

# THE FIFTH GOSPEL

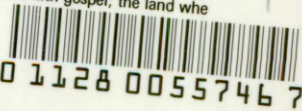
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J. M. P. OTTS, LL. D.

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# THE FIFTH GOSPEL



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THE LAND WHERE JESUS LIVED

REV. L. J. CHAMBERS, D. D.  
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“Not to be interested in the land and life of Jesus, is to be, I do not say irreligious, but unintelligent.”  
—Canon Liddon.

FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY,

NEW YORK:  
30 Union Square: East.

CHICAGO:  
148 and 150 Madison Street.

LONDON: W. G. WHEELER, 21 Warwick Lane.

This One



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## PREFACE

This is not a "book of travels," though it never could have been written if the author had not traveled in Palestine; for, it is the result of the careful reading of the Gospels in the lights and shades of the land where Jesus lived and taught. When so read it is found that the land of Jesus so harmonizes with the four written Gospels, and so unfolds and enlarges their meaning, that it forms around them a Fifth Gospel. Ofttimes the land brings into light many shades in the meaning, and many beauties in the expressions, of the inspired records which had not been before perceived. Sometimes an unexpected point in the topography of a place, or a feature in the manners of the people not before known, or a hitherto unperceived connection in the order of the events of the narrative, presents itself to view and causes some Gospel allusion, until then unnoticed or misunderstood, to spring into prominence and to flash a new light upon whole passages. Thus, to the observant traveler in the

land where Jesus lived the written Gospels become in form, and hence in substance to some extent, a new and enlarged revelation. In reading the Gospel of either one of the Evangelists by itself we find at places a want of finish or a shade of obscurity, which, when all four are read in connection and compared with one another, is completed and made clear; and just so, when the four Gospels are read together in the light of the land it is found that what seemed to be discrepancies in their respective narratives are real agreements; that their seeming differences are concealed harmonies, and their apparent contradictions strong confirmations. In this way one Gospel explains another, and the land illuminates the four written Gospels and brings into light their inner and deeper meaning. Thus the land is to the four, a Fifth Gospel.

We do not offer our book as, in any sense, a biography of Jesus or a geography of the land in which he lived, but as a number of broken sketches of certain prominent events in his life, and disconnected descriptions of certain localities in the land which throw a special light upon the passages brought under review and into discussion. Thus, it is the aim of the author, not



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by a complete description of the whole land but by a delineation of its characteristic features, to place under the eye of the reader a pen-picture, so far as his words can paint it, of the present general aspect of the land where Jesus lived, and to contrast that picture with what must have been its general appearance in his day, and to connect therewith careful studies of certain typical and exponential passages in his life, the true and inner meaning of which is unfolded and elucidated by the scenes and circumstances under which they occurred.

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# THE FIFTH GOSPEL

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## I

### THE FIFTH GOSPEL

#### THE LAND WHERE JESUS LIVED

The land where Jesus lived was known in the days of Abraham and Moses as Canaan or the Land of Promise, and is known in these modern days as Palestine or the Holy Land. Its boundaries have never been very clearly defined. It is true that Moses in Numbers xxxii:1-15, described its proposed limits with great precision, but it is not probable that the Land, as held by the children of Israel at any given time, ever corresponded accurately with these lines; and it is certain that the lines, as given by Moses, cannot now be traced because so many places are mentioned which cannot now be identified.

Under the kings the power of Israel was ex-

tended beyond the original boundaries over many distant districts; but, after their return from Babylon, the Jews never regained but a small portion of the territory once held by them. In the time of our Saviour their land was under the dominion of the Romans, and it comprised only that portion of their former possessions which lies between the Mediterranean and the Jordan, and extends from Dan, at the foot of Mount Hermon on the north, to Beersheba, in the borders of the great desert on the south, together with a narrow strip on the east side of the Jordan between the river and the mountains of Gilead and Moab. Within these narrow limits, with the exception of two short journeys, Jesus passed all his days on earth, and performed all his mighty works. The extreme length of this land, from north to south, is about one hundred and seventy-five miles, and the average width of it is not more than thirty-five miles. This is the land where Jesus lived; and, in all his journeys, he never traveled over as much as one-half of this very small territory. Every traveler in Palestine, no matter how well informed he may be in sacred geography, is surprised at the smallness of the sacred territory.

It is the greatest land on earth—the land of the Bible—the land where Jesus lived—the land that has influenced the whole world as no other land has ever done or ever will do;—and for this reason, it seems impossible for one whose eyes have not seen it and whose feet have not walked over it, to conceive how small is the space which this Holy Land covers; and, when one journeys over it for the first time, he never ceases to be surprised at finding the holy places so near to one another.

From many a mountain-top it can almost all be seen in the sweep of one look. Moses, who was not allowed to enter it, saw from the top of a lofty mountain on the east side of the Jordan, all the land of Canaan spread out before him like a great map on a table.

But this land, small as it is, is wonderfully diversified with seas and plains, mountains and valleys, hills and dales, lakes and rivers, and running rills; and it has every variety of climate and soil, and yields almost all kinds of fruits and flowers, and of vegetable and agricultural products. It is a mountainous country of a very peculiar character, being a huge mountainous mass thrown up to a great elevation, having on



the top of it other mountains and hills with valleys between them; as it were, mountains and valleys on the top of a broad mountain.

The mountains do not rise up straight out from the sea, but from a beautiful, slightly undulating plain that intervenes between them and the sea shore. This great mountainous elevation, running north and south, is cut in two near the middle by a low district called the Plain of Esdraelon, which runs clear across the country from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, in a southeasterly direction. Then again, this mountain-mass is split asunder from north to south by the deep ravine of the Jordan valley, which, in its whole length, dips down many hundred feet below the level of the great sea; and, as it advances southward, sinks lower and lower, until, in its southern extremity, it forms the deep bed in which the Dead Sea sleeps in its unbroken stillness and silence.

This little country was once very beautiful, and fertile in the extreme. Moses speaks of it as the finest country in the world—a land flowing with milk and honey and abounding in corn and wine. The Old Testament is full of references both to its beauty and fertility. Josephus informs us that Hecatæus, who had been brought

up with Alexander the Great, spoke of it as an excellent province that was in his day well peopled and very fruitful, bearing all kinds of good fruits. In the days of Christ the richness of the soil and the glory of its production were unabated, notwithstanding the people had fallen under the subjugation of the Roman yoke. Putting all descriptions together, we gather that the land in which Jesus lived, was in his day full of forest and fruit trees of great variety and beauty, and of fields of various crops whose cultivation was everywhere marvelous. The whole country must have then afforded one of the most striking figures of human industry which it is possible to imagine. No doubt the present bare limestone rocks and stony valleys were then entirely covered with plantations of figs, vines and olive trees. There are marks yet remaining which show that even the hills and mountain slopes, from base to utmost summit, were then entirely covered with gardens and vineyards, which were kept free from weeds, and in the highest state of cultivation. Even the sides of the now most barren mountains were then terraced and made fertile, and forced to add their tribute to the fruitfulness of the land. And

on a thousand hills and in hundreds of valleys were numerous herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats grazing and growing fat, adding to the wealth of the land their milk, their flesh and their fleece. But even at that day, there were exceptions to the general fertility and beauty of the land. There were desert places. In the wilderness of Judea, where John preached and Jesus was tempted, there was then, as now, a barren, bleak and dismal desert, a portion of the land upon which the curse of God had already fallen.

The land on the west side of the Jordan was then divided into the three provinces of Judea, Samaria and Galilee, and of these Galilee was the largest and richest, and, in all respects, the most important. It was by far the most populous, containing, according to the figures of Josephus, two hundred and forty cities, the least of which contained fifteen thousand inhabitants. In this province Jesus passed the greater part of his private life, and performed most of the mighty works of his public ministry. The home of his childhood, youth and early manhood was at Nazareth, in the bosom of the Galilean mountains; and though he was rejected by his neighbors among whom he grew up, and by them,



soon after beginning his public ministry, was cast out of their synagogue and driven away from the home of his childhood, he did not forsake Galilee, but made his residence, for the short period of his public life, in Capernaum, on the northwestern shore of the sea of Galilee. Hence he was called the Galilean. And as most, or all, of his apostles were also Galileans, either by birth or residence, his disciples, during his life-time, and his followers, for some time after his death, were also called Galileans. It is also noticeable that most of his parables and illustrations bear the mark of being greatly influenced by the peculiar features and customs of this region in which most of his life was spent.

In accordance with the above facts, Galilee was, strictly speaking, the land where Jesus lived; but as he made, during his public ministry, frequent excursions beyond this province, we include under this title all the regions through which he journeyed and in which he sojourned. He never failed to attend the annual feasts of the Jews at Jerusalem; and, in coming and going, sometimes he journeyed on the east side of the Jordan, and sometimes he passed through Samaria.

He was born at Bethlehem in Judea, where his parents were sojourning, under the requisition of a civil law, at the time of his birth; and he was crucified at Jerusalem in Judea, where he was sojourning, under the requirements of an ecclesiastical law, when he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies.

Though he was born and was crucified and buried in Judea, yet his home was always in Galilee; and he never left the soil of Galilee except as a traveler and sojourner; and in all his journeys, as he went about doing good, or was driven from place to place by his enemies, he never went as far as one hundred miles from the home of his infancy and the scenes of his childhood, except when his parents fled with him into Egypt from the bloody design of cruel Herod, who sought the young child to kill him. Though Jesus was, in the strictest sense of the word, the Man of Galilee, yet we include under our second title

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

The three most important cities in the history of Jesus are: Bethlehem, where he was

born; Nazareth, where he grew up; and Jerusalem, where he was crucified and buried.

Of these Jerusalem fills the most significant place. It was, in the day of Christ, as it had been from the days of David, the metropolis of the Jewish world—the center around which clustered the hopes and aspirations of all Jews throughout the earth. Jerusalem was then, under the rich and costly adornments of Herod the Great, at the very height of its glory. Pliny makes mention of it, and says it was not only the most famous city of Judea, but of all the eastern world. It was then, even more than in the days of Solomon, beautiful in its elevation, and the joy of the whole earth. All writers of that date who have mentioned its name, speak of its greatness and laud its glory. And though the Jews were then, as a people, under the humiliation of the Roman yoke, yet their city was still reigning, as a queen of glory on her mountain throne, over a yet rich and populous country that was still filled with fleecy flocks and fertile fields. From the days of its shining glory under King Solomon, to the days of its dazzling shame under the reign of King Herod, a period of ten centuries had elapsed, bringing with them

so many and so great changes that the face and general appearance of all things were so greatly altered that the tokens of its past glory could scarcely be traced amid the monuments of its then glorious shame. It was the same city, so much like and yet so much unlike what it had formerly been, that, as Dr. Edersheim says, "If the dust of ten centuries could have been wiped from the eyelids of those sleepers, and one of them who thronged Jerusalem in the heyday of its glory, during the reign of King Solomon, had returned to its streets, he would scarcely have recognized the once familiar city. Then, as now, a Jewish king reigned, who bore undivided rule over the whole land; then, as now, the city was filled with riches and adorned with palaces and architectural monuments; then, as now, Jerusalem was crowded with strangers from all lands. Solomon and Herod were each the last Jewish king over the Land of Promise; Solomon and Herod each built the Temple. But with the son of David began, and with the Idumæan ended, the kingdom; or, rather, having fulfilled its mission, it gave place to David's greater Son! The scepter departed from Judah to where the nations were to gather under its

sway. And the Temple which Solomon built was the first. In it the Shekinah dwelt visibly. The Temple which Herod reared was the last. The ruins of its burning, which the torch of the Roman had kindled, were never to be restored."

And now, since Herod's death, almost twice ten centuries have elapsed, bringing still greater changes to the glorious city and the great land over which it reigned as a queen in her beauty. If we leave out of the account, as Edersheim does, the short reign of King Agrippa, who can scarcely be called a king, then Herod was the last Jew that ever sat on a throne. He was the last king that the Jews have ever had. They will never again have a king until they accept Jesus of Nazareth, "The King of the Jews," whom they rejected and caused Pontius Pilate to crucify. Till then their land shall lie in ruins and shame. Since then ten times has their glorious city been destroyed, and their land has all the time been given over into the hands of strangers, to be trodden down by the feet of their enemies. They refused the crown to Jesus, and the crown has fallen from the head of this great city, and the light of their glorious land

has been turned into darkness; and now, only ruins remain where greatness and glory once reigned. The curse of God came down upon the city, and the doom of its destruction has spread over all the country.

The land where Jesus lived, once so great and so glorious, is now a destroyed land. Of most of the cities of the days of Christ nothing now remains except heaps of ruins. The forests that shaded the mountains and beautified the plains have all disappeared, and, in consequence, the rains of heaven have become irregular and scanty; and because the rains have ceased, many of the streams have dried up. And to-day only the mountains, now barren, and the valleys, now covered with stones, remain to mark and identify for us the land, once so rich and so beautiful, where Jesus lived. In general, all beauty has departed from the valleys, and all grandeur from the mountains. All Palestine is to-day one sad scene of ruins and desolation. All its former glory has passed away. The few favored spots that are still fertile and lovely serve to show how rich and beautiful the land once was; and, by their contrast with the poverty and degradation all around them, they show how deep and dis-

mal is the desolation into which the land is now fallen.

The land where Jesus lived, and in which his holy body was once buried, is to-day one immense cemetery, in which many successive nations lie buried, one upon the top of another. It is, in its general appearance, as gloomy and awe-inspiring as a neglected and ghost-haunted country graveyard in which most of the tombstones are broken down, their fragments lying around in scattered confusion, or in mouldering heaps, with their inscriptions so defaced that but few of them can now be deciphered.

In a land so changed, so fallen, and so degraded from its ancient glory, can we now trace the footprints of our Saviour, and follow him along the paths by which he journeyed through it? We can find his footprints all over the land, but we cannot so connect them as to follow him with certainty, and in order, along the very tracks by which he passed to and fro during his life on earth. We know, with the certainty that arises from scientific geography, the city in which he was born, the town in which he grew up, the fountain from which his mother drew her daily supplies of water, the hills among which

he must have wandered when a boy, the Jordan in which he was baptized, the wilderness in which he was tempted, the village where he was present at the marriage feast and performed his first miracle, the sites of some of the cities around the sea where most of his mighty works were done, the well of Jacob at the base of Gerizim where he revealed himself, as the Messiah of the Jews, to the woman of Samaria, the city of Nain where he raised the son of the widow to life, the village of Bethany where he sojourned with the sisters whose brother he called from the tomb, and some of the roads by which he traveled, at least the one that led from Jericho up to Jerusalem by Bethany, and over the Mount of Olives into the city where he was crucified. We can stand on Olivet at the point where the city and the site of the Temple burst into full view, and know that he must have stood there when he beheld the city and the Temple in all their glory; and, weeping over them, pronounced against them the sentence of their doom, which, coming in disaster upon all the land, has so changed its general appearance, that what now remains is only the fossilized remnants of a life and glory that have passed away. And



yet, the land where Jesus lived, is, even in its present destroyed and decayed condition, the Fifth Gospel, as M. Renan has happily styled it. It so unfolds and vivifies the life revealed in the four written Gospels that it led even him to say: "I have traveled through the evangelical province in every direction; I have visited Jerusalem, Hebron and Samaria; scarcely any locality important in the history of Jesus has escaped me. All this history which, at a distance, seems floating in the clouds of an unreal world, assumed a body, a solidity which astonished me. The striking accord of the text and the places, the wonderful harmony of the evangelical ideal with the landscape which served as its setting, were to me as a revelation. I had before my eyes a fifth gospel, torn but still legible, and thenceforth, through the narrations of Matthew and Mark, instead of an abstract being, which one would say had never existed, I saw a wonderful human form live and move."

It was under this influence that he wrote his "Life of Jesus," that remarkable book which is a bouquet of beauties and falsities bound together with golden threads of truth and twisted cords of error.

We here gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to M. Renan for the very suggestive title which we have given to our book; but, at the same time, we feel constrained to add, that, if he had seen in the written Gospels the light of divine inspiration, he would have found in their great Character more than a "human form" living and moving in the activities of a mortal life; he would have seen a divine Person whose life on earth is inexplicable on any other hypothesis than that it was, as the written Gospels declare, higher than the loftiest human life. The land where Jesus lived is not a gospel to reveal his divine Life, but the divine light of his Life, as revealed in the written Gospels, is tempered to our mortal eyes when we read them in the shades of that land, so that we can see in our glorious Saviour from heaven, our great Brother man on earth.

We have three written Gospels—Mark's, Matthew's and Luke's—called the synoptical Gospels because they almost uniformly narrate the same events. These three were certainly published within fifty years after the death of Jesus. Added to these we have a fourth Gospel, which was published much later, the chief object of

which seems to be to supply important events omitted in the other three, which are necessary to a full comprehension of the nature and end of Christ's life on earth. The three synoptical Gospels, mainly, though not exclusively, narrate the events of Christ's ministry in Galilee, while the fourth Gospel is almost wholly occupied with his ministry in Judea, one-third of it being a narration of the events and circumstances of his betrayal, trial, death and resurrection at Jerusalem.

The land where Jesus lived stands to these four Gospels as a Fifth Gospel, not as giving an additional revelation of the life of Jesus, but as a witness to the truth of the revelation of Jesus Christ which they give. The land shows that the evangelists who never assumed to be critics, were simple, artless and faithful chroniclers of events that are so strikingly in accord with the places mentioned, and the customs referred to, that they bear on their very face the unquestionable stamp of veracity and historic truth.

In the written Gospels, features of the common daily life of the people are constantly alluded to which remain in that land unchanged to the present day. The land still shows that the

words which the evangelists put in the mouths of the various personages, their homely details of domestic and social life, their references to agricultural and pastoral pursuits, their passing allusions to the peculiar customs of the people, are all in accord with the modes of thought, forms of belief, and habits of living which still remain unchanged, or have left their unmistakable imprints on what remains. The four Gospels were certainly written by those who knew the geography and topography of the land and the peculiarities of the people who lived in it in the first century.

