete humiliation, if not to entire silence.

The exterior of the Circular Temple is very fine. It is surrounded by eight Corinthian capitals and each is a monolith. Seldom does a traveler so fully feel his littleness, or the smallness of our boasted civilization and irreverent spirit of progress, as he does at Baalbek. One almost feels that he is surrounded by the evidences of a civilization of Titans, or by the results of the labors of a race of gods, or by the works of nature, as an immediate creation by God, rather than in the presence of the works of men's hands. The words of M. Pressensé, though somewhat long, are truthful and eloquent and may be here reproduced :

Baalbek, or Heliopolis, was an insignificant town of small note, except in the time of the decline of the Roman empire. One may judge from the remains of this inglorious city, with what a pride of pomp paganism arrayed itself before its death. The temples of Baalbek date—at least as

the time of their positive erection—from the reign of Antoninus Pius. The acropolis of the town was entirely isolated, and placed on an eminence, surrounded with gigantic walls, the stones of which belonged to that Phœnician architecture, which, by its colossal genius, has earned the name of Cyclopean. Three temples rose on this acropolis: a circular temple, of which there remain only a few highly decorated chapels; a temple of Jupiter, which has preserved a great part of its portico, and its cella quite entire, with its architrave ornate to excess, its fluted columns, and a rich profusion of decoration; and a temple of the Sun, the remains of which clearly indicate its former grandeur. A peristyle led to a vast hexagon surrounded by niches and columns; a large square court conducted to the sanctuary. To this edifice belonged the five splendid pillars which rear to such an astonishing height an enormous mass of stone, as finely carved as if designed for a temple of miniature proportions.

The peculiar characteristic of this architecture is precisely this combination of the immense and the graceful, of Cyclopean vastness with the refined elegance of an art already in its decadence, but still in possession of most marvelous processes. Nowhere is the Corinthian acanthus carved with more delicacy than on these gigantic blocks. After studying these three temples in detail, the mind must be abandoned freely to the impression produced by the magnificent whole. The fallen fragments heaped on the ground are as wonderful as the standing remains.

While the five pillars of the cella of the great temple rear themselves grandly to the eye, the earth around the foot of the isolated columns still standing is strewn with enormous *débris*, which form a magnificent pell-mell, displaying all imaginable forms of Grecian architecture. It is the ruin of an entire city, the ideal ruin of a dream, full of disorder, poetry, grandeur. This is the sublime cenotaph of two distinct but blended civilizations; the old natural religions, which so long held Asia captive, mingle the wrecks of their colossal architecture with the exquisite forms that the genius of Greece threw off as if in sport. Spring casts the garland of her perpetual youth over this thrice

dead past—a smiling irony ; camels and sheep graze on the grass which grows over columns and capitals. Picture the white chain of Libanus looking down on this overthrown city ; embrace in one comprehensive glance of thought all the contrasts blended here, and the thrilling effect of such a scene will be understood.

And the words of another recent traveler in Palestine and Syria exactly expressed my feelings as the next morning we rode away, and I took my last look, perhaps forever, on the gigantic ruins of Baalbek.

There are many things to wonder at and admire in Baalbek. One never wearies of gazing upon those graceful ruins, beautiful from every aspect and in every light ; but it is not "on holy ground" that we are standing, and with the influence upon us which the ruins of Palestine have created, we forget the might of Phœnician strength, the poetry of Grecian architecture, the pomp of Roman power, and sigh to think that all this magnificence was pride, this worship pagan, and all this skill and grace and beauty defiled by voluptuous and soul-destroying sin. I climbed a wall and sat upon a richly sculptured parapet, watching the sunset. To the left was Hermon, to the right Lebanon, and at my feet the whole vast area of ruins. It was an hour full of suggestion, and one could not fail to trace how the word of the Lord was receiving its fulfillment ; how the false systems were lying in the dust and darkness, while his own prophetic proclamation was gaining daily new force and power : "I am the light of the world."

The Phœnician heathenism, the Greek and Roman heathenism, have passed away. Jesus Christ is king. Over the ruins of every heathen faith his kingdom will rise.

## XL

### BEIRUT

THE carriage ride from Baalbek to Zahleh was most enjoyable. At noon we took at Zahleh the train we had left the day before, and started for Beirut. The day became very warm and the journey was peculiarly tiresome. It was thought by many before the railway was built that the people would not ride in the trains; but now they are often very much crowded. It was so on this occasion; the cars of all the three classes were packed for the greater part of the journey. The track is rough, the trains move slowly, and they stop frequently. After days spent on horseback, our limbs were stiff when we arrived at Damascus; but our positive fatigue was far greater when we arrived at Beirut after riding in crowded cars and under a burning sun. Although it was now about the middle of October, the ride to Beirut and the night spent there were the hottest experiences which we had after leaving the Red Sea.