But the Fifth Gospel, like the other four, is written in what is for us to-day a dead language; and, in order to acquire and to appreciate its full significance, we must learn to read it in the original. The modern traveler in the land of the Gospels must learn how to read the past under the surface of the present; otherwise, his faith will be puzzled, if not staggered, by the external appearance of many things. It will not be easy for him to realize that the present poverty-stricken and desolate land could have ever been "a land flowing with milk and honey;" or how such a barren and almost desert-like region

could have supported the vast population that is said to have crowded it in the days of Christ, and for long periods before his day. But, sojourning in the land, he will find, in the early spring, a short, but very nutritious, grass springing up everywhere, covering the valleys and climbing up the mountain-sides to their very tops, and that the cows and sheep and goats, feeding on this grass, soon grow fat, and that their distended udders drip all day long the white milk on the green grass on which they graze. He will also see all over the land bright flowers in multitudinous numbers shooting up among the grass, so innumerable that it will seem there is a bloom for every blade of grass; and in many places he will hear the ceaseless hum of busy bees, and, looking, will find a bee for almost every bloom, gathering honey to store away in the clefts of the rocks. He will also discover, by observing the natives at their meals, that it requires a far less food-supply to support a large oriental population than that which would be necessary for the same number of people among ourselves. In their warm climate they seldom eat flesh, and never as much food of any kind as we are accustomed to use. Add to all

this that the present bare and bleak surface is due to the fact that the lands have been overrun and desolated by almost countless wars, and have been left without care or cultivation for almost two thousand years. All this time the rains of centuries upon centuries have been washing away the soil; and yet when one digs beneath the dead surface a rich subsoil is found, capable of producing a luxuriant yield.

When one becomes conversant with the foregoing facts he finds signs, in the present all-wide desolations of the land, that its fertility and bounty in the past ages must have been such as sacred and secular writers have described.

At first one's hopes are disappointed, and his faith may be troubled, at finding that so very few of the particular localities connected with the life of Jesus can be identified with any certainty whatever. His judgment will be offended at the multitude of spurious sites of holy places that priestcraft and superstition have invented, and he will turn away from them in disgust. This may incline him at first to doubt the genuine; but, as he journeys on, reading the Gospels and surveying the land, he finds the mountains and lakes, and rivers and rills, and hills and

valleys, and towns and villages, all in their places, relatively located, and running in the courses, just as described in the casual allusions of the sacred pages.

Viewing the land, he will not fail to perceive that great changes have come over it as the centuries have gone by—changes made by the sword, fire, famine and waste of time; but, viewing the changes, he will also perceive that they are just such as the written Gospels had predicted, and that they came in the way in which their coming was foretold, and they have left standing amid their ruins monuments that prove the truth of the Gospels, both in their descriptions and predictions. Thus the well-informed and observant traveler in the land of the Bible will find more to confirm its truth and to unfold its meaning, while journeying through the land where Jesus lived, than he could ever gather from whole acres of printed matter, on the abstract question of the evidences of Christianity. He will find that the written Gospels fit into the land just as a picture fits into its frame, and that the land is a frame into which no other picture can be made to fit. Thus the land where Jesus lived is the Fifth Gospel, because it is so related

to the four written Gospels that it constitutes a great frame of concurrent circumstances in which the unique picture of the life of Jesus, formed as a mosaic by blending the facts and allusions of the four written Gospels together, is enframed in perfect order and harmonious consistency. This fact has more and more deeply impressed itself upon our mind, from the moment we first caught sight of the land to the present day.

We sailed from Egypt to Palestine over the great sea; and our ship came to anchor in the port of old Joppa on a Sabbath morning, just as the day was breaking. The sea was calm, the sky cloudless, and the morning bright and beautiful. I regarded it as a very happy coincidence that I should catch my first sight of the land of the Son of Man in the early dawn of a bright and glorious Sabbath morning; and this coincidence was all the more impressive because it was the morning of Easter Sunday. With prayer in my heart, and praise on my lips, I hastened on deck to view the shores of the land in which our blessed Saviour had condescended to live.

As I stood, worshipful and wondering, trying to realize that I was, indeed, looking at the very land over whose holy fields his blessed



feet had walked, the first rays of the Easter sun beamed out from behind the sacred mountains; and soon the sun itself was seen, rising slowly and majestically over the mountain tops, gilding them with a crown of burning gold, and shooting out long golden bars of dancing light over the leaping and laughing waters of the sea. It was a vision of brightness and beauty which can neither be described nor forgotten, and which will always live in memory like a pleasant dream that can never be fully told.

What a fit symbol was the sun of that bright Easter morning—rising over the land where Jesus lived, dispelling the darkness of night from hill and dale, clothing the mountains in robes of beauty, and filling the earth and flooding the sea with its glorious light—of the Sun of Righteousness, which arose, in the morning of the Christian era, out from among those same sacred hills, and shone out over those same holy fields; and which, rising higher as the centuries have unrolled, is now shining away the darkness of a benighted world, and which shall continue to rise higher and to shine brighter, through all the coming ages, until the saving beams of his life-giving light shall fall upon all the nations of

earth, and the whole world shall be filled and flooded with the glory of his salvation.

## II

## BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA

## WHERE HE WAS BORN

Bethlehem of Judea, the city of David, where our Saviour was born, is located on the mountain tops, about five miles south from Jerusalem. Come now, as the shepherds said to one another when the angel songs had hushed and the angels had disappeared from their sight, let us go to Bethlehem and see the place where this great thing came to pass which the Lord has made known to us, and on which our hope of salvation depends. As one approaches the city, rising over the hills by which it is surrounded, it presents a very neat and attractive appearance. It looks clean, and that gives it a marked contrast to almost every other town in this dirty and degraded land. The houses are all white-washed, and rise one above another, in tiers of streets winding around the slopes of the hills. Viewed from outside the walls, the courses of

the streets cannot be traced except by the different heights of the tops of the buildings. There is no architectural style or variety in the houses; they are all square or oblong buildings, looking at a distance like so many huge dry-goods boxes placed along side of each other, or piled on the top of one another. There are no towers, nor spires, nor chimneys, rising above the flat roofs, nor are there any pointed gables to break the monotony of the general appearance. Most of the windows look like so many square holes cut out in the square sides of square boxes; though, here and there, a few arched doors are seen, and are all the more noticeable by reason of their contrast with the general square appearance of all things around them. The beauty of the little city, now inhabited mostly by Christianized Jews, is due solely to its clean and neat appearance, and its picturesque surroundings of hills and valleys and fruitful fields.

Our approach to the gate by which we enter, is through well cultivated gardens of vegetables and flowers, terraced vineyards, dusty green olive groves, and orchards of figs and plums. Looking around, we see luxuriant fields of wheat and barley in the valleys, while the slopes of the

hills are covered with herds of cows, troops of asses and flocks of white sheep and black goats, with camels scattered among them, all grazing peacefully on the deep, dark green and flower-decorated grass.

All this, and something else, I know not what, invests this city and its environs with a peculiar and irresistible charm. One cannot help exclaiming, "How beautiful, how lovely this scene, and how would I love to linger here, taking in the present and thinking over the past!"

And this is Bethlehem of Judea where our Saviour was born! This is the city of David in which was born he who was at once David's son and David's Lord! In this city, perched in its whiteness and beauty on the mountain-top, was born Jesus, the perfect man—the God-man, who is at the same time the Brother of all men and the Lord of all the heavenly hosts. In this city there was once folded in its mother's arms a Babe who was the Messiah of the Jews, and who is the Saviour of the world. Born into our world, he lived with us, and died for us, on earth; but now he lives forever, and reigns on the throne of heaven.

So many hills arising, green and gay,  
 On earth's large round, and that one hill to say:  
 "I was his bearing-place!" On earth's wide breast  
 So many maids! And she—of all most blest—  
 Heavily mounting Bethlehem, to be  
 His mother! Holy maid of Galilee!  
 Hill with the olives, and the little town!  
 If rivers from their crystal founts flow down,  
 If 'twas the dawn which did day's gold unbar,  
 Ye were the beginnings of the best we are,  
 The most we see, the highest we know,  
 The lifting heavenward of man's life below.  
 Therefore, though better lips ye shall not lack,  
 Suffer if one of modern mood steals back,  
 Weary and wayworn, from the desert road  
 Of barren thought; from hope's Dead Sea, which glowed  
 With love's fair mirage; from the poet's haunt,  
 The scholar's lamp, the statesman's scheme, the vaunt,  
 The failure, of all fond philosophies—  
 Back unto thee, back to thy olive trees,  
 Thy people, and thy story, and thy Son,  
 Mary of Nazareth! So long ago,  
 Bearing us him who made our Christendom,  
 And came to save the earth, from heaven, his home.

On entering the city the streets are found to be irregular, narrow, winding, and broken, in places, by sudden and steep ascents and descents. Viewed from within, the city of David does not make as favorable an impression upon the visitor as the sight of it does when viewed from the mountains without. Few things in Palestine, in an æsthetic point of view, can bear close inspection. The houses, shops, and streets of Bethlehem are, however, much cleaner, neater, and more attractive than those of any other town in all this land. The inhabitants number

about five thousand, most of whom are converted Jews, belonging in about equal numbers to the Latin, Greek, and Armenian churches, with a few Protestants mixed in with them. Bethlehem to-day is a Judeo-Christian town, and is, for Palestine, in quite a prosperous condition.

We found a brisk trade going on in the shops, along the street, and in the large open space in front of the Latin convent. There were many swarthy Bedouins from the plains of the Jordan and the regions of the Dead Sea mingled in with the traders. I could not tell whether they were present as buyers or sellers, but I suppose that they were there in both capacities. The scene was thoroughly oriental, and very picturesque, and the street was noisy in the extreme with the loud talking of the traders, who buy and sell as if they were in an angry and fierce quarrel all the time.

In the shops quite an extensive trade is carried on with pilgrims and tourists, in objects of olive wood, mother of pearl, coral, and stinkstone from the Dead Sea. These objects are carved principally in crosses, rosaries, images of saints, and in engravings of the nativity, of the

visit of the Magi, and of the babe in the manger. Quite a number of other objects are also made of these materials, such as paper-knives, spoons, card-cases, and the like. There is also quite a trade in pressed flowers, many of which are arranged into beautiful pictures of scenes in the life of our Saviour. As the flowers that grow in profusion around Bethlehem retain, when pressed, their bright and brilliant colors of red, purple, yellow, and deep blue, many very effective pictures are made of them. They are really objects of great beauty.

At Bethlehem I was struck with the strong and well-developed forms of the men, and with the stately and handsome forms, graceful movements, and modest and lovely faces of the women. Some of the women are really beautiful. There is an indescribable something in their soft eyes and sweet faces, in their easy and graceful movements, and in their modest demeanor, that suggests the idea of culture, of refinement, and of piety. The Jew is a Jew always, and everywhere, and is marked with unmistakable characteristics; but within the limits of the type there are remarkable shades of differences. For instance, in Egypt, the Jews, and especially the



women, are noticeable for their fair hair, blue eyes and white skin, just the opposite of the characteristics by which they are generally distinguished in Europe and America. Here in Bethlehem, the features are Jewish, and while the skin is dark, it has a clearness and transparency through which the rich, red blood shows itself, painting the cheeks of the young with great beauty, and giving to even the old an appearance of vigor and freshness which is quite attractive.

In the women of Bethlehem, there is a certain softness and tenderness in the expression of the eyes which I know not how to describe, but which I know is peculiarly attractive. It suggests the idea of delicacy and purity of life, and wins affection, and commands respect. I remember that these are the daughters of Judah, and that he was the son of Leah, the "tender-eyed" daughter of Laban. This caused me to examine the Hebrew word translated in our version "tender-eyed," and I found, just the opposite to the generally entertained idea, that it means soft or beautiful eyes, and not eyes that are weak and squinting in the light. It designates the one mark of peculiar beauty that be-

longed to Leah, while Rachel had a fine figure and a beautiful face. The daughters of Judah have inherited from their father, and from the large admixture of foreign blood in their tribe, comely shapes and beautiful faces, as well as soft and winsome eyes from their mother Leah. There was more foreign blood mixed in with this tribe than with any other one of the twelve. We know that Judah himself married a foreign wife—Shuah, the daughter of Hirah, the Adullamite. Boaz was the son of Rahab, the woman of Jericho, and he also married Ruth, the beautiful Moabites. We know, also, that the Jebusites were not driven out till after the elevation of David to the throne, and it is likely that during the time that they dwelt among the tribe of Judah there was more or less of intermarriage with them. At all events, however it may be accounted for, the Jewish Christian maidens and matrons of Bethlehem, at the present day, are both “tender-eyed” and “beautiful, and well-favored.” Mary, the mother of our Lord, the most blessed of all women, was a daughter of the tribe of Judah; and we love to fancy her as of all women the most beautiful, as well as the most highly favored. Surely, even to the pres-

ent day, the daughters of Judah are most highly favored among the daughters of men.

Judah and his tribe are the most highly favored of all the families of the human race. He has given his name—Yehudee, hence Jews—to God's chosen and peculiar people; from him descended David and Solomon, the greatest and the most glorious of the kings of Israel; and, above all, of his tribe and in his city was born Jesus, the Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world—the Seed promised in the Abrahamic covenant in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Surely this city is rightly named—Bethlehem, the House of Bread—for out of it hath come the bread of life, he who said of himself: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Bethlehem is not only the house of bread, standing in the midst of the fruitful fields of Ephrath, where the rich harvests of Boaz grew, in which Ruth, the beautiful, gleaned; it is also the home of shepherds, and has been so from David's day down to the present. Around

Bethlehem, David watched his father's flocks, just as many a ruddy lad this day is doing; and just outside the east gate there, on that beautiful plain in this same country, where shepherds still watch their flocks, there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night, when, lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. And, when they were sore afraid, the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And it was up that sloping hill they entered the city and found the infant Saviour in the manger with his mother. It was out of this city that came the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, who again said of himself: "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I am that good Shepherd, and I know my sheep and they know me, just as I know my Father and as my Father knows me: and I lay down my life for my sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

How the heart is moved when one realizes that he is standing in the midst of the place where occurred these events, the sublimest of all realities in the history of our world!

Of course, the first and greatest object of interest to every one who visits Bethlehem is that most sacred spot of all places on earth, the place of the nativity of our Saviour. The place is marked by a huge pile of buildings, looking very much like a military fortress, which is called the Convent of the Nativity. It consists of the Church of St. Mary, and three huge convents—Latin, Greek and Armenian—piled around it. It looks very Christian-like and amiable to see the three convents of those opposing sects, whose differences are as huge as their great edifices, jammed up against one another around the birth-place of their common Saviour; but one must not go inside there to “behold, how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” He will find Mohammedan soldiers with guns and bayonets, smoking nasty nargileh pipes, and mingling foul tobacco odors with the fragrance of the holy incense, encamped in the Convent of the Holy Nativity to keep those holy brethren from cutting one another’s throats.

But, taking each convent separately, I found the holy brethren gentle, polite and quite accommodating in showing me all that there is to be seen, of which there is both a great quantity and a great variety.

This was, perhaps, in some measure due to the fact that I was somewhat liberal in my distribution of backshish in order to induce them to put everything on exhibition. I dined with the Franciscan monks in the Latin monastery, and found them quite companionable, and even disposed to be jovial; but I was not particularly impressed with the learning or piety of any of them.

But do we find here, in truth, the spot where our Saviour was born? I believe we do; and the following are the links in the argument that convinces me:

The narrative of Luke connects our Saviour's birth with the inn at Bethlehem. There was at Bethlehem, from the days of David, if not from the days of Boaz, a very important inn or caravansary, that has a very significant and thrilling history. It is spoken of in the days of the captivity by Jeremiah as the inn of Chimham, and as then being a historical place that was well

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known (Jeremiah xli: 17.) The Hebrew word *geruth*, translated in King James' version, habitation, means an inn, or lodging-place. It is the word that was used to designate a khan, or caravansary.

Now, who was this Chimham? And how did he become the owner of the inn at Bethlehem? In II Samuel xvii: 27 and 28, and xix: 31-40, we learn who he was. He was the son of old Barzillai, the Gileadite of Rogelim, one of three important personages living on the east side of the Jordan, who supplied David and his men with food when he was driven from his throne and home by his wicked and rebellious son Absalom. On the death of Absalom, when David was returning to Jerusalem, he asked old Barzillai to go and live with him as a member of his household the balance of his days. To this noble and royal invitation, the grand old Gileadite replied: "I am too old, and am nearly blind; I could not enjoy the honor, nor can I be of any great use to the king, but there is my son Chimham, he has his life before him, let the king bestow upon him the honors and favors designed for me." To this King David gladly consented, and Chimham returned with him to Jerusalem, and

was adopted into his family as a member of his household. He seems to have been treated with peculiar favor, for David commended him in special terms to his son Solomon, and requested that he should be of "those that eat at his table." This implies that he was adopted into the king's family, like Mephibosheth, as one of the king's sons. This is the highest honor that a king can confer upon a subject. Chimham, the Gileadite, was both an adopted subject and an adopted son. This is the honor that Christ will confer on every one who is adopted into his kingdom and family: "That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom."

It is probable that Chimham was adopted to take the place and the inheritance of Absalom, who lost his life in his rebellion against his father, in resisting which old Barzillai rendered such timely and valuable assistance. At all events, he obtained an inheritance among the children of David, and thus came into possession of the hereditary inn at Bethlehem, David's city. In no other way can we understand how this Gileadite could have become a land-owner at Bethlehem. On this point, the Rev. Samuel Manning, LL. D., a high authority on the laws and customs of the Jews, thus speaks:



“It is, and always has been, the custom throughout the East, for places to be provided for travelers—one in each village—where they might halt for the night. They are generally at distances of six or seven miles, so as to allow of an easy day’s march from one to another. Bethlehem thus formed the first stage from Jerusalem on the way to Egypt. The duty and honor of providing and maintaining these khans devolved upon the sheik, or head man of the village, who was empowered to levy a tax upon the villagers for their support. Sometimes only a space of ground was staked out and fenced with thorns, so as to furnish protection against thieves and wild beasts. But often a wealthy sheik would erect a substantial edifice, either defraying the cost himself or seeking aid in the work from the inhabitants. It seems almost certain, therefore, that Chimham either became sheik of Bethlehem, or else that, out of gratitude to his benefactor, he built a khan on a portion of the land he received from the king. Of these, the former is the more probable, and more in accordance with the custom of the country. One thing, however, seems clear, that, long after the time of David, ‘the inn’ at

Bethlehem was well-known as the khan of Chimham, and that it stood on land which had descended by inheritance from Boaz to Jesse, to David, and to David's adopted son."