Tremendous were the noise, confusion, and excitement of every sort on arriving at Beirut and getting our baggage through the custom house. The Orientals love noise; it is a form of their chosen enjoyment. Business of many millions



of dollars might be transacted in Europe or in America with less confusion and noise than we had in the tedious delay of getting our baggage examined and in securing carriages to drive to our hotel. The arrival by sea would have had much more noise and confusion still. It is almost as much as a traveler's life is worth to land by boat at an Oriental port.

I was now near the end of my fifteen days in Palestine and Syria, and was not sorry to leave for "The Isles of Greece," and finally for Great Britain and home. My face was now distinctly turned homeward. Never did Europe seem so much like home as when I reached it from Asia. I was weary of the noise, of the dogs, and of the dirt of Oriental cities. The night spent at Beirut was very uncomfortable. It was extremely hot; bands of some wild sort played most of the night, and mosquitoes—which are rare in Palestine, owing to the coldness of the nights—sang their songs and worked their lances and their pumps all night. There are good hotels and almost all modern and European conveniences and comforts in Beirut, so far as Oriental conditions will admit; but certainly I have no very pleasant memories of my night there. On the train to Beirut, and in the city itself, we found French constantly spoken. Few stop to think of the hold the French have in Syria. In connection with the settlement of the troubles in Damascus in 1860, and with the building of the railway, Frenchmen, French capital, and French influence in many ways, are felt in

Syria. If Palestine and Syria should be divided among the nations of Europe, France would be sure to get a large slice in this vicinity. Indeed, a knowledge of the French tongue greatly facilitates travel in Syria. English is also spoken by those who have attended the schools at Beirut, and altogether one feels here almost as if he were in Europe; and the more he can so feel the better he will like this old and interesting city. There are here good shops, baths, photographers, and English, American, French, German, Austrian, and Italian physicians; there are also good dentists of different nationalities, besides bankers, consulates, and steamboat agents. Altogether the town is quite modern, but there is still room for improvement. It is the principal commercial town in Syria.

BITS OF EARLY HISTORY.—It was originally one of the two towns of the Canaanitish "Giblites," or dwellers on the mounts; these towns were Berytus and Biblus. Some derive the name of Berytus from its fountains, "beerot"; others from "berosh," a pine tree. The town is mentioned by the Greeks before the time of Alexander; but it is not named in connection with his campaigns. As the consequence of a rebellion against Antiochus VII., Berytus is said to have been entirely destroyed; but the Romans rebuilt it and named it Augusta Felix, in honor of the Emperor Augustus. Herod Agrippa, to please the Romans, built here baths and theatres, and organized gladiatorial combats. At Berytus,

as at Banias, Titus, after the destruction of Jerusalem, caused many Jews to fight against one another in the arena. In the third century Berytus with Tyre furnished silk fabrics to the Roman markets; and later this trade was extended to Greece and was continued for several centuries. This port of Syria was thus long famous for mulberry trees and for silk culture. As the result of terrible earthquakes Berytus long lay in ruins. In 635 it was easily captured by the Moslems; but in 1125 it was taken by the crusaders under Baldwin, and held by them until they were practically driven out of the land by their defeat at the battle of Hattin. For a time in the sixteenth century it was the residence of the Druse Prince Fakhr. He banished the Turks, favored the Christians, and promoted trade. Beirut was for a time his favorite residence. On his return from Italy he undertook to introduce many innovations. Finally both he and his son were taken by the Turks and slain. After the usual changes of dynasties and ownerships characteristic of Oriental towns, Beirut was in 1840 bombarded by the English and captured for the Turks.

**RAPID INCREASE OF POPULATION.**—After the massacre of so many Christians in Damascus in 1860, large numbers came to Beirut to make there a home. Since that date the prosperity of Beirut has been greater than ever before. There are not, however, many places in the city for the tourist to visit. The bazaars are almost as much

European as Oriental. The ancient tower near the harbor is interesting because of all that it suggests regarding past history. The town occupies a part of the southern side of St. George's Bay, and the interior of the bay offers partial protection to ships which are in the harbor against stormy weather. A very considerable amount of shipping enters Beirut, and when the new harbor, partially completed, is ready for occupation, Beirut will be the only safe landing-place along the coast. There are in the city official representatives of the Greek Orthodox Church, the United Greeks, the Maronites, and also the Roman churches. The plain on which the town stands is covered with luxuriant gardens, while behind it the mountains rise to a good height, and snow-covered summits are seen still beyond. The hills are cultivated to a considerable degree, and an air of prosperity marks the whole neighborhood, and the tints of the mountains contrasting with the blue sea make a charming picture. The heat is often great, but is usually tempered by the refreshing sea-breeze. It was a matter of regret to me that I visited here at a time when many of the Europeans, and especially our American missionaries, were absent, having gone to the heights of Lebanon for the summer.