Now the inn of Chimham, at Bethlehem, as we have already seen, was well known to the Jews long after the days of David; and Dr. Manning, and others of high authority, inform us that when once the khan of a village has been established, its site is seldom changed. It becomes a public institution of the town, like the court-house with us, and it continues to occupy the same spot from generation to generation.

It is reasonable to suppose, or, rather, the supposition is unavoidable, that the khan of Chimham was just like the caravansaries common in the East to-day, and which have been common there from time immemorial; only, perhaps, as it was near Jerusalem, and as it descended from the royal family of David, it was larger and better provided with the means of accommodation than the average run of village inns. It was situated just outside the eastern gate of the old city, and consisted of a considerable space of ground enclosed with a hedge of thorns and cactuses, or with a stone wall. Within this

enclosure, or on the wall, there was a two story building erected, the upper story of which was divided into two or more large bare rooms, one of which was designed as an apartment for women. These upper rooms were designed for the accommodation of the better class of travelers who, in every case, furnished their own bedding.

In the lower story of the building, and around the walls of the enclosure, were stables and stalls for the beasts of the travelers. The goods of the travelers, many of whom would be merchants with their bales of merchandise, would be piled in the center of the enclosure; and the servants and the poorer class of travelers would sleep in the open air, or in the stables, or in tents, around these piles of goods of various kinds.

Almost all Palestine is a limestone country, and caverns and grottoes are common almost everywhere, and especially at and around Bethlehem. It is almost certain that there were such caves, used as stables, within the khan at Bethlehem. On this point, however, we will let Dr. Thompson, of the "The Land and the Book," speak with all the right of the authority of his name. He says:

"Many inns or khans have caverns of greater or

less extent below them, where cattle and flocks are sheltered, and stone mangers, like those in stables, are built along the walls. Nor is there anything incredible, or even remarkable, in the statement that the infant Jesus was 'laid in a manger.' Throughout this country, especially in the mountain villages, a part of the one large room in which the native farmer resides is often fitted up with mangers for the cattle; the rest of the room, some two or three feet higher, is arranged for the accommodation of the family. The mangers are built along the elevated platform, and are generally constructed of small stones and mortar, in the shape of a shallow box or trough. Cleaned out and whitewashed, as they often are in the summer, when not required for the animals, they would make suitable cribs in which to lay little babies. *Indeed, our own children have slept in them* in the rude summer retreats on Lebanon. In such a manger the infant Redeemer may have been laid. On this theory the entire narrative is consistent and natural."

To this let me add, when the stable is a natural cavern, as many are, the manger is a small trough hewn out in the natural rock of the wall.

Such a one, it seems was the manger at Bethlehem in which the infant Jesus was cradled.

It remains, now, to connect the birth of our Saviour with this inn of Chimham at Bethlehem, and to locate it in a cavern within that inn, which was used as a stable, and in which there was a manger. Can this be done? Let us see.

“And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed, and all went to be assessed for this taxation, every one to his own city. And Joseph, who was of the house and lineage of David, went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be assessed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.” This is why Mary was at Bethlehem with her espoused husband when she brought forth her first-born son, whom she wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

This does not comport with the idea so prevalent at the present day, that the parents of our Saviour were, at the time of his birth, in stringent and pinching poverty. People who have

no property are not troubled with tax assessors and tax collectors. The fact that they were there for the governmental purpose of being enrolled and assessed for their taxes, disproves the assumed impecuniosity of the holy family. They must have owned property that was subject to taxation under the Roman law.

If the cause of their going to Bethlehem had been simply that Joseph might be enrolled for a poll tax, then it would not have been necessary for Mary to have gone with him. There must have been an imperative demand for her presence also; else, surely, Joseph would not have brought her, in the delicate and critical circumstances of her life, so far from her home. She must have possessed a property in her own name and it must have been an inherited property. The Greek (*apographsasthai sun Mariam*) means that both Joseph and Mary were enrolled. This registration was under the Roman law, which required women to be enrolled only when they held a separate property in their own names. The property owned by Mary was possessed and held in accordance with the Jewish law. By this law a daughter, when there was no son in the family, inherited her

father's estate and held it as a separate property after her marriage.

This also explains the difficulty in the two tables of the genealogy of Jesus, in regard to which Dr. Kurtz says: "Joseph's father, according to Luke, is Heli, but according to Matthew it is Jacob. Among the many attempts to explain this apparent contradiction, none seems more successful than the one which produces the result that Joseph became the son of Heli by his marriage with Mary. If Mary was a daughter capable of inheriting, that is, the heiress of a family estate in consequence of having no brother (Num. xxvii:8), then she could not marry except in her own tribe (Num. xxxvi: 4-10); and when she did marry, her husband's name would take the place in genealogy which really belonged to her own; therefore, in Luke's genealogy, Joseph appears as the son of Heli, who was really Mary's father."

According to this view all difficulties dissolve and disappear. Both Joseph and Mary were of the house and lineage of David. Both belonged to the same tribe. Mary inherited property in her own name, and when Joseph married her his name had by law to be substituted for hers in

the genealogy of her family. This explains the necessity of Mary's personal presence at Bethlehem.

On their arrival at Bethlehem, they would naturally go to the inn of Chimham for accommodation. The accommodations they required would be a stable and stall for their asses in the lower part of the khan, or somewhere within the enclosure, and an apartment in the upper story of the inn where they could spread down their bedding and sleep. They must have had at least two asses with them, one on which Mary rode, and another which bore their luggage, bedding and provisions for the journey. It is likely that Joseph walked, as was the usual custom of the country, and as Jesus did when he went about preaching his gospel and healing all manner of diseases. They may have had a servant with them; who knows? It seems that Joseph found a grotto within the enclosure, which was used as a stable, and in which he stabled and fed his beasts. Leaving Mary in the stable with their beasts, and with the servant if they had one along, Joseph went into the upper story to seek a suitable place in what, in a narrow sense of the word, was called the inn of the caravansary,



where he might prepare a sleeping place for himself and wife for the night. But there was no room for them in the inn. They were not crowded out because they were too poor to pay for the accommodations desired, but simply because the place was so crowded that there was no room for them. And so, returning with this information, he and Mary made the best arrangement they could, and laid down in the stable to sleep by the side of their beasts.

That was no uncommon occurrence in that land in their day, nor has it yet become an uncommon occurrence in that land as many a way-faring man, and every muleteer, will testify. I have seen men in my own camp lying down, night after night, to sleep by the side of their beasts. Of course it was exceedingly inconvenient and uncomfortable. But there was an unusual throng of strangers crowding the khan that night, brought there, as were Joseph and Mary, to be enrolled for taxation under the imperial decree which none dared to disobey. Joseph had done all he could do. He sought for better quarters, but neither money nor entreaty could at that time provide a better shelter. Love was doing all that love could do.

But God was preparing for them and all the world a great and glorious surprise. That night, in the city of David, in that humblest apartment in the royal inn which had descended by inheritance from Boaz to Jesse, from Jesse to David, from David to Chimham, his adopted son, was born David's greatest son, the Saviour of the world. Thus and there was fulfilled the prophecy of Micah: "But thou, Bethlehem-Ephrath, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Then the mother, all trembling, wondering and worshiping, "wrapped the babe in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger" in which her own patient beast had eaten its nightly allowance. Then Mary and Joseph sat down in awe and reverence to watch and pray and praise.

But soon the silence without was broken. Over there on the plain the shepherds, watching their sheep, had seen the glory of the Lord shining out from heaven, and heard the angelic song bursting through the skies, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." And "they came with haste, and found

Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." And when they had seen the babe, they aroused, with their shouts and songs, all the sleepers in that inn that night, and all the inhabitants of that city which was thus crowned with the greatest glory that was ever given to a city on earth. "And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds."

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen. But were Mary and the babe with Joseph left in the cave-stable where the Saviour had been born? We would love to think of the mother and the babe remaining in the cave for a few days, but it does not seem that such was the case. For when the Wise Men came from the East, of whom Matthew tells, bringing their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh, to pay their homage to the "Desire of all nations," they did not find the mother and child in the stable, but *in the house*. What house? It was a *particular* house in Bethlehem. It seems that as soon as it was known in the city that this wonderful babe had been born in a stable in the inn, a hospitable home was opened to receive the

holy family; and perhaps that very night, at all events early the next day, Mary and the child were removed to a comfortable home where every want was supplied until the forty days of her purification were passed.

We go back to the cave-stable. Can it now be found? Is the proof conclusive? We descend into the crypt of the church, and come to the chapel of the Nativity, the most sacred spot on earth. It is perpetually lighted by thirty-two lamps. It is thirteen and a half yards long by four wide and ten feet in height. The pavement is of marble, and the walls, which are of masonry, are lined with marble. Under the altar in the recess a silver star is let into the floor with the inscription: "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.*" Around the recess, burn, year in and year out and from generation to generation, fifteen lamps, of which six belong to the Greeks, five to the Armenians, and four to the Latins.

Is this, indeed, the very spot where our Saviour was born? I think it is, beyond a reasonable doubt. But it is not now as it was when Jesus was born there. The finger of piety has touched it, and the hand of superstition has deformed it,

and all in the vain attempt to adorn it. Oh, I wish that they had left it just as it was when Mary left it with the infant Saviour in her arms! But, changed as it is, I believe it to be the very spot where my Saviour was born. The chain of evidence seems to be unbroken.

Luke connects the birth of Jesus with the Inn of Chimham. In that khan there were, beyond doubt, caves that were used as stables. The holy family was forced into one of these stables because there was no room for them in the apartments used for the accommodation of travelers. A tradition that goes back nearly to the days of the apostles, designates this cave as the place of the great event. It was a shrine of Christian pilgrimage in the very earliest days of Christianity. Before the days of Hadrian there was a Christian church erected over it, which that wicked emperor, to show despite to the Christians, caused to be thrown down; and then, because the Christians, in the face of his threats and penalties, would continue to visit and revere the spot, he desecrated it by having erected over it a temple to Adonis. And then, when the Empire was Christianized, one of the first great works of Constantine in the Holy Land,

was to have the temple of Adonis thrown down and a handsome basilica, the present Church of the Nativity, erected over the sacred spot. That church stands to-day, and is the oldest and the most venerable church on the whole earth.

Add to all this, Jerome, one of the most learned and venerable of the early fathers of the church, a native of Syria and familiar with all the customs and traditions of the country, was so thoroughly convinced that this cave was the veritable spot where the Saviour was born, that he went to Bethlehem and took up his abode in an adjacent cave, which was also, doubtless, a stable in the inn of Chimham, and lived in the cave until he translated the whole of the Bible into the Latin tongue, which translation is the famous Vulgate, which was the Bible of all Christianity, as King James' version is with us, until the days of Luther. Jerome said, in explanation of his making the cave at Bethlehem his abode while translating the Bible, that it was his desire that the written word should go forth to the world from a cave near to the one in which the eternal Word had become incarnate. Summing up the evidence in favor of the authenticity of this most holy site, I here give the words

of Dean Stanley, who says, "After all that has been, or can be said against it, there remains the remarkable fact that the spot was revered by Christians as the birthplace of Christ, two centuries before the conversion of the Roman empire—before that burst of local religion, which is commonly ascribed to the visit of Helena." And Canon Farrar says, "This is indeed the ancient and constant tradition of both the Eastern and the Western churches, and it is one of the few to which we may attach a reasonable probability." And Dr. Edersheim says, "It may be—nay, it seems likely—that this, to which the most venerable tradition points, was the sacred spot of the world's greatest event."

Let no one be prejudiced against this conclusion, because the spot is now held as a shrine of Roman Catholic devotion; it was a shrine of Christian veneration whole centuries before the Roman Catholic Church came into existence.

My main object in visiting the Church of St. Mary was, of course, to see the chapel of the Nativity; but while there I wandered around and through the venerable building to see whatever else I might find there to see. I found many things that I wish I had not found; that is, I

wish that they had not been there to be found.

Priestcraft, led by ignorance and guided by superstition, has crowded around the birth spot of our Saviour many absurd traditions and impossible traditional sites. For example, we are asked to believe that twenty thousand children perished in the slaughter of the innocents under Herod's cruel decree, and that they are all buried in the same grave in the crypt of the church, over which an altar, called the Altar of the Holy Innocents, has been erected. We are also shown an altar, called the Altar of the Adoration of the Magi, which is said to mark the spot where the Magi, when they came bringing their costly gifts, found the mother and the child. Another altar marks the spot where Joseph was sleeping when he had the vision that warned him of the approaching danger, and commanded him to take the child and the mother, and flee into Egypt. All this in total forgetfulness of the fact that the holy family had been removed before these events occurred, from the stable in the inn to the house in the town in which they lived during the time of their sojourn at Bethlehem.

Of course, common-sense compels us to reject all these senseless traditions and impossible tra-



ditional sites; but common-sense, on the other hand, keeps us from rushing into the opposite extreme of rejecting what seems to be authentic and true, because there is a mass of silly and superstitious nonsense piled around it.

The two most memorable chapels—two that are, in highest likelihood, genuine sites—are that of the Nativity already described, and that of St. Jerome. Originally they were natural caverns, but the walls have been hewn off smooth, and are lined with marble. St. Jerome, the translator of the Latin Vulgate, was the Luther of the early centuries of Christianity. In the chapel that goes by his name there is an ancient painting of him with the Bible in his hand.

Passing out at the east gate of the city and going through the supposed field of Boaz—a rich barley field near Bethlehem, which may be, for all we can now know, the very one in which Ruth, the beautiful Moabitess, gleaned—we came to the Field of the Shepherds, where are the ruins of an old church—the Crusader Church of Gloria in Excelsis.

This church was built in the mediæval age over the spot where a tradition says the fold of the shepherds was located, on the roof of which

they were sleeping when they saw the vision of the angels, and heard their glorious song. For centuries a monastery stood here in connection with the church. In the grotto there are some very old paintings, and a few traces of ancient mosaic in the pavement of the floor.

This is a fit place at which to terminate the day given to Bethlehem. Standing in a clump of olive trees, we look out over a rich plain that still affords most excellent pasturage, and know that somewhere on this plain there were shepherds in the field, watching their flocks by night, when the heavens opened and the angels came down to reveal to them the glad tidings of great joy to all the world, that the long promised Saviour had at last been born. The ground slopes up to the beautiful city, leading thither through rich fields of wheat and barley and terraced vineyards as in the days of old. On all the flowery hillsides were seen, as in the days of Boaz and David, flocks of innumerable sheep and goats and herds of cattle, and troops of asses and camels grazing, all unconscious that they were reproducing there for the beholder in the midst of this nineteenth century, the scene which beautified that spot, the morning when

opened the Christian era in the old world's history.

In the distance *Jebel Fureidis*, or the Frank Mountain, looms up in full sight, near the foot of which is the famous cave of *Adullam*, in which David, with his handful of all sorts of men, hid from persecuting Saul. In that band of followers there were men of every description, some good, some bad, some unfortunate, and some guilty, and all more or less wretched. They were bound together by strong ties of common dangers, toils and sufferings. Here, under the influence of a mind so uncommonly pure and spiritual, God threw together a heterogeneous mass of discordant elements to be subdued, blended and molded into the characteristics of their great leader. With all their evil and guilt weighing heavily upon them they admired and loved their great leader, and wished that they were like him; and wishing this, and loving him, they gradually became like him.

Indeed David was a type of David's greatest Son, of him who was born in the city of David, and of the house and lineage of David, as David's Lord and the Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world.

He is the Captain of our salvation; and he is gathering around him an army of all classes, conditions and sorts of people, all of whom he is subduing, blending together and molding into his own character. Christ Jesus gives himself for us, and redeems us, and of an army of sinners makes a host of saints, heirs of God and joint-heirs with himself, who, with him, shall inherit the kingdom of which David's kingdom was the type and shadow.

## III

## NAZARETH OF GALILEE

## WHERE HE GREW UP

The distance from Bethlehem of Judea where Jesus was born, to Nazareth of Galilee where he grew up, is about sixty-eight miles in a straight line; but it is much greater by any road by which the journey can be made. The shortest and most convenient way leads out north by Jerusalem, and through Samaria by Jacob's well, and thence across the plain of Esdraelon and out through a narrow mountain pass into a little circular valley in which the city is found, nestling in the bosom of the Galilean mountains. It is located between the two seas, at the distance of twenty-one miles east from the blue Mediterranean and of seventeen miles west from the Sea of Galilee. We will not at present carry our readers along this route; but, in another part of this work, we will journey with Jesus

over this same road, and then we will stop to describe the places of greatest interest over which we now make a flying leap.

When we cross the Plain of Esdraelon we come to a low range of whitish limestone hills, and almost in the middle of the range we find a gap through which a narrow steep passage leads. The hill, up which we climb, is covered with a short, soft grass of a deep, dark green color and a profusion of pretty flowers of many colors. On reaching the top the road descends gently into a beautiful valley which opens gradually and assumes a circular shape, measuring nearly a mile across its diameter. The land, which seems to be very fertile, is divided off into little fields or gardens by hedges of prickly cactus.

Here, in this out-of-the-way place, we find the little city where our Saviour grew up from tender infancy to mature manhood. It is built partly on the slope of the hill, and partly in the valley. Its houses are mostly constructed of white limestone, and are square or oblong in shape, and have flat roofs.

The city is about the same size, and looks in its general appearance very much like Bethlehem, only Bethlehem is perched on the top of a

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mountain and Nazareth is nestled in the bosom of a beautiful valley, surrounded by mountains. In Bethlehem we go upon the top of the houses to look over the surrounding country, and here we must go upon the top of a neighboring mountain to look over the city. The little city is entirely cut off from the world, being surrounded on every side, except the narrow pass through which the road enters and departs, by hills and mountains. Fifteen different mountains encompass the valley, forming around the city a castellated enclosure. Perhaps in all the world there is nowhere else to be found a more picturesque and charming spot.

Our visit to this delightful place was made in the early spring, and we found, scattered about among the houses, many gardens of vegetables and flowers and orchards of fig-trees with their broad green leaves, of olives, shaped gracefully, in their grayish dress, of pomegranates decorated with their bright scarlet flowers, and of orange-trees covered with their glorious and fragrant blooms, having a few golden oranges, here and there, still hanging on their boughs

As we rode into the city I noticed birds in larger numbers and of a greater variety than I

had anywhere seen in this desolate land. Some were perched on the branches of the trees in the gardens, and some were flitting about in the sunshine without ever seeming to tire. Among them was one of a very light blue color which, I was told, is the "roller bird," the prettiest of all birds seen in this land. I did not hear any outburst of song as when birds sing in concert; but, occasionally, I caught the low hooping notes of the hoopoo, and all through the day I heard the purple-colored doves—large numbers of which were sunning themselves on the flat roofs of the white houses—cooing softly to their loving mates.

Those birds and their scanty songs were peculiarly interesting to me, because I was all the time thinking, just such birds and such bird-songs did Jesus see and hear when he was a boy in these streets. I remembered the legend, that Jesus and the village children were playing together one day, and they made them, as children sometimes do, birds of clay; and when they tired of the sport the other children broke their birds to pieces, dashing them down upon the ground, but Jesus clapped his hands and his birds fluttered into life and flew away. This is



the only one of the fabulous legends of the childhood of Jesus that is worth remembering. Most of them are grotesque and disgusting.

We rode on through the town to the Fountain of Mary at the eastern end of the village. This spring furnishes the water supply for the entire city, as it must have always done. It is the center of the life of the village. If this fountain should dry up the city would disappear. Here, the shepherds water their flocks, the women come to draw the daily supplies of water for their households, the pilgrim stops to quench his thirst, and the herds of cattle pass this way to drink as they go out in the morning to their pasture-fields and return at evening. It is also the center of the social intercourse of the city. As all the city drinks from the same fountain, and as the women of all classes fetch the water for their household use, the whole city meets daily for gossip around the one spring that supports the life of every home. Groups of women and girls are gathered around the fountain at all hours of the day and to a late hour at night; and the men too are always coming and going.

Around the fountain there is always heard the hum of conversation, which seems to be as con-

tinuous and unbroken as the flow of water; and every now and then there breaks out over the hum of voices the ring of hearty laughter and of merry song.

The scene we witnessed at the Fountain of the Virgin has, we suppose, been repeating itself there day after day for centuries upon centuries, back to the day when the maiden Mary used to come with the other village maidens and chat with them while she filled her pitcher. For here, no doubt, she too, with her water-jar on her head, used to come and go with light and graceful step as do the maidens of the present day. And in after years, also, the young Jesus no doubt used to come with his mother, down to this spring, and, while she was waiting for her turn to fill her pitcher, he used to play in the sparkling water, as the children now do while waiting at the fountain with their mothers.

Nazareth, like Bethlehem, is a Christian city, having about the same number of inhabitants, and about the same proportion of them, more than three-fourths, being Christians; and the women of Nazareth, like those of Bethlehem, are also deservedly famed for their personal beauty,

and the men, while not as stout and stalwart in appearance as those of Bethlehem, are noticeable for their noble bearing and polite manners toward strangers. I noticed, however, in the eyes of many, especially of the children, a wild expression, a hawk-like restlessness, which was very disagreeable, and especially noticeable in comparison with the soft-eyed beauty of the women of Bethlehem. Taken as a whole, I would say that the women of Bethlehem are in general more beautiful than those of Nazareth, but single ones might be selected out at Nazareth as nearly perfect in figure and face as it is possible for the living woman to be; and so we are not surprised that Dr. Porter says: "If we go out and sit for an hour of an evening by the little fountain, we shall see many a face which Raphael might have chosen as a study when about to paint his Madonna della Seggiola, and many a figure that Phidias might have selected as a model for Venus."

Of course, while we were at Nazareth, we went around to see the traditional sites that priestcraft has invented, and superstition venerates.

Among other places we visited the Church of

the Annunciation, where we were shown the veritable room—according to the report of the Italian priest who showed us round—where the angel Gabriel appeared unto Mary, and also the room in which, it was said, Joseph and Mary lived. The latter contains an altar bearing the inscription: "*Hic erat subditus illis*"—"Here he was subject to them." We were also shown the place where, it is said, the house of the Virgin stood which the angels carried away to Loreto in Italy to keep it from being desecrated by the Moslems.

There were many other impossibles sites and absurd and ridiculous relics shown us, all of which I wish the angels had carried away to Italy or some other place. Among these was a large stone on which, the priest gravely informed us, Christ took his last meal with his disciples before his crucifixion, and his first one after his resurrection. All such monkish traditions, legends and sites are always offensive, but here in Nazareth they are doubly so; and especially so, when we know that most of them have been invented not through ignorance, but in covetousness, for the sake of the fee which pilgrims and tourists pay for seeing them. It is a pity that

the name of Jesus is made a source of merchandise in the very home of his childhood.

There were, however, three places which I visited with interest. The first was the so-called workshop of Joseph, situated in the Moslem quarter, but held in the possession of the Latin Church. I have no thought that it is the veritable carpenter-shop in which Jesus worked with his reputed father; but, as it is a very old workshop and has in it a collection of the most ancient carpenter's tools, it conveys to us an idea, as near as one can now be formed, of what the workshop of Joseph must have been.

The second is the old synagogue in which Christ is said to have preached, and from which he was cast out. It is very old, and its history can be traced back to the fifth century; and, if it is not the veritable synagogue in which Jesus worshiped with his parents in the days of his childhood and youth, it may stand on the site of it; and, at all events, it gives us some idea of the appearance of the place which marked a crisis in the ministry of Christ, and in the history of the home of his private life.

The last is the so-called Mount of Precipitation. I give no credence to the traditional site

which is located more than a mile from the city, but think the true place is found back of the Maronite church, where there is a precipitous cliff, some thirty or forty feet in height, which suddenly terminates the slope of the hill on which "their city was built." This precipice is in the southwest extremity of the town, and here, I feel sure, the murderous attempt on the life of our Saviour was made by his neighbors, among whom he had grown up, and with whom he had once been so popular.

Early in the morning we ascended the mountain that overlooks the city and surrounding country, and enjoyed the most magnificent and splendid views anywhere to be found in all this land. The views changed continually as we ascended, and all were very beautiful. The young Jesus must have frequently rambled over all these mountains, and seen all the views that are here spread out before the eyes in grandeur and beauty. In his day these mountain landscapes must have been much more beautiful than they are now. All Galilee was then like a garden, flourishing in its well-cultivated fertility. The hills, now bare and barren, were then terraced to their tops and covered with vines. The

scenery here is much more varied and pleasing than that around Bethlehem. What must it have been in the days of Jesus before the land was trodden down and given over to perpetual desolation?

But, amid all the great changes that the centuries have brought in, the natural landmarks and the permanent features are still in the main just as they were when Jesus looked upon them. We see the same mountains and valleys, and hills and dells that he saw, only they are not now clothed in the same dress they wore when he viewed them. To the north, grand old Hermon lifts toward the sky its hoary, snow-crowned head, dazzling in the early morning light; and to the east, the eye ranges over the hills of Galilee and catches the tops of the mountains of Gilead beyond the Jordan; in the south the eye sweeps over the rich, corn-covered fields of Esdraelon, level as the sea and bounded in the far distance by a line of undulating hills; and in the west, the eye rests on the range of Mount Carmel, extending to the great sea which opens out into the great world for which Jesus came to die. A striking object in the charming landscape were the numerous flocks of snow-

white sheep and ebony-black goats that were being led out, in the early morning, to pasture on the slopes of the surrounding hills. At that early hour everything was bathed in its loveliest light. In the warm and soft tints of the vernal sun, the flat-roofed houses, half hidden among the trees, made a very beautiful picture.

This city, thus surrounded and thus cut off almost wholly from contact with the world, was the home of Jesus for nearly thirty years. Here his childhood developed into youth, and his youth matured into manhood. What thoughts did those wide views of hills and dales and far-off mountain-peaks awaken in his tender heart! What prayers did those mountains witness when he used to retire into the solitude of the secret nooks which their varied foldings make, to meditate, as his life deepened into the seriousness of manhood, upon the great and mysterious mission which he had been sent into the world to perform!

This home of his childhood and youth, which is no dream-land, but an actual place on this common every-day earth of ours, is the only true "Gospel of his Infancy." The so-called apocryphal book is too utterly and grotesquely absurd



to bear reading, much less to gain credence. The life of the young Jesus, as it unfolded itself amid these scenes, was the gradual development of a natural human life in which was infolded, as the fruit in the flower, the supernatural divine life that was manifested, in after years, in the mighty works of his public ministry.

And now, what were the moral influences under which the life of the young Jesus was developed amid these pleasant and propitious physical surroundings? What was the mental and spiritual atmosphere of the home in which he grew up? And what were the moral and religious influences that surrounded that home?

A better home, and more genuinely pious and prudent parents, a child never had. The home in which the child Jesus was subject to his parents was all that a home on earth can be; and hence, the child-life of Jesus, absolutely perfect in itself, was developed under the most favorable circumstances possible. It was not a home of wealth and luxury, nor of poverty and want; but one of easy competency, supported by the daily toil of honest and faithful industry. Joseph was a carpenter; and, no doubt, as the young

Jesus grew up he did not disdain to assist his father in the honest and honorable work by which their daily wants were supplied. His mother was no ordinary woman, but was not such as the brilliant fancy of pious painters have represented. She was never, as their pictures paint her, seated on a stately throne, under a canopy of blue and gold, amid unearthly splendors surrounding her and her child. In external marks she and her child were not different from other mothers and their children in Nazareth in their day. Her superiority over other women consisted in her inward mental endowments, spiritual graces, and holy accomplishments. She was a woman of superior innate refinement and pious culture. In her arms and at her knee, the infant Jesus was surrounded by the best and most potent influences that ever molded the life of a child on earth.

The intellectual, moral and religious training of the childhood and youth of Jesus in the tranquil home of domestic happiness in Nazareth, was as perfect as any home that ever was on earth could furnish. We do not mean by this that Joseph and Mary were immaculate and sinless in character and life, but that their home,

in all its holy influences, was as perfect as it is possible for a home to be in this fallen world. In this home the life of Jesus was sinless; and yet, as the son of man, he thought and felt, and looked and acted just like other children do. His child life was perfectly human, but perfectly holy in its humanity.

But what were the social and moral influence of the community surrounding this home? On this point there is a difference of opinion. The name Galilee is derived from the Hebrew words *Gelil haggoyim*, meaning the circle of the Gentiles, and implying that there was a large Gentile element mixed in with its Jewish population; but there is no evidence that this admixture of foreign blood prevailed at Nazareth where Jesus grew up.

The name of the town is not mentioned in the Old Testament, nor by Josephus. There was no Roman garrison in the place; and, being hid away among the mountains and off from all the great roads, it seems that it was overlooked and almost unknown. It is most probable that there was but little admixture of foreign element in its population, if any at all. It was contemptible in the eyes of the Jerusalem and Judean

Jews, not for any irreligion or immorality for which it was noted, but solely on account of its obscurity. It was unrenowned, almost unknown, and therefore, when Jesus appeared, coming from Nazareth, one would ask, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" It is true that Nazarene was a contemptuous name given to Jesus, but, originally, it only indicated the obscurity of the almost unheard-of village from which he hailed. His enemies would say: "Jesus of Nazareth our Messiah! How preposterous the pretension! How absurd! Why, Nazareth is not even mentioned in our Holy Scriptures, which teach us that the Messiah shall come of the family of David, and must be born at Bethlehem, the city of David!" That question had been settled thirty years before in a great council of the chief priests and scribes which Herod had called together, and then "demanded of them Where should the Messiah be born?" And they said unto him, "In Bethlehem of Judea." This was the argument by which the rejectors of Christ set aside all the infallible proof furnished by his wonderful life and mighty works, that he was the Messiah. They would say: "The Messiah must be born in Bethlehem of Judea, and

this man is from Nazareth of Galilee; and therefore he can not be the Messiah." With this argument they set aside all his claims to the Messiahship, just as if a child could not be born in one city and grow up in another. They would say, "He is a Nazarene;" that is, he is a pretender: "He is a Galilean;" that is, he is a false Christ. His disciples were called Galileans, that is, followers of the false Christ, that pretender of Nazareth (John vii: 41, 52). This is the opprobrium that was attached to the name of Nazareth of Galilee; and it came in, not before, but with, the public ministry of Christ. It was first mentioned by the Galileans themselves who, of course, would not cast an odious reflection upon their own section.

The expression, "Can any good come out of Nazareth," originated with Nathaniel, who was himself of Cana of Galilee; and, as Dean Alford truly says, it carries with it no evidence that Nazareth was previously held in contempt. Afterward it became a proverbial expression, not to signify that the inhabitants of Nazareth were held in disrepute for irreligion or immorality prevalent among them, but to indicate the scorn with which the learned doctors of Jewish the-

ology rejected Jesus as a pretender and false Messiah because he came from Nazareth, and not from Bethlehem, where their prophets taught that the Christ should be born.

It is curious to note how the opinions of the Jews have changed in regard to Galilee. Two of their sacred cities, Safed and Tiberias, are in Galilee. In the latter their great Sanhedrin was set up when they were driven out of Jerusalem, and there, they say, it shall again be called to life and re-established; and at Meron, near Safed, lies buried a great Galilean rabbi at whose tomb, once a year, pious Jews, coming from all parts of the world, offer burnt-offerings of costly shawls and needlework. There are also current among them two traditional beliefs as to the coming of the Messiah—one that he will appear on *Jebel Jermaq*, the highest mountain in Galilee; and the other, that he will rise out of the waters of the Sea of Galilee. Opinions that have nothing to rest upon except the baseless fabric of prejudice, are as unstable as the waves of the sea and as changeful.

## IV

## THE COUNTRY AROUND NAZARETH

WHERE HE WALKED AND TALKED WITH THE  
PEOPLE

We come now to study the little that our written Gospels tell us of the human development of Jesus, in the light of what we know of the scenes and influences in the midst of which he grew up. Only one of the evangelists gives us any information at all concerning the early life of Jesus; but the little he gives, while it is provokingly meager and unsatisfactory, is sufficient to assure us that there was nothing unnatural, nor even uncommon, in his physical and mental development. If there had been anything in his youthful years to mark his life as peculiar and different from that of other children, it would have been noted.

There was one instance—on the occasion of his presentation in the Temple when he was

twelve years of age—in which he manifested, in conversation with the learned rabbis, an extraordinary and precocious development of knowledge and thought, and in which there flashed out some symptomatic indications of an inward consciousness of his divine nature and wonderful mission to earth. If there had been other instances of a like nature, they doubtlessly would have been recorded. There is nothing more told, because there was nothing more of the kind to tell. The evangelist informs us that, after this outburst of the divine life that was in him—which his parents did not understand—“he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.” That is, he lived in the home with his parents and demeaned himself toward them just as an obedient and dutiful child should do, living a natural human life just like any other child, only he was sinlessly perfect in the discharge of all filial duties.

All the information that we have in addition to this, is summed up in the statement: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and age, and in favor with God and man.” This declares very little, but it implies very much. The “and” which in-



roduces this statement connects his life after his presentation in the Temple at twelve years of age with his previous life—that is, his youth with his infancy—and shows that there was no apparent change in his life more than in the life of any other child, developing out of infancy into youth. It was a natural and ordinary human development; and, as a boy growing to be a young man, he continued to be subject to his parents just as he had been as a child. As a boy his life in Nazareth was just as natural and human as that of the other boys of the city among whom he grew up, only it was sinless and perfect.

As he increased in age and size, he increased in wisdom. That is to say, his mental development was as natural as his physical growth. His mind unfolded and his information enlarged as his body grew and developed into the size and maturity of manhood. Jesus learned and acquired gradually knowledge and wisdom as the years of his life multiplied, just as any other child of the race does. Jesus' knowledge and experience came to him, not by miracle, but naturally, from study and observation, as to any other child of the race.

As he grew in years and increased in wisdom, he also increased in favor with God; that is, his spiritual life deepened and strengthened. He was sinless from the beginning, and continuously sinless to the end; but there was in his experience a continuous growth and development of spiritual life as well as of physical and mental life. The life of an infant is as perfect as the life of a man, but the life of manhood is larger and stronger than that of infancy. In the spiritual life of the sinless Jesus there was an infancy, then a youth, and then a manhood, as there was in his physical and mental life. In this way, and in this way alone, can we understand how Jesus increased "in favor with God."

In body, soul and spirit Jesus of Nazareth was a perfect human being, and the development of his life, as "he increased in wisdom and age, and in favor with God and man," was the natural unfolding of a perfect human life.

The words of Terence can be put in the mouth of Jesus in a sense higher than that of absolute philanthropy—*Homo sum, et humani a me nil alienum puto.*" Sin is not an element of human nature. Human nature, as it came from the hands of its Creator, was sinless. Sin is a con-

dition into which human nature has fallen. It is a foreign element superinduced and brought into it.

Jesus was perfect in sinless humanity; but in him sinless humanity was gradually developed from infancy through youth into the maturity of sinless manhood. In this way, in his human life, he increased in favor with God, not becoming more sinless, but deeper and stronger in the sinless development of his spiritual life. All this implies continuous fellowship with God, growing closer as he increased in his favor.

But he also increased in favor with man; and this implies companionship with men. And as this increase in favor with man was from infancy through youth unto manhood, it follows that Jesus was not, at any period of his mortal life, a recluse, shutting himself off from the society and companionship of the race into the life of which he entered as a member. As a child, he must have mingled with the children of Nazareth as a playmate; as a youth, he must have associated with the young people of the neighborhood as a companion; and as a young man, he must have joined in the labors and shared in the recreations of those around him.

Since he increased in favor with man as he grew in age, he must have been in all these relations companionable, agreeable and helpful. He must have been serious, but never morose; holy, but never sanctimonious; and grave, but always cheerful and agreeable. How else could he have increased in favor with man as he increased in favor with God? His life was a godly life, but, at the same time, it was a manly and a manful life.

Of all this the evangelists, in the written Gospels, give us abundant proof in what seems to be almost unconscious hints that they let fall. It is clear that he was not an unfrequent guest at the social gatherings of his neighbors. It was at a wedding-feast, to which *he* and *his* disciples were *invited*, that he performed his first miracle, and began to manifest the glory of his official life upon which he was then entering. The fact that he was *invited*, shows that it was not contrary to his usual habits to attend marriage-feasts and the social gatherings of his town and neighborhood; and the fact that *his disciples* were also invited, shows that his neighbors were not expecting any change of practice in this respect now that he had announced himself as a

public teacher, and was gathering around him a school of disciples.