As already intimated, the population of the town has grown rapidly since the slaughter of Christians in Damascus in 1860. Previous to that day the population was about twenty thousand; now it is more than one hundred thousand. The religious community is of varied

complexion, the Moslems, however, predominating. It is a great comfort to know that they are rapidly decreasing, while Christians are constantly increasing. The Christians have the reputation of being very industrious, enterprising, and prosperous, and in this respect have been compared to the ancient Phœnicians. Business houses are found in Beirut with branches in England, France, America, and other countries. These merchants are doing a good business, and are not surpassed in success by European merchants doing business in Syria. As already remarked, French is becoming the common language next to the Arabic, having in this respect taken the place formerly held by the Italian tongue. Romanist schools have done much to disseminate the knowledge of the French language in this part of Syria. The number of persons in Beirut who can neither read nor write is very small compared with most Syrian cities.

BENEFACTANT INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.  
—Christianity has shown its beneficent influence here by exalting woman in the social and intellectual scale. The church of Scotland has a Jewish mission in Beirut which was begun in 1864, and it does admirable work in educating the Jewish youth. St. George's Institute, under the direction of Scotch ladies, is rendering excellent service for Moslem and Druse girls. The British Syrian Mission began its work here with the special object of caring for the orphans whose parents were slain in the Damascus massacre.

There are also schools for the blind. Excellent Christian work is done by German mission organizations. The Kaiserswerth deaconesses conduct a large orphanage and boarding school, which school stands high as a college for young women. Reference has already been made to the French institutions belonging to various bodies in connection with the Roman Church. The Italian government is also making efforts to found schools for boys and girls; and the Greek Orthodox and Maronite churches, as well as Jewish synagogues, are conducting schools with vigor and success. To American Christians Beirut is especially interesting as the seat of the American mission which entered upon its work in Syria as early as 1821. From it have gone out Christian influences which have affected all Syria. Much has been done by distributing Bibles, organizing schools, and preaching the gospel, and the good work permeates the whole country. Among the American names deserving of great honor are Messrs. Parsons, Fiske, Goodell, King, and Bird; between the years 1819 and 1823 these gentlemen were the pioneers of missions in Syria. The places made vacant by the early death of Parsons and Fiske were filled by other noble Christian workers. These men then were and others to-day are striving to rekindle the light of Christianity in lands made sacred by the work of Christ and his apostles. The labors of Doctor Thomson, so widely known as the author of "The Land and the Book," as well as those of Drs. Vandyck,

Calhoun, Bliss, and Eli Smith, are worthy of all honor, as are also the names of the men in the field to-day. Distinguished scientific men have been connected with this mission. The university in Beirut has a theological seminary and a medical department, as well as courses in science and literature. Its buildings are excellent and well adapted to their various purposes. A four years' course of training is given to the pupils in the medical department, and those who receive degrees greatly surpass the native physicians. The girls' seminary is an important part of the work of the American mission. It is stated that the number of schools of this mission in 1889 was one hundred and forty-one, with over six thousand pupils of both sexes. It also publishes a weekly newspaper, and in a great variety of ways is laboring to diffuse a knowledge of Christianity in this dark country.

VISIT TO PALESTINE ENDED.—The time has now come when I must leave this land which I so longed to visit and through which I have passed rapidly, experiencing no little fatigue, but very much pleasure and profit. It is with mingled joy and sorrow that I now prepared to leave Palestine and Syria. God has marvelously preserved this land as a truthful witness to the teaching of Holy Scripture. I now part with my faithful Abdallah, who had been my devoted attendant and instructive guide from Joppa to Jerusalem, to Damascus, and to Beirut. He comes with me to the boat which lies in the

harbor waiting to carry me away from these historic shores, perhaps never to return. As I think of this land over which the baleful shadow of Islam falls, I can say with Doctor Fish, that the significant prophecy, perhaps but little understood by the Moslems, which so long was over the portal of their great mosque at Damascus, gives me cheer and hope as I leave this dark country: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom." May God speed the day when Christ shall reign in all parts of Palestine and throughout the whole world! I now turn away to sail to lands visited by apostles as the first preachers of Christ, and to lands and to islands made famous alike by the missionaries of the cross and the immortal poets of classic Greece; the isles which live in our memories as synonyms of art and literature, of song and story, the isles of which Lord Byron sang:

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!  
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,  
Where grew the arts of war and peace,—  
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!  
Eternal summer gilds them yet,  
But all, except their sun, is set.