All the indications go to show that Jesus was much in society during the days of his youth and early manhood, and that he was everywhere received with welcome and favor; all of which proves that he moved about in society just like any other man and that he was companionable and agreeable in his social intercourse with his neighbors.

This is also evident from the fact that the child Jesus, when taken to Jerusalem at twelve years of age, "after the custom of the feast," tarried behind in Jerusalem a whole day without his absence creating any anxiety on the part of his parents. When leaving the city they did not note his absence nor inquire whether or not he was present, but went a whole day's journey, supposing him to be in the company of their kinsfolk and acquaintance. It was only when he failed to come to their tent at night, and when, on inquiry, they had discovered that he was *not* in the camp at all, that they began to be concerned about his absence. This shows conclusively that it was the custom of the child Jesus to wander about in the company of his

neighbors and kinsfolk. Everywhere he was a favorite, and was constantly increasing in favor with all classes as he grew older and became more widely and better known.

It also appears that, during the years of his public ministry, he frequently turned aside from his arduous labors to rest his tired human energies in the enjoyment of the polite amenities and kind hospitality of his personal friends, and that everywhere he was a favorite guest, as he was at Bethany in the home of the orphans. He often dined with the rich as with Zaccheus, and was a guest at the feasts of the great and of the Pharisees; so much so that his enemies complained and murmured against him, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." John was an ascetic, living in the wilderness, neither eating nor drinking with men, and they said of him, "He hath a devil;" but Jesus was companionable and social, and because he mingled with men, eating and drinking at their feasts, they said of him, "Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."

He who stands forth as the model man of the race, was the model child in the family,

and was a general favorite in companionable and social life, in the community in which he grew up; and he continued the social habits of his youth and early manhood throughout the short years of his public ministry.

As there was nothing unnatural nor unusual in his early development, it is more than probable that he was put to school to the rabbi of the synagogue, and that he learned to read and write, and was instructed in the religious and civil history of his people, in common with the other children of Nazareth with whom he grew up as a companion and associate. This, together with the wise training of his own refined and devout mother, seems to have been all the educational advantages that the child Jesus enjoyed.

He was not illiterate, but he was not tutored in any of the great schools of Jewish or Gentile philosophers. He was taught in a greater school than any of these—the school of nature; and hence, the striking originality and great naturalness of all his own teachings which invest them with their perpetual and irresistible charm. The land in which he lived was the book which he studied. Hence, his matchless parables and all his most beautiful illustrations are drawn

from this great text-book of his education. With the illustrations drawn from the natural phenomena by which he was surrounded, he interwove incidental references to the industrial pursuits, and to the manners, customs and habits of the social and every-day life of the people of his nation and age, showing that his early life was developed in the most natural way in the social circle of home-life, and in frequent walks over the mountains and through the fields in the open air, and along the streets and through the marts of trade where men bought and sold.

He was a carpenter by trade, but he seems to have been equally familiar with the usual operations of agricultural and pastoral life, and of all other branches of industry ordinarily pursued, in his day and generation, in the land where he lived. His parables show the most familiar and accurate acquaintance with all the minutiae of all the departments of business and of social life prevalent in his country at his day.

All this goes to show that his early years were not spent in seclusion, or in unearthly pursuits and observations. The reverse of the old Latin proverb, "*Noscitur a sociis*," is as true as the proverb itself; just as a man is known by his as-



sociates, so can we infer from the man himself what his associations have been. On this principle of interpretation it would seem that Jesus, during the time of his educational development, must have mingled on intimate and friendly terms with men of all classes and of all vocations. We know that he made an annual journey to Jerusalem, going up to the great feasts of the Jews, as the custom of his people required him to do after reaching the age of twelve years. As his information about all that was common in Palestine in his day, is extensive and accurate, we suppose that he traveled extensively in the little land where he lived, and that he was a close and discriminating observer of all that fell under his eyes.

We know that there are those who set aside all reasoning as to how Jesus acquired his knowledge of men and things, on the ground that he, as God, knew all things without having to learn anything. So be it; but then, as man, he had to learn all things as men learn them. He *increased* in wisdom, acquiring his human knowledge in the ordinary way. His human information was altogether Jewish, and his similes in his parables and illustrations, are altogether Jewish,

and are only such as were naturally acquired by observation in the land where he lived. He spoke to Romans and Greeks and Barbarians, but he always spoke as a Jew. His language was Jewish, but his thoughts were cosmopolitan. His language and illustrations belong to the land and to the age in which he lived, but the truths he uttered belong to all mankind of all lands and languages.

Such, as is set forth in the foregoing pages, was the human life of Jesus of Nazareth, as that life is revealed in the written Gospels, when they are interpreted by the Gospel of the land where he lived. His life at Nazareth was a human life, and its physical and mental development, from infancy into manhood, was human and natural; but when he reached the years of the maturity of his manhood, his piety deepened into a torrent of zeal, and his earnestness into a fire of enthusiasm, and there flamed out, from the natural course of his human life, the supernatural glory of a divine life. Thus he was born into our race as the Child of humanity, lived on our earth as the Brother of all men, was crucified on the Roman cross as the Messiah of the Jews, rose from the tomb as the Sav-

jour of the world, and ascended to heaven as the God-man in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily.

## V

THROUGH THE WILDERNESS TO THE  
JORDAN

## WHERE HE WAS BAPTIZED

From the Field of the Shepherds, near Bethlehem, we journeyed through the wilderness of Judea to the Dead Sea, and from the Dead Sea to the ford of the Jordan opposite Jericho, where, an ancient tradition says, our Saviour was baptized. This journey required us to spend two days and a night in the wilderness. When night drew near we pitched our tents in a deep, narrow valley surrounded by lofty and jagged mountain-peaks. The situation was gloomy and the surroundings awe-inspiring. We were in the midst of the wilderness, and night was fast gathering around us. The sun was hid behind the dismal mountains that lifted their frowning heads all around, but the western peaks were crowned with spears of gold that shot up from behind them. The clear sky, as we descended

into the valley, assumed a brighter blue than I had ever seen in the heavens before; and, as the stars came out in unusual brightness, it seemed that the eye could see through the transparent blue vault away beyond the home of the orbs of night. We could see in two directions from our camp the black tents of the Bedouins, and the sons and daughters of the desert, seen at a distance moving about in their flowing garments, looked like ghosts of the dead departed ages appearing in the gathering darkness of the evening. A number of them—men, women and children—had already gathered around our tents, and they deafened us with their clamorous cry for “backshish.”

As the darkness thickened into full night, the Bedouins slunk away; but, as the clamor of their tongues died away, our ears caught the weird barking of jackals on the mountain-sides. There seemed to be hundreds of them, and it seemed that they were hunting in packs and chasing their prey all around our camp.

We had agreed, before retiring, to rise before daylight and make an early start for the Dead Sea. With a certain nervousness that had crept over me from the strangeness of the surround-

ings, and by the incessant barking of the jackals, my sleep for the fore part of the night was broken, but after midnight it was very profound. About three o'clock in the morning I was suddenly aroused, with a start, from sleep by the shrill blast of the head dragoon's horn. In a few moments everything was in motion. With a hasty breakfast and hot coffee, the cool breeze of the night fanning our cheeks, we were all soon wide awake and ready to begin our journey. We were in the saddle an hour before the break of day, moving on solemnly by starlight through the wilderness. The morning was clear and the stars shone down from the blue heavens upon the black earth with a brilliancy that was inexpressibly beautiful. There seemed to be more of them in the heavens than I had ever noticed before, and as we looked up from the deep ravine, the stars seemed to be larger and nearer the earth—almost touching the tops of the mountains—than they had ever before appeared to me. As I gazed on the stars in that strange land, I thought of the time in the long centuries ago when Abraham had gazed on those sparkling orbs, and heard a voice speaking from beyond their bright domain, promising him

that his seed should become more numerous on earth than the stars in the skies. That promise has been fulfilled, and there is not a land on which the sun shines in which some of the scattered children of Abraham may not be found.

We at once began to ascend out of the valley, and our road was only a narrow, rough and exceedingly rocky path clinging to the steep, precipitous mountain side. It was perilous. I can never forget that early ride through the wilderness, up and down the rough and rugged mountain steeps, and through dark, dismal, stony and waterless valleys. All around we heard the jackals yelping, and now and then caught a glimpse of a stray one as he darted across our way and hid behind the rocks. The pale light of the pearly stars served only to make the desolation and dismalness of the region appear more wild, weird and demon-haunted than it would have seemed if total darkness had brooded over the desert. We journeyed on in almost total silence, speaking to one another only in undertones. Whether it was drowsiness from being aroused at so early an hour, or a sense of awe inspired by the situation and circumstances, I cannot tell, but some cause produced a silence

so profound that I could feel it resting upon my soul like an oppressive weight.

After the night comes the day, and so at length the rosy hues of dawn began to appear in the "dappled east." The blue, star-spangled curtain of night was slowly lifted from the dark ridge of the encompassing mountains, and we caught a glimpse of the golden fringe upon the morning robe of the king of day.

Thus the new day began to break in upon us just as we were rising to the top of a rocky peak. The light crept on so gradually that none could tell just when the night died and the day was born. The morning light was not heralded in by an outburst of song from the throats of joyous birds. Not so much as a sparrow was heard chirruping among the rocks

Some of the party suggested that we should greet the day with a song, and a feeble attempt was made to hum a hymn; but it soon died away into silence. And then, suddenly, there burst a vision of unutterable beauty upon our view. It was the sun rising from behind the purple mountains of Moab, shooting out golden spears of dazzling light over the hills of Judea, and gilding their tops with crowns of saffron and gold.



In the distance beyond Jordan the Moab mountains looked like masses of purple clouds with two peaks, Nebo and Pisgah, towering up through them, and looking, in the flaming beams of the rising sun, almost like two huge pillars of fire shooting up out of encircling clouds of smoke. On one of those peaks Moses stood and viewed the Promised Land over just as if it had been a great map spread out on a table before him. Was that possible? All things are possible with God; but no miracle was needed to enable Moses to get a general view of all the land from his lofty point of observation.

Travelers who are permitted to

“Climb where Moses stood,  
And view the landscape o'er,”

find spread out before them, like a picture, the whole land of old Canaan from snow-capped Hermon on the north, to the dark granite peaks of Arabia on the south, and to the blue Mediterranean on the west. It is only needed that we put ourselves in the right positions to see how natural and truthful the Bible descriptions are in their minutest details.

On reaching the crest of a cliff, which we ascended just after sunrise, we saw the glassy

waters of the Dead Sea. At a distance its appearance was beautiful. It spread out before us, down deep below the bottom of the mountains, a broad sheet of dazzling water with scarcely a ripple on its surface, looking like a sea of molten glass, clear as crystal. On reaching it, one is very much, and very agreeably, surprised, in not finding it a scene of indescribable ugliness, and unutterable desolation. In its general appearance, the sea is a perfect picture of beauty, and, in some places along its shores, vegetation grows in luxuriant abundance to the very brink of the water. The beautiful picture of the lake is enframed in the wild scenery of picturesque mountains, which gives an aspect of grandeur and sublimity to the view that spreads itself out to the wondering eyes of the beholder.

And this is the Dead Sea! But why is it called dead? Because there is no living thing, either vegetable or animal, in its waters; and nothing that has life in it can live for a minute when plunged beneath its bitter waves. A fish from the river or from the sea will live longer on the dry sand than in its deadly waters. It is the Dead Sea because it swallows up the life

of everything that flows or falls into it, becoming the grave of all the living streams that empty their waters into its bosom.

It is dead, but it is beautiful in death; and there are no signs of putrefaction or decay. The waters are perfectly odorless. It is the one place in Palestine where the nostrils are not sickened with the stench of filth and decay. There are no water fowls in its waters or on its shores, because there is nothing there for them to feed upon.

When we rode round to the northern extremity, where the valley of the Jordan comes down to the sea, an indescribable scene of barrenness, deadness and desolation met our eyes. This beach is strewn with trunks of trees, bones of land animals, and shells and bones of fish, which, brought down by the Jordan when swollen with winter rains, had been thrown into the briny, acrid, death-dealing waters of the sea, and, after being tossed about, perhaps for centuries, had been again cast ashore, so saturated and encrusted with salt, that it was only by a close examination that the wood and animal substances could be distinguished from one another. This northern shore is a flat, verdureless and deso-

late waste, death-like and melancholy in the extreme.

The Dead Sea is a desert of lifeless waters enframed in a wilderness of barren mountains; a dismal desert of waters on which a sail is never seen, and over which a boat never floats; for, as no fish can live within its waters, so no boat can live on its waves. Lieut. Lynch managed, with great difficulty, to get two metal boats down the Jordan from the Sea of Galilee into it, in which his expedition cruised about over its waters for twenty-two days, taking soundings and making observations; but, in the first storm that arose, his metal boats were dashed to pieces, the waves, heavy with the great quantity of solid substances they contain, striking them with the destructive force of huge iron sledge-hammers. No ordinary wind can lift the heavy water into waves, but when a storm comes that is strong enough to lift up its waters, which is not an un-frequent occurrence, there is nothing that can stand before the force of their weight and fury.

From the days of Lot to the present day there is not a single pleasant memory associated with the Dead Sea. This region was once the most fertile, the richest and the most

productive of all the land promised to Abraham and his seed after him. It was for this reason that Lot "set his face toward Sodom," and finally became a resident of that wicked city. And even to this day some of the valleys of this now cursed, sterile, and dismal region are oases of the utmost fertility and beauty. It once resembled the garden of the Lord, but it is now for the most part a wild waste where only thorny bushes grow, and over which, since the day of its doom and destruction, only tragical and gloomy memories hang. Over there among those mountains on the eastern side stood frowning Machærus, now marked by the modern villiage of Makaur, in which John the Baptist was imprisoned, and where he was when cruel and heartless Herod sent and had his head severed from his body—a dastardly deed from which the sin-hardened man could never recover.

Down there on the western shore, among the everlasting rocks, stood Masada, the palace-fortress of Herod, in which was enacted the last awful tragedy of the Jewish war of independence—a colossal suicide to which history furnishes no parallel. Thus, under the leadership

of a son of a Judas, in accordance with the prediction of Him whom a Judas betrayed, the sun of Judah's national history set in the blood and carnage of self-slaughter, which was never before nor since equaled in the history of the world; and since that day the children of Judah and all Israel have been only a scattered nation on the face of the earth. Most of them had been subjugated before, but this faction, led by Eleazar, had held out in defiant resistance to this last act, claiming to be the Jewish nation, and hoping yet to achieve independence; and when hope died there was nothing left which they thought worth living for, and so they plunged into death, and died with their dead hope.

This wilderness of Judea is a striking picture of the state of the world without the redeeming and saving power of Jesus and his Gospel. It is a wilderness in which no one can find his way, a desert given over to barrenness and waste; and yet, it is not uninhabitable, nor totally uninhabited. Amid its general sterility and desolation there are oases of wonderful fertility, and landscapes of remarkable beauty. The world without the Gospel of Christ is a wilderness where

despair reigns on the throne of perpetual desolation, seeing all things swept down into the sea of death which swallows up all, and returns nothing, and is never filled; and yet, here and there in life, without the Gospel, noble characters are to be found like the little fertile oases scattered about in this wilderness; but it is only the Gospel of Christ that sheds over the wilderness of human life the glory of the Lord, and fills the waste places with plenty and gladness. Where the Gospel goes and is received the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

In Ezekiel's vision of the holy and healing waters that issued from the Temple and fertilized the barren desert and purified the deadly waters of the salt sea, filling the wilderness with flowers and fruitfulness, and the sea with life and activity, we have a picture of what this world shall come to be under the redeeming and transforming power of the Gospel of Christ, flowing through the wilderness of human life (Ezek. xlvii). The vision is a prophecy given in the form of a parable. The wilderness of Judea in its

deadness and desolation is the world, dead in sin and trespasses, awaiting the coming of its Saviour to redeem it.

The brook Kedron begins at Jerusalem and runs down in a tortuous course through the wilderness into the Dead Sea, becoming a deep and dreadful ravine as it winds in and out between the bare and barren mountains. It is now, for most of the way, only a winter torrent, but it bears marks in many places of having been swept over at times by large and tumultuous volumes of water.

What could be a more true and impressive symbol of the deadness, desolation and despair of this world of sin and sorrow, than the dark, dismal and waterless valley of the Kedron, winding its tortuous and joyless way through the barren and bleak desert and wilderness of mountains into the salt sea over whose bitter waters death reigns in undisputed dominion? From out of the east gate of the Temple the prophet saw waters issuing in little rills and flowing down into the brook Kedron, and becoming wider and deeper as they flowed on into the wilderness until they became a great river that could not be passed over, going down through the desert



of the barren land into the desolation of the lifeless sea.

The waters of this ever-increasing river were full of fish; and, as they flowed on, becoming deeper and wider, they fertilized the treeless and fruitless desert, causing trees, herbs and flowers to spring up on both sides of the stream, thus filling the land with fruits that never failed; and, finally, flowing into the impure and lifeless waters of the Dead Sea, they purified them and filled them with life and a great multitude of fish, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

In this we have a prophecy of the rise of Christianity out of Judaism—of its small beginnings and gradual growth, and then of its irresistible power and rapid spread, as a converting and purifying influence in the world, dead in sin and trespasses, and polluted in iniquities. Christ Jesus and Christianity are the fulfillment of this prophecy.

When one journeys through the wilderness of Judea, where Jesus was prepared to begin the fulfillment of the prophecy of this inspired vision, he is overwhelmingly impressed with the poetic beauty and aptness of all its symbols; and when

one reads the history of the rise and progress of Christianity, he sees how the prophetic vision, in all its minutest details, has been, or is being, fulfilled in the small beginning, gradual growth, and then rapid spread of Christianity as a new life-giving, transforming, purifying and joy-inspiring power on the earth, gradually changing the world from a wilderness of woe into a paradise of joy.

That great work, which is moving on through the centuries to the whole world's redemption, began in this wilderness.

When Jesus was about thirty years of age a great sensation was produced throughout all the land by the ministry of John the Baptist, who appeared, in this wilderness of Judea on the banks of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Almost the whole Jewish population of the country went out to hear him, and vast multitudes were baptized by him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. There was a general expectation among the people that their long-promised Messiah was about to appear, and John's baptism was regarded as a preparation to receive him. It was a baptism of repentance unto the remis-

sion of sins, involving the confession of sins on the part of those who received it and the hope that He who was about to appear would take away their sins.

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee to John where he was baptizing, and presented himself for baptism. John recognized in him a sinlessness that set him apart from all other men, and which seemed to him to render it improper for him to receive his baptism. He instinctively felt that it would be more becoming for him to be baptized by Jesus than for Jesus to receive baptism at his hands. He could not understand how the sinless one could receive the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sin, a ceremony which was grounded in the confession of sin on the part of the recipient. And so, at first, John "forbade him," that is, declined to administer to him his baptism. But Jesus told him that it was necessary, and that it became them in their official relations to one another to fulfill all righteousness. Thereupon, John baptized him, and as he came up out of the water the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God descended upon him in a bodily form, like a dove flying out of the opened heav-

ens; and he heard a voice, saying, "Thou, my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Immediately Jesus was driven or drawn of the Spirit into the wilderness where he remained for a period of forty days and nights among the wild beasts, fasting. The devil came to him in the wilderness and tempted him, and after the temptation angels came and ministered to him.

Whereabouts on the banks or in the waters of Jordan our Lord's baptism took place we cannot now certainly know; but a very ancient tradition locates the place at the ford opposite Jericho, where the children of Israel crossed the river, dry shod, from the wilderness of their long sojourn into their long sought promised Land. This ford will be forever famous as the place where great miracles were performed. Three times the waters of the sacred river were here miraculously divided, opening a dry passage across its bed.

The miracles of the wilderness were begun by the waters of the Red Sea opening to let the children of Israel out of Egypt, and were completed by the waters of the Jordan opening to let them into Canaan.

Twice again the waters were here parted on

being struck by the mantle of Elijah, first by himself when he was going over the river to be translated, and the second time by Elisha when he returned alone, bearing the mantle of his departed master.

In the absence of all evidence to the contrary we accept the time-honored tradition that locates the baptism of Jesus here, where the children of Israel passed through the opened river, out of the wilderness of their sojourn into the Canaan of their rest; and we love to think that Jesus was here, by his baptism, inducted into his holy work for our redemption, which opens for us a safe passage, through the river of death, out of the wilderness of this life into the Canaan of heaven.

We will not stop to raise the question of the mode of John's baptism, for that discussion is altogether foreign to our purpose. It is sufficient for us to know that John was baptizing *at, in* or *near* the Jordan, and that Jesus came to him and was baptized of him by *sprinkling, pouring* or *immersion*.

Here we see plenty of water for immersion, and, consequently, a convenient supply for sprinkling or pouring; but no man can determine by

looking at the place which mode was used in John's baptism. That question is to be settled, if ever settled at all, not by ocular observation of the place where John was baptizing, but by a different line of argument altogether. When Jesus was baptized the Spirit descended upon him, like a dove flying down from heaven. And after all, the baptism of the Spirit is the real baptism, and that of water is only the symbol of it. Without the baptism of the Spirit in the soul, that of the body in the water, or of the water upon the body, will be of no avail.

This ford is now, and has been from an early age, a famous bathing place for pilgrims of different creeds, many considering it the highest privilege of life to the baptized in these sacred waters. Antonius, who wrote in the sixth century, says that he found here a great multitude of people seeking baptism at the hands of a priest who stood in the middle of the river, baptizing all—men, women and little children—who came or were brought to him. He also says that both banks of the river were paved with marble, and that a large wooden cross stood in the middle of the stream by which the priest stood to receive the subjects of baptism, each

of whom wore a long white linen garment that was carefully preserved to be used at death as a winding sheet. At the present day both Greeks and Latins, and especially the Greeks, attach great importance to a bath in the Jordan at this place; and for this purpose a great caravan of pilgrims leave Jerusalem for the Jordan every year, immediately after the Easter ceremonies are closed. Their encampments on the western bank of the river, lighted by lurid flambeaux, present a curious and picturesque appearance which, if once seen, can never be forgotten.

The Jordan, from the Hebrew "yarden," to descend, has so many peculiarities that it cannot be compared with any other river on the face of the globe. It is the one sacred river of our holy Scriptures—the only one. It has never been navigated, and it empties itself into a sea that has never had a port. It springs out of the snows that rest upon the lofty tops of the heaven-aspiring mountains, and it rushes madly through its narrow and ever descending valley until it empties itself in a sea that is far below the level of all other seas. It is full of life, but after running its short career it suddenly dies away in the lap of death. At its sources, and

for a long way down its course, its waters are as clear as crystal; and, flashing in the sunbeams, they look like a flowing stream of molten silver; but, before losing itself in the sea of death, its waters become muddy, as if filled with the filth of earth. Flowing into a sea in which no life can live, and which its unceasing flow never fills, it is a fit symbol of human life, ever descending and becoming corrupt, and finally plunging into the gulf of death which swallows up all streams flowing into it, and is never filled. In this stream was Jesus baptized, symbolizing the glorious fact that he has entered the stream of our human life to redeem our souls from the sea of death into which all human life flows.

But here the same difficulty confronts us that confronted John when Jesus came to him for baptism. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins; but Jesus had no sin to repent of, nor sins to be remitted; therefore, he could not have received John's baptism for himself. He must have been baptized as the substitute for others. While he had no sin of his own, yet the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He came into the world to be the sin-bearer that he might take away the



sin of the world. It must needs be that, as our Substitute, he should take the sin of the world upon himself. Beginning the official work of his Messianic office, he was, as our Substitute, baptized for us in the Jordan, repenting of, and confessing, our sins. In his baptism, just as in his death, the sinless Jesus was our substitute. Without sin he was baptized for us in the Jordan, and without sin he died for us on the Cross, making complete atonement for our sins. Thus his baptism inducted him into the official work of his Messianic office, in which he stood for us, as our Substitute, from beginning to end.

It was in the act of his baptism, as our Substitute, that he, officially, took upon himself the sin of the world in order that he might take it away. It was the baptized Jesus that John pointed out to his disciples as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

## VI

## IN THE WILDERNESS

## WHERE HE FASTED AND WAS TEMPTED

When Jesus was baptized he came up out of the water praying, and the Spirit descended upon him from out of the opened heavens, and led, or drove, him into the wilderness where he was left, among the wild beasts, to fast for forty days, and afterward he was tempted. Thus by prayer and fasting he was prepared for the conflict with the Evil One for the world's redemption.

It was, no doubt, the wilderness of Judea into which the Spirit, which had descended upon Jesus, impelled him to go, that he might there engage in conflict with Satan, from whose dominion he had come to rescue the human race. That wilderness, in its desolation and deadness, is a fit type of what sin and Satan have made of this world.

Let us now wander back into this wilderness

and see the scene of our Saviour's fast and temptation, and learn what lessons the dismal region shall teach us.

We cross the valley of the Jordon—once fertile and fruitful as the garden of the Lord but now deserted and given over to briers and thorns—and reach a range of steep and barren hills which varies the surface of the country without changing its sterile character. Sharp, rocky eminences rise all around us, and steep ascents, formidable in height, and deep declivities, perilous to descend, fill our narrow pathway with obstacles that make our journey both difficult and dangerous. Dark caverns and chasms amongst the rocks yawn fearfully on every side. A mysterious dread creeps over us as we enter the awful wilderness of our Saviour's forty days' fast, and view the scene of his personal conflict with the Prince of Darkness and death.

The gloomy and dismal scenes around us look as if they might be the waste and dry places in which evil spirits are wont to wander, when driven from mortals whose forms they possessed, seeking rest and finding none.

This wild and weird region is sometimes called a desert; and that name is not inappropriate,

for it is a deserted tract of land that has no settled and permanent inhabitants. A desert may be a wide plain of barren sand, or a wild maze of bleak mountains. It is any region that is uninhabited and destitute of water and vegetation. But this region is, more properly speaking, a wilderness, for, while it is a wide, wild and uncultivated waste, it is not wholly deserted of men and beasts. It is the haunt of barking jackals, thorny porcupines, croaking ravens, and soaring eagles; and nomadic Bedouins sojourn here during the spring months, pitching their black tents in the deep ravines and grazing their goats on the rugged mountain sides.

The untilled and jagged slopes of the bleak and barren mountains are full of deep and dark-mouthed caverns; and, rising abruptly from out of deep and darksome ravines and terminating in bald, flat rocks, or in ragged peaks, they produce a profound impression of desolation, deadness and danger. Such a mountain wilderness is far more gloomy in its aspect, and far more depressing in its effects upon the imagination than the wide-spreading deserts of arid and barren sands. For on the desert-plain one can see the sweep of the land around him, and that im-

parts a sense of freedom and fearlessness to the feeling of loneliness produced by the boundlessness of the empty view; but, in a mountain wilderness, unless one stands on the loftiest peaks, the vision is shut in on all sides by bleak and rugged cliffs that force the eyes to look into dark and dismal ravines that split asunder the rock-ribbed ridges, or into frightful caverns that open their yawning mouths and darksome throats from beneath frowning rocks. Amid such surroundings an unutterable sense of solitude overwhelms the soul and fills it with a dread of some unknown and hidden danger. A sense of trembling creeps into the heart of the bravest, and he cannot put back the thought, though he knows it to be all imaginary, that some ferocious beast or armed robber might suddenly spring out of a cave, or from behind a rock, and seize upon him.

One cannot wander about in this dismal region without being overwhelmed at the thought of the many dreary days and dark nights that our Saviour passed, all alone, in this dismal and dreadful wilderness, going into this darkness for us that his life might shine forth out of the darkness as the true Light of the world, so that men

need no longer dwell in the wilderness of sin, and walk in the darkness of death.

Somewhere in these dreadful and dreary regions the Son of Man came into personal conflict with the devil, and triumphed over his power. We do not suppose that Jesus abode in one place during all those forty days, as a hermit in a cave. He wandered about through the wilderness among the wild beasts; and, before the temptation terminated, he was one time in the holy city, on a pinnacle of the Temple; and afterward, according to order of Matthew, he returned into the wilderness, and was on the summit of an exceeding high mountain. We do not accept the mediæval tradition that designates Mons Quarantana as the scene of his fast and temptation, for the name implies that he passed all the forty days on that mountain, and carries in it the monkish idea that he dwelt there as a hermit in his cell.

Without attempting to localize the scene of his temptation we will inquire, briefly, What was the purpose of his forty days' fast and the purport of his trial? It was his preparation for the Messianic ministry into which his baptism had inducted him. That preparation involved only

his human nature. The divine nature in Jesus could not have needed any preparation, nor was it possible for temptation to make any appeal to it. The trial involved only the human nature in Christ Jesus, and that was a sinless human nature.

We will not enter into the question of the peccability of his human nature farther than to say, there must have been the abstract possibility of sin, or there could have been no real trial in his temptation. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin, that is, without sinning; and the very point and soul of our temptations is the possibility and peril of sin. Where there is no peril, there can be no triumph. As in Adam's case there was the possibility of his not sinning, or there would have been no guilt in his sinning; so in the case of Jesus there must have been a possibility of his sinning, or there could have been no merit in his not sinning. There was a certainty in the divine mind that he would not sin, but not an inherent impossibility in his human nature of his sinning. Otherwise, the conflict on the part of Jesus would have been a mere sham battle, a make-believe and a pretense. Of course, the divine nature

is absolutely impeccable, but that was not under temptation. His human nature was sinless; but as it was possible for Adam to be tempted in his sinless state, so it was possible for Jesus to be tried in his sinless human nature. He was tempted in all points in which we can be tempted. Whether the divinity of Jesus was *inborn* with the birth of his human nature, or was *in- of used* into his matured human nature in his baptism at the moment when the Spirit of God descended upon him, is a vital question which is not to be too hastily answered. At all events it seems that Jesus was not conscious of indwelling divinity previous to that critical moment. When he was presented in the Temple at twelve years of age there flashed into his mind a consciousness that he was in some peculiar way the Son of God, and that he had a peculiar mission appointed him to be performed on earth; and, for the moment, he felt that the time had come when he should set himself about it. But it seems that this consciousness of a divine nature, and of a divine mission, was at that time transient. It soon passed away; and so he went down to Nazareth with his parents and was subject unto them as he had been before, and con-



tinued to live among men a natural human life, as he had been doing before, until he began to be about thirty years of age. It was only when he was of full age that the divine nature in him began again to move in his consciousness; then he came to the baptism of John, and was formally inducted into his official work as the Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world. Prior to this his own life must have been a mystery to his human mind. He had, no doubt, all the time a half-awakened consciousness of his indwelling divinity and Messianic mission, but did not fully comprehend the power that was in him, nor how it was to be manifested in the accomplishment of the divine work for which he had been sent into the world. This is evident from the fact that he *increased* in wisdom, including a knowledge of himself and his work, as he grew in age. From this it would seem that his divine nature was inborn with his human birth, but that he became self-conscious, in his human mind, of its indwelling presence and power *gradually*, as his human soul and body developed into maturity. The divine nature in Christ Jesus, in all his words and works on earth, operated through his human nature—

through his perfect human soul and human body. While Christ was on earth his divinity was clothed and veiled in his humanity and he himself became self-conscious of it, and it was manifested to others only through the functions of his human life and of his human thought. Hence, as the Son of Man, there was a certain limitation on both his knowledge and his power. It was his divine power that performed his miracles, but that divine power was always exerted through his human will, and by his human faculties and his human activities.

At his baptism, by the visible descent of the Spirit upon him, and by the voice from heaven that he heard, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," he became conscious in his human mind, as he had never before fully been, that he was the incarnate Son of God, the Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world. Hence, the purpose of his forty days' fast and of his temptation in the wilderness, was to adjust, in his human thought, his human nature with his divine nature for the accomplishment of the divine mission which he had been sent into the world to perform, and for the proper performance of which there were

united in his one person the two natures, the divine and the human.

It was necessary that the human nature of both soul and body in the Son of Man should be brought into conscious and free-willed submission to the authority and control of the divine nature in the Christ as the Son of God. Jesus could pray only in his human nature as the Son of Man, and it was the continuously answered prayer of his life on earth, not my will—the human will in him—but thy will—the divine will also in him—be done by me, in me, through me and upon me. This was the order of the human and the divine life in Jesus Christ that was to be established and confirmed as the law that was to direct and govern the double life of the Man Christ Jesus in his Messianic work. When this order was clearly adjusted in the human mind of Jesus by and through the self-abnegation and self-control involved in his forty days' fast, then came the temptation of the devil to test it, and to manifest that the human nature in him was made invincible, and was thus prepared to be the medium of the divine-human work of man's redemption.

1. The first temptation was an appeal made

by the personal Spirit of evil to the human nature of Jesus, to use the power of the divine nature incarnate in him, for his self-gratification. After his long fast the devil came to him when he was hungry, and said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread;" that is, Use the power of your divine nature to gratify the appetites of your human nature. The answer was, The power of my divine nature is not given to my human nature for the gratification of that life which is sustained by bread, but for the salvation of that higher life that is nourished "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." This established the fact, once for all, that Jesus would never use his miraculous power to supply his human necessities.

2. The second temptation was an appeal to the desire of self-glorification which is inborn in our human nature and sinless in itself, but which becomes sinful when unlawfully gratified. The devil took him into the holy city and set him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and said to him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, and cause the angels to bear thee up in their hands, so that no harm shall come to thee."

That is, he was tempted to use the power of the divine nature within him to work out the salvation of the world, but, while so doing, to use it in such a way as to cover his human nature with the glory of an admiring world. He was tempted to surround himself with an army of sustaining angels, and then to cast himself down into the midst of the holy city, and thus to capture the world by astonishment, and then to work out its redemption in the *eclat* of worldly glory, and thus to avoid the toil, the humiliation and the agony of death to which he was appointed in the divine scheme of human redemption. To this temptation Jesus answered, The way of self-abnegation and humiliation is the divine plan, and the human nature within me must not tempt the Lord my God by substituting for the divine plan a human scheme of self-glorification. It is written of me in the volume of the book, Lo, I come to do *thy will*, O God; that is, subjecting my human nature to my divine nature, to live the life of obedience and to offer my human nature, the body prepared for me, the sacrifice for sins once for all; and after that I am to sit down on the right hand of God in glory.

3. The third and last temptation was the boldest of all. It was the last, desperate struggle of the devil for supremacy over the human race. He threw off all disguise and stood before Jesus as the Personal Principle of Evil, and tempted him to open rebellion against the throne of his Father in heaven.

In the two preceding temptations the Tempter had not appeared as the devil, but as a friendly counselor advising Jesus how he should perform the Messianic work which he had come into the world to accomplish. His first attempts were to entice Jesus into sin, artfully concealed. It was his hope that he would be able to confuse the human thoughts of Jesus, and thereby to entrap him in evil by surprising him into a misuse, for his self-gratification or self-glorification, of the divine power invested in him.

But now he throws off all disguise, and, displaying before him all the glory of the world, says: "I am the Principle of Evil; fall down and worship me, and all this glory will I give thee; join me in my rebellion against Jehovah, and I will abdicate my throne in thy favor, and I will follow and serve thee."

This was a temptation to the human nature of

Jesus to use the divine power put at the disposal of his human will, not for men's salvation to raise them to heaven, but for his own human elevation to exalt himself into a throne of universal dominion over this world, in which he would reign as the king of all the kingdoms of earth.

This reached the climax. It was not possible for temptation to go farther. And here the triumph of Jesus was complete. He commanded the devil to get behind him, and henceforth there is an irreconcilable conflict between Jesus and Satan. The human nature in Jesus, to which alone temptation could appeal, is shown to be invincible. The angels, ever desirous to look into the mystery of human redemption, now recognized the Son of God as incarnate in the Son of Man, and "came and ministered unto him." The triumph over Satan was complete; and hence, his human preparation for his divine-human work for the redemption of the world, is full and finished; and so he goes forth from the wilderness into the midst of men to begin and to finish the work of human redemption which he had been sent into the world to accomplish.

## VII

## AT BETHABARA BEYOND JORDAN

## WHERE HE BEGAN TO GATHER HIS DISCIPLES

When Jesus had triumphed in the wilderness over the power of the devil, being prepared by his forty days' fast to begin His work for the world's redemption, he came to John where he was then preaching. He found him at Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where great multitudes were still crowding to his ministry.

It was now time for Jesus to reveal himself. Through the preaching of John general expectation was standing on tiptoe looking out, with wistful eyes, for the coming of the Promised One. Many were beginning to hope that John was the promised Messiah, and that he would soon declare himself. But John declared most emphatically that he was not the Christ, but only a voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way for his coming, then near at hand. He



even went so far as to assert that he had already come, and was even then standing in their midst, adding that he was so much mightier than himself that he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose the latchet of his shoes. He said to the people, "I indeed baptize you with water, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

He did not even claim to be the predecessor of Jesus in the official sense of the word, but only his messenger, running before him to prepare the way for his coming. Jesus had no predecessor in office, and can have no successor. John was simply the herald that ran before to proclaim his approach, and that stood before the people to point him out when he came. He was no more the predecessor of Christ than the lark, which heralds the approach of day, is the predecessor of the rising sun. He was simply a voice in the wilderness, prophesying the immediate coming of the King of men, as the lark is a voice in the sky prophesying the speedy rising of the king of day. No one could be more fully aware of this fact than was John himself: and so, seeing Jesus coming to him on his return from the wilderness, he cried to the multitude: "Behold

the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." The next day, when standing with two of his disciples and seeing Jesus walking by, he said to them, "Behold the Lamb of God."

These things, we are told, were done at Bethabara where John was then baptizing. That was not the place where Jesus had been baptized. During the forty days of his absence in the wilderness it seems that John had moved higher up the river towards Galilee. It seems that John began to preach in the wilderness of Judea on the borders of the Dead Sea, and that he journeyed in his ministry up the river as far as the Sea of Galilee, stopping at the different fords to preach and baptize the multitudes that came to him at the different places. At all events we know that his ministry was not stationary. He was at one time in Arnon near Salim, because there was much water there; that is, many fountains furnishing a sufficient supply of water for the necessities of the great multitudes that crowded to hear his preaching. The Palestine Survey thinks, with apparent good reasons, that it has recovered the site of ancient Bethabara high up the river, at a distance of only twenty-two miles from Cana of Galilee. Jesus

may have been baptized at the lower ford nearly opposite to Jericho, and John may have moved up the river to the borders of Galilee while Jesus was in the wilderness. This seems to be the most reasonable supposition, and it harmonizes with all the facts recorded in the written Gospels.

Jesus began at once to gather around him disciples, selecting the first ones from among John's followers.

The two to whom John pointed him out as the Lamb of God, followed him, and said to him, when he accosted them, "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?" Which meant, "Teacher, where dost thou teach?" Jesus said, "Come and see." They abode with him that day, and became his disciples. That day's teaching convinced them, and they received him as the long-expected Messiah.

The unnamed one of these two was, no doubt, John himself, who wrote the fourth Gospel. In his characteristic modesty he did not name himself as being one of the two who were the first to follow Jesus. But he was his first disciple, and he stood by him to the last, being the only one of all who stood by the Cross and saw him die.

The other was Andrew, who went in search of his brother Peter, and brought him to Jesus. As he came Jesus said to him, "Thou art Simon Bar-Jona; thou shalt be called a Rock." Peter believed and became the third disciple.

The next day, going into Galilee, Jesus found Philip, and said to him, "Follow me." There was something irresistible in the call, and Philip followed him, and became his fourth disciple. And next, Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Nathanael was of Cana of Galilee, just four miles from Nazareth; and, in all probability, he knew Jesus, the son of Joseph, personally. Being neighbors it is probable that they had often met, and had frequently conversed with one another.

The words of Philip overwhelmed him with astonishment. He could not think that it was possible that his neighbor, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, could be the Messiah. And besides, did not their Scriptures say, Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem? And so he said to Philip,

“Can the good thing come out of Nazareth? It is contrary to Scripture. If Jesus of Nazareth claims to be the Messiah, there can be no good in him.” To all this, Philip, not being able to explain the prophetic difficulty, simply said, “Come and see.” Nathanael followed Philip, and, as he came up with him, Jesus said to those around him, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” At this Nathanael was very much surprised, and said, “Whence knowest thou me?” Not, whence knowest thou my name, who I am? but, whence knowest thou my character, what I am? His name was not mentioned.

When Peter came up, he called him by name, and also named his father; and thereupon gave him a new name. They had never met before; but at sight Jesus showed him that he knew his name, and his father's name, and all about him, just as if he had been personally acquainted with him from his youth up. But when Nathanael came up, his neighbor, with whom, no doubt, he had often met, he did not call his name, which was well known to him; but, with a single sentence, he unfolded his inner character, and interpreted the secret thought in his

mind. In astonishment, Nathanael asked, "Whence knowest thou me, my inner character and secret thought?" Jesus answered, "I saw thee under the fig-tree before Philip called thee; I know thy secret life, and see thee through and through when thou thinkest no mortal eye can see." It was enough. Nathanael was convinced. Like the woman of Samaria who ran into the city and said to her neighbors, "Come, see a man which told me all things that I ever did; is not this the Christ?" he said to himself: "Is not this, my neighbor who knows all things that I have ever thought, the Christ?" And so he said to him, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Inwardly convinced, without having the Scriptural difficulty explained, he at once received his neighbor as his Lord, and as the Messiah of his people; and so believing, he was enrolled as the fifth disciple.

With these five disciples Jesus set out for Cana of Galilee where there was to be a marriage-feast, to which he and his disciples were invited. We suppose that they went by the shortest and most direct route, which would lead them across the eastern end of the plain of Esdraelon, under the shoulder of Gilboa, and along the eastern

side of Little Hermon, into the hill country of Galilee somewhere in the neighborhood of Mount Tabor. This portion of Esdraelon over which they passed must have, at that time, presented a perfect picture of inexhaustible fertility and fruitfulness; for the neglect and waste of eighteen centuries have not been able to destroy the richness of its soil and the wealth of its yield. I have seen on this plain, under the most imperfect system of cultivation now prevalent there, most luxuriant crops of wheat, yielding from forty to sixty bushels to the acre; and I am sure, that, under proper cultivation, in favorable seasons those rich lands could now be made to produce two or three bales of cotton to the acre. There is not in the whole of our own wide and fertile country a strip of land more fertile nor more capable of abundant yield under proper cultivation. It was sad to see such a fertile plain given over to the miserable cultivation of the nomads of the desert.

On entering the hills of Galilee we found them less bare and bleak than those of Judea, and some of them are even at the present day clad with vines and verdure to the summit. As we passed through the narrow valleys between

the mountains we saw villages picturesquely perched upon the slopes far above our pathway, and many of them were surrounded with vineyards where it seemed there was but little soil to sustain the adventurous vines.

The homes of the peasantry here and there clustered beneath the foliage of fruit-bearing trees, or embowered in gardens of figs and olives, looked very beautiful—at a distance. How beautiful and charming this region must have been when Jesus and his five disciples journeyed along this way to the marriage-feast at Cana of Galilee, where he performed his first miracle, changing water into wine. Its general appearance is beautiful even now in the poverty and wretchedness of its long neglect and wasting decay.

But here is Kerf Kenna, which is undoubtedly the site of ancient Cana of Galilee. When we came to a halt and looked around we found that the villages and homes of the Galilean peasantry of the present day, which seemed so attractive when viewed at a distance, are not beautiful and sweet when examined on close inspection.

As we entered the town we came to a spring at the foot of the hill on which the village



stands. This spring empties itself into an ancient stone sarcophagus out of which our horses drank. Standing around were a few women without veils who eyed us curiously, but turned their faces away when we looked at them, fearing lest we might inflict upon them the curse of the "evil eye." They were neither beautiful in face nor handsome in figure, and were very slovenly in dress and unclean in appearance. All around the ground is covered thickly with loose stones, but stones are everywhere more plentiful in this land than soil. This is the spring that furnished the water that was made wine. We found its water cool and refreshing. As I raised the water of the sacred fountain to my lips I felt that it was a sacramental cup of which I was about to drink, and it drew my heart close to the heart of my Saviour, like the cup of wine in the holy communion supper.

Leaving the spring we ascended the hill into the village through a lane hedged about on both sides by thickly-set prickly pear plants. In the village we found a population of about one hundred and fifty souls, all very poor. They live in miserable flat-roofed houses of mud and rough stones, which have ill-constructed and shaky-

looking arbors of canes on their unsafe roofs. Among the houses, and right in front of their doors, were piles of malodorous stable-refuse on which were seen the carcasses of dead cats and dogs and the decaying entrails of chickens. There were standing around the houses three or four mud ovens in which are baked the thin cakes of wheat and barley bread that are a common article of diet of these poor people. They looked just like the old "Dutch ovens" that I have often seen in the Carolinas and Pennsylvania in America. When required for use they are heated by such slight fuel as dry grass and weeds, or the slender brush-wood gathered from the stunted growth on the mountain-sides.

As we came through the mountains we met boys and women driving long lines of asses laden with the newly cut grass and twigs of weeds and bushes to be used on baking days. The sight of these ovens and of the bundles of grass and weeds with which they are heated, brought vividly to our mind the words of our Saviour: "Wherefore, if God so clothed the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O, ye of little faith?" I noticed that one of the

ovens was used as a chicken coop, having in it two or three hens with their broods of young chickens.

The small white stone Franciscan church with its pretty and well kept garden, all nicely railed around, was the sole object in the place on which the eye could rest with pleasure. This church stands over the traditional site of the house in which the wedding was celebrated, and has over its door-way this inscription in Latin—"Here Jesus Christ from water made wine!"

The local priest showed us in the church six water-pots of natural stone, which, he said, were the very ones our Saviour used in the miracle. Our faith could not open its throat quite wide enough to swallow this story without question; and yet, those water-pots, and similar ones found in the ruins of other places in Galilee, are of the natural stone of the surrounding country, and are very ancient. And as we know that no such jars have been manufactured in this country since the days of Christ, earthenware having long centuries ago superseded their use, it seems probable that the water-pots in the Franciscan church at old Cana belong to the age of the ruined synagogues of Galilee; and, while they are

not the very ones that were used in the miracle, they are just like them. This invests them with a peculiar interest, and proves that the records of our Gospels are very ancient, or they would have spoken of earthenware jars instead of water-pots of stone. Here the Gospel of the Land confirms the historical accuracy of the Gospels of the Book. What we see fits into what we read and explains it, just as a key fits into its lock and turns back its bolt.

## VIII

## AT CANA OF GALILEE

## WHERE HE MADE WATER WINE

The Gospels do not say that Jesus was baptized at Bethabara, but that John was at Bethabara when our Saviour came to him out of the wilderness after the forty days of his fast and temptation. Bethabara means the "house of the ferry," and it is said that it was "beyond Jordan;" that is, it was on the east side of the river. This place, as already stated, has been identified as one of the main fords of the Jordan, at a distance of about twenty-two miles from Cana. It was easy for Jesus and his disciples to have made the journey in one day. Travelers now make the journey in less than a day, and now there is no road, or next to none. In the days of Jesus there must have been a good road across the plain and over the mountains to Cana, for it seems that the town was then one of considerable size and of some im-

portance. The marriage-feast which our Saviour attended there must have been one of dignity. The parties must have been well off and influential. There were many guests, some invited from a distance, and it required a large quantity of wine to supply them. Jesus made at least fifty, possibly a hundred and fifty, gallons to supply the deficiency when the wine failed. It has been conjectured that Nathanael was the bridegroom, simply because he was a citizen of the place; and others have imagined that it was John the Evangelist, and that his characteristic modesty kept him from mentioning his name. All this is guess-work, and no one can ever know which, if any, of all the guesses is right. But we know that for some reason Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there, seeming to have authority over the servants. As the feast progressed the wine gave out, and to save the bridegroom from humiliation Jesus supplied the deficiency by changing water into wine. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed upon him. This was really the beginning of his public ministry for the world's redemption,

the divinity of which was abundantly attested by this and the other miracles that followed.

The first thing to be particularly noted here, is the significant fact that this beginning of his miracle-attested ministry was made at a marriage-feast. It emphasizes the position of the family in the divine economy of grace, and indicates that it is, in the Gospel plan of our salvation, the second corner-stone on which the church is built, Christ himself being the first and chief one. The family is the elemental unit in the church, which is composed, not of individuals, nor of nations, but of families.

Jesus did not begin his ministry in the Temple, addressing himself to the nation; nor, like John, in the wilderness, addressing himself to individuals who might be coming and going; but at the marriage-feast where old families met and a new family was formed—in the bosom and at the center of families. At the marriage-feast the families of the bride and of the bridegroom met and the members of the families of the kinsfolk and acquaintances were the guests. Thus Jesus honored marriage by his presence at the ceremony, and by the performance of his first miracle to supply wine for the feast; and, by

thus beginning his miracle-attested work for the redemption of our fallen race in a family-gathering, as all weddings are, he showed that God, in the dispensation of his grace for our salvation, deals with the race in the ties of the family-relationship. Our race is the only one of intelligent and morally responsible beings that are linked together in the family-ties of husband and wife, of parents and children, and brothers and sisters. Among the angels there is no marriage and no kindredship except that of a common creation. Our world is the world of marriage, and God deals with our race, especially in the dispensation of grace unto salvation, as with families rather than as with individuals or nations.

When God made man he made him male and female, uniting the two as one in the marriage tie with the potency and promise of offspring. In the family relationship he entered into a covenant of life with our first parents, to save them and their posterity on the condition of their perfect obedience,—not on the perfect obedience of one, or of the other, or of both separately, but on the joint and united obedience of the two together, as constituting the original family from



which all other families should spring. In the fall the act of disobedience was their joint act. It was not the eating of the forbidden fruit by one or the other alone and apart from the other, but their eating it together, as a family act, that constituted the fall, and involved the sin of the race. It was to take away this sin of the world that Jesus appeared as the Lamb of God; and he began his ministry for man's redemption in the bosom of the family. It was only after the fall, and in consequence of the fall, that the man and the woman are spoken of as distinct, and as standing apart. It was not when the woman did eat, but when she took the food and gave to her husband and *he did eat with her*, that the eyes of *them both* were opened, and they knew themselves to be naked. They no longer stood related as husband and wife, but as man and wife divorced by sin. By the act of the fall Adam lost his position as husband. The houseband was broken, and the fallen pair stood as man and woman without the divine sanctity of holy marriage. They knew that they were naked, and they were ashamed; and they could not cover up their shame by the aprons of fig-leaves they sewed together.

When they heard the Voice of the Lord *walking* in the garden in the cool of the day, they flew apart and hid themselves from the presence of the Lord, among the trees—separately, as the Hebrew word implies, one in one place and the other in another. They hid from one another, and tried to hide from the Lord.

The Voice of the Lord was heard, not *talking*, but *walking*; it was the footfalls of a person that were heard. That Voice was the Eternal Word that was with God in the beginning, and that was God by whom all things were made. That Voice—the Word—was made flesh and dwelt among men, and men beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The Voice that was heard walking in the garden in the cool of the day, was the first appearance of the only begotten Son of God in this world as the Redeemer of our fallen race; and the first step toward our redemption, was the re-establishment of the family. He reunited the man and the woman as husband and wife, and promised that of the woman a seed should be born which would crush the serpent's head. And now, born of a woman, having grown to the maturity of manhood

in the home of his mother, having been inducted into his official work by his baptism, having been prepared for that work by his forty days' fast, having met the devil in his temptation and triumphed over his power, and having gathered a few disciples around him, he appeared at the marriage-feast at Cana of Galilee—in the bosom of the family and at the center of families—as the seed of the woman; and *there* he began his work to crush the head of the serpent, and to redeem the human family from the power of his dominion.

Seeking more light upon this point, we read back in the history of the church, and find that God has always dealt with the human race, in working out its redemption, by families. He created the human race as a family, and made the covenant of life with them as a family, involving in the covenant the destiny of the posterity that should spring from them out of the family relationship.

When families had multiplied on the earth, and the race had become so corrupt and wicked that God determined to destroy mankind from off the face of the earth, and yet to save the seed of the race alive, he did not select a number of

the best men and women, and save them as individuals; but he chose a family of families—Noah and his wife, and his three sons and their wives; thus he saved the seed of the race alive by families. Again, when families had multiplied and men had forgotten God, and became so ungodly that God determined to establish on earth a church as a distinct and separate institution from the world, he did not select a number of the best men and women that could be found and constitute them into his church; but he selected a family—Abraham and his wife—and made the family the corner-stone of the church.

Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees and came into Canaan as a household—a family of families—under the promise that out of his family should spring the Seed in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed. Jesus of Nazareth is that Seed. He began his holy ministry for the redemption of the race—the work of salvation in which all the families of the earth are blessed—at the marriage-feast of Cana of Galilee, in the bosom of the home and at the center of families. By this, marriage is sanctified, and the family glorified.

The family is the grand Christian institution of our race; and in it our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, stands as the babe in his mother's arms in the stable at Bethlehem, the child subject to his parents in the home at Nazareth, the son who toiled with him who stood to him as father in the honest industry of daily labor, and the brother who was true and faithful among his brothers and sisters with whom he grew up; and in the spiritual family of the redeemed he stands forever as our great Brother—man, while he is our glorious Lord and Saviour.

At the marriage-feast at Cana of Galilee, standing among his neighbors, in the midst of whom he had grown up as the son of Mary and Joseph, he astonished them all by performing the miracle of changing water into wine. Thereby he manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed upon him. What was the glory that this beginning of miracles manifested forth among his neighbors? It was the glory of the power in him to work miracles—a power which his neighbors had never, before that moment, dreamed of as a power residing in him. His life among them for thirty years, from his childhood

up, had been so natural, so human, so just like their own lives, that they must have been astonished beyond measure when the glory of his miracle-working power blazed out among them. The generation in which Jesus lived had never seen a miracle-worker, and were not dreaming that there was a miracle-worker on the earth. Miracles had ceased from among the Jews for a period of more than five hundred years previous to the coming of Jesus. The miracle lay at the foundation of their religion just as it does with us, but there had been no miracle-worker among them for centuries on centuries. This miracle of Jesus and all that followed it, burst upon his neighbors and his contemporaries with all the wonder-producing effect that the sudden appearance of the miracle-worker among us to-day would produce.

The Bible history was not, as many seem to think, an unbroken period of miracles. The land where Jesus lived had never but once before his birth been a land of miracles; and that was in the days of Elijah and Elisha, nearly a thousand years before he was born. The great miracle-workers of Bible history were Moses and Joshua, and then Elijah and Elisha,

and last, Christ and his apostles. Between these periods there were only a few sporadic miracles. Among those by whom miracles were wrought Jesus Christ stands out alone, and by himself, as the Miracle-Worker. All others, as Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, and the apostles, were only mediums through whom miracles were wrought by a power behind and beyond them; but the power of the miracle resided in the life of Christ, and by it his life was differentiated from that of all others by whom miracles were manifested. His life on earth was the miracle of miracles, and the power of working miracles was not supernatural to it, but natural in it. In those aspects in which his life appeared to be most human, it was most miraculous; it was the miracle of his infinite self-suppression and self-control.

To understand this we must understand what the miracle is. It is the product of a power that produces an event naturally impossible, or prevents an event naturally inevitable; hence it is a work of supernatural power. The miracle is an event impossible in the orderly and ordinary course of nature. All created things, including created persons and powers, are

within the domain and under the dominion of natural laws. The miracle, therefore, is impossible with the creature, but possible with the Creator of all things. It is a work within the category of creation, and is possible only with the Creator who made all things and gave them their powers and established their laws. In creating, the Creator of necessity retained within himself power over his creation, and over all natural laws to suppress or to suspend them, and so to combine them as to make them produce events which they would not have produced in their ordinary operations, and he must have also retained within himself power to work above nature in a new creation, producing new things and establishing new, but not contradictory, laws. The miracle is always the immediate work of the omnipotent Creator and Governor of the universe.

Therefore, if the power of miracle was inherent and indwelling in the person of Jesus, his life was supernatural, and hence not under the laws of creation, except as he voluntarily condescended to subject himself to them. The power of miracle was never innate nor invested in Moses, or in Elijah, or in Paul, or in any



prophet or apostle. They were only inspired to know and to declare when God was about to perform a miraculous work, at their word and through their faith, for the purpose of attesting some divine mission or message intrusted to them. This is all that any one of them ever claimed; but Jesus claimed to be the immediate and direct miracle-worker by virtue of an inherent power indwelling and belonging to himself. His life was supernatural; and, so to speak, the supernatural was natural to him in his sphere; and the power of miracle belonged to him as a part of his life, just as the psychological power of will and the physical force of motion belong to men as a part of their lives. It was just as natural for him—that is, in perfect accord with the law of his being—to perform miracles, as it is for a man, by the volition of his will, to lift his hand to his mouth, or to direct his steps when he walks. This inherent and indwelling power of miracle in Jesus proved him to be himself supernatural—to be God himself incarnate in a human life.

The miracle is supernatural, and the supernatural is humanly impossible, but divinely possible. The miracle is a work in the category of

creation, and the Creator— but only the Creator—has absolute power in and over his creation—that is, in and over nature and all natural forces and laws. But some things are impossible even with God. The thoughts and things that fall within the category of the laws of his own absolute and eternal self-existence, can no more be suppressed or suspended than God can cease to be, or change the mode of his own absolute and immutable being. Even God cannot make two and two be more or less than four, nor all the parts to be more or less than the whole, nor a thing to be and not to be at the same moment and in the same place. Things that contradict the laws of absolute existence, are absurd and self-contradictory, and unthinkable and absolutely impossible. The water could be made wine, but it could not be water and wine at the same moment. The miracle is a work that lies between the realms of the naturally impossible and the absolutely impossible. Miracles are impossible with the creature because they lie within the causation and laws of creation which are beyond his reach, but possible with the Creator, who is behind and above his creation and is only limited by himself, and within the absolute and

immutable conditions of his own being and existence. Nature and natural laws are invincible as to the power of man, but not as to the power of God. The Creator must have infinite power over the works of his hand.

The glory of Jesus that was manifested forth by his miracle, consisted in the fact that it set him forth before his neighbors, and before the world, as the Miracle-Worker in the sense in which no mere mortal ever was, or ever can be. His miracle glorified him by setting him forth as a supernatural person, to whom the miracle was natural. In his sphere he performed miracles by the word of his mouth and the motion of his hands, as naturally as other men speak or move their limbs; and he had the same control over his miraculous power that other men have over their power of speech and action, only more sure and perfect. Accordingly, we see a marked and radical difference between his miracles and all others in the manner and ease of their performance. To note this remarkable difference, "we find," as says Dr. Trench, "oftentimes the holy men of the old covenant bringing, if one may venture so to speak, hardly and with difficulty the wonder work to the birth; there is

sometimes a momentary pause, a seeming uncertainty about the issue; while the miracles of Jesus are always accomplished with the highest ease; he speaks and it is done." Jesus was himself the Miracle-Worker. The power of the miracle resided in, and proceeded from, himself; all others, through whom miracles have been wrought, worked through their faith in the power above and beyond themselves by which the work was done.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and henceforth there flowed from his life a continuous stream of miracles. At Cana of Galilee he began his holy ministry for the world's redemption, a ministry that was proved to be divine by the miracles he did; and, henceforth, there was no hesitation, no delays in his work, nor cessation of his miracles that proved himself and his mission to be divine. From the moment he began he never slackened his hand until he cried on the Cross: "It is finished," and gave up the ghost; nor did his miracles then cease—the greatest of all followed, his resurrection from the tomb.

And we find all his miracles just such as we should expect from his character and office. He

came as the perfect model of sinless manhood to redeem men from the damnation of sin, and to deliver them from its damages, and to make of all who received him just such as he was himself, both sinless and perfect. Perfect health is soundness of both body and mind, and Jesus appeared as the good physician to heal both soul and body of the diseases and distresses of sin; and his miracles all, or most all, were of a healing and restorative nature. He gave food to the hungry, hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, wholeness to the maimed, health to the sick, and life to the dead. He gave soundness to the mind and purity to the heart, delivering from demoniacal possessions, and saying to all, "Go in peace and sin no more." He walked upon the waves of the sea and commanded the winds of heaven into stillness. He dried up the life of the tree by a word, and caused the swine to rush into the sea by a nod of consent. He created by adding more to what already existed in changing water into wine, and multiplying the loaves and fishes. All this showed that his life belonged to a sphere above nature in which he reigned as Lord and Sovereign, having power in himself over nature and all natural laws and

forces, having dominion over vegetable life in the trees, over animal life in the beasts, and over physical, mental and spiritual life in men.

His miracles were not performed in a land of miracles, nor among a people who were familiar with miracles. The people of the generation in which he lived had never seen a miracle before his day, any more than we of this generation have seen miracles. Miracles had ceased out of Israel, and out of the whole world, for a period of more than five hundred years prior to his birth. The miracle lay at the foundation of religion with them as it does with us, but there had been no miraculous manifestations among them for centuries upon centuries. They believed in miracles with all the various degrees of faith and doubt, and with all the varied explanations, that exist among ourselves at the present day. Consequently they received Jesus and his miracles with all the shades of credulity and incredulity, and of scrutiny and criticism with which we would receive the miracle-worker and his miracles, should one suddenly appear in our midst to-day.

It was natural and right that they should do as they did—scrutinize and criticise his miracles,

and analyze them to the bottom. The result was, they could not deny the fact of their performance. Their most learned, critical and competent scholars and investigators confessed and admitted the reality of the occurrence of his miracles. But if they received the miracles of Jesus as real and genuine, they could not avoid receiving Jesus with all his claims to be the Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world. Multitudes, convinced by what their eyes beheld, did receive Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of men, and became his disciples and were faithful unto him to death. Others, while admitting the fact of his miracles, sought to set aside their force by artful explanations. Some said that his mighty works were magical performances; others said that they were performed by the power of Beelzebub, the Prince of devils. Those whom his miracles did not convince, were forced of necessity to reject Jesus and cast him out as a deceiver and impostor. They could not have done otherwise. This was the alternative that was placed before them, the two horns of the dilemma that confronted them. They must receive Jesus as the Messiah or cast him out as an impostor. One or the

other Jesus was—one or the other Jesus is—the glorious Saviour of the world, or the greatest impostor that ever was on the earth.



## IX

FROM CANA TO CAPERNAUM WITH THE  
WEDDING GUESTS

## WHERE HE PERFORMED OTHER MIRACLES

From Cana, Jesus went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; but they did not tarry there long. As these all were invited guests at the wedding in Cana, it seems, though it is not so stated, that they went to the city by the little sea to continue there the festivities of the happy occasion. That would have been in exact accordance with the custom of the country, if the home of the bridegroom was in Capernaum. When the contracting parties in marriage lived in different towns the wedding ceremonies and festivities began in the home of the bride, and were concluded in that of the bridegroom. When both parties lived in the same town the festivities began simultaneously in both homes, two or

three days before the marriage proper took place. In this case the bride and her maids, never less than ten and frequently more, entertained themselves at her father's house, and the bridegroom and his companions at his father's house. In the evening of the day of the actual marriage, the bridegroom, attended by his companions, would go forth with music and torches to meet the bride and conduct her to his home. This was always done on the fourth day of the week if the bride was a virgin, or the fifth if she was a widow. The most solemn moment, that which completed the marriage, was the moment when the bride entered the house of the bridegroom—her new home. Hence, marriage was called the "reception" or the "introduction" of the wife; and hence the expression, he took to himself a wife. We have the same idea lingering in our word "infare," meaning the reception and entertainment given to a newly married wife by the husband and his parents in their home.

It was my good fortune to be an invited guest at a wedding in Nazareth where all these points were essentially carried out. It was the marriage of a converted Jew and Jewess, and hence in the ceremonies of the occasion there was a

commingling of ancient Jewish and modern Christian customs. The festivities began on Thursday afternoon, simultaneously, at the respective homes of the bride and the bridegroom; but the two festivals were kept distinct and separate until Sunday afternoon, when the bridegroom and his companions went to the home of the bride to bring her to the church where the marriage ceremony proper was performed. The bride, with her maids and friends, at her home awaited his arrival; and then the two companies formed into one procession, headed by the bridegroom and bride—he clothed in his bridal robe and wearing a crown, and she covered with a veil from head to foot—which marched to the church, where the priest performed the ceremony. The bridegroom conducted the bride from the church to his own home, where the festivities were continued for two or three days longer, the friends of both parties uniting in them.

I was told by an intelligent citizen of the place, and his information was confirmed by my well-informed dragoman, that, if the bridegroom had lived in a different town, the festivities would have commenced on Thursday in the house

of the bride, and that the bridegroom might have been present at her home from the beginning; but, in that case, he and his companions would have entertained themselves in one part of the house while the bride and her female friends were entertaining themselves in another part, it being not considered proper for young people of both sexes to mingle together in the festive pleasures of a marriage-feast. In that case, it is the usual custom for the bridegroom to furnish the feast for himself and companions; if not wholly, at least the wine. In such cases the festivities begin in the home of the bride, and are continued for three days as two separate and distinct feasts; then, on the last day, the two feasts are consolidated into one when the marriage ceremony proper takes place; then, immediately, the bridegroom departs with the bride, accompanied by her invited guests, to his own home, where the festivities are renewed and continued for three or four days.

On close inspection it seems that the marriage at Cana of Galilee was of this sort. The feast there was in the home of the bride, who seems to have been some relation of the holy family. In that case the bridegroom, who, according to

custom, furnished the wine for the occasion, would have been doubly humiliated if the deficiency had not been supplied. On this interpretation we also see an additional reason why Mary was so solicitous to have the deficiency supplied before the bridegroom should even know of its existence. We also see a reason for the prominence that was given her in the feast, she being a kinswoman, or at least the special friend of the bride in whose house the feast was being celebrated.

And on the supposition that the bridegroom's home was in Capernaum we see a good reason why Jesus, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples, should accompany the newly married couple to the bridegroom's home. Without this supposition it is not easy to understand why they should go to Capernaum instead of Nazareth, his own and his mother's home so near by. They went to Capernaum, as the especially invited guests of the bride, to continue and complete the marriage festivities in the home of the bridegroom.

If any one objects to this view of the case because it may seem to deviate in some points from certain hints in our gospels as to marriage-

customs, I would remind him that there is abundant proof, both in the Gospels and the Talmuds, that, in the days of Jesus, as at the present day, the particular forms and fashions of marriage customs and ceremonies were considerably different in different ranks of society, and were oftentimes considerably varied in the same ranks.

Prof. Edmond Stapfer, in his "Palestine in the Time of Christ," after giving a detailed account of the wedding customs, says, "The reader will have observed that there was no religious ceremony at the marriage. The benediction of relations and friends was all that the newly married couple received. The Talmuds speak strongly against free unions, but Moses instituted no marriage rite, and gave no command as to the way in which marriages should be celebrated." For this reason there was, as one would naturally expect, a great variety in the habits and customs among the Jews relative to marriage in the ancient times as well as in these modern days.

The hypothesis that his mother and brethren, instead of returning to Nazareth, went down with him and his disciples to Capernaum to be present at the concluding ceremonies and festivi-

ties of the wedding, accords well with the fact which St. John emphasizes, that "they continued there not many days." As soon as the concluding festivities at the house of the bridegroom were over, Jesus and his disciples hastened up to Jerusalem, that he might be present at the Jews' passover which was at hand; and his mother and brethren returned to their home in Nazareth. It seems, however, that during those few days he performed a number of miracles at Capernaum, and also continued to perform miracles along his journey to the holy city. His fame as the Miracle-Worker rapidly spread over the whole country, and preceded him to Jerusalem. This is easily explained when we remember that it was the passover, and the whole nation was astir, and Jews were coming from all nations, and moving from all directions, to the holy city.

We do not know what were these first miracles that Jesus performed, as they are not recorded, but suppose that they were of a nature like all his others, healing the sick, cleansing lepers, giving sight to the blind, and the like. They were such works as gave convincing proof that God was with him; for Nicodemus said unto him, concerning those he performed on his

arrival at Jerusalem, "We know that thou art a teacher sent from God, for no man can do these miracles, that thou doest, except God be with him."



## X

## IN JERUSALEM AT THE JEWS' PASSOVER

## WHERE HE PURGED THE TEMPLE

The Synoptists do not mention this visit of Jesus to the passover at Jerusalem. It is only the Gospel of St. John that gives us an account of it and of the great events that took place during his stay in the holy city. We do not know by what route the journey was made. The sacred record simply states, the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Let us try to form in our minds a picture of Jerusalem as it must have appeared to him on his arrival. The best way for us to do this now, is to look at Jerusalem as it is to-day and to remember that we now see only the remains and ruins of a ten times taken and trodden-down city. And then, out of these remnants, we are to try to reconstruct, in imagination, the holy city as it was in the day of its greatest grandeur and glory.

The present city stands over the ancient Jerusalem upon a mass of debris, varying in thickness from ten to one hundred feet, like a broken tombstone over a badly kept grave, in which we can now find only a few fragments of the broken skeleton of what the live city was when Jesus walked through the streets of it.

We enter through the Jaffa or Bethlehem-gate. What a wilderness of confusion do we find in the streets of modern Jerusalem, in their various ups and downs and manifold windings! They are as strait and narrow as the ways of righteousness, but as crooked and devious as the paths of wickedness. In fact, there are no streets in any true sense of the word, but only narrow alleys and passage-ways, from six to twelve feet wide. They are only dark, dirty and slippery street-ways leading between dirty and dilapidated houses, and under low and darksome arches and clumsy overhanging balconies, with flapping awnings of rotten straw-matting and torn and tattered canvas hanging over them, and giving them a very ragged appearance.

The whole city has the appearance of being one huge and wide-spreading building, half in ruins and yet inhabited. The streets, if streets

they can be called, seem to be the passage-ways between the apartments and rooms of one immense building from which the roof in places has been removed.

The two principal streets, one running from the Bethlehem-gate (which is also called the Jaffa-gate) to the Temple-plateau, and the other from the Damascus-gate on the north to the Zion-gate on the south, divide the city into four unequal sections, known as the Christian, Mohammedan, Jewish and Armenian quarters. Thus divided off, the different religionists live segregated from one another. Some of the streets are paved after a fashion, that is, the oriental fashion, which means that the pavement is composed of all sorts of stones, of all shapes and sizes, all thrown together in the most sublime disregard for order and regularity. The modern city has no underground drainage, and the surface gutters are for the most part choked up with filth and offal of every imaginable kind. The carcasses of dead dogs and cats, and the decaying entrails of fowls, and much that is unmentionable, lie festering in the sun, or rotting in dark recesses which the sun never reaches. It is difficult to walk through these ever-crowded

streets in the daytime without being jostled against camels, mules, donkeys, and human beings heavily laden with huge packs on their backs; and how people get through them at night at all, is more than I can tell.

We walk along Christian Street, the best street in the city, and all along we see bazaars, workshops, fruit-stalls and coffee-houses, all very curious-looking to the eyes of a western man. The bazaars look like alcoves in the walls, from six to ten feet by from twelve to fourteen, built of fragments of stone of every age, and without the least trace of order or beauty about them. In these dark and dirty stalls one can buy almost anything ever sold in an oriental market, from diamonds and fine damask silks down to the nasty and sticky dates which nothing but Arabs and flies can eat.

It is Easter week, and all Jerusalem, and especially this street, is full of pilgrims and tourists from all parts of the world. We hear around us a perfect babel of all languages, in which the deep guttural of the Arabic prevails.

Entering the Jewish quarter we find the filthiest and foulest part of this filthy and foul-odored city. The denizens of this quarter are

unmistakably Jewish in their physiognomy, and they seem to be of the poorest and most wretched class. It is said there are no Jew-beggars, and we did not hear the cry of "backshish" in this quarter; but all these Jews are beggars, living on the charity of their co-religionists in Europe and America. Here is their famous Wailing Place, a part of the substruction of the ancient Temple-wall. My heart is touched with an unutterable pity as I look at these wretched descendants of Abraham, here in this most fallen part of their once glorious city, weeping and wailing over their departed glory and lost greatness.

There are a few notable building in modern Jerusalem, among which the most noticeable are the Church of St. James, the Armenian convent, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and the mosques of Omar and Aksa. The first—the Church of St. James and the Armenian convent—are in the Armenian quarter; and the spaces around them are the places in all Jerusalem which have an air of comfort and the appearance of decency about them. Behind the convent are quite extensive and attractive gardens with shade trees in them, giving the whole place a clean, cool and delightful appearance.

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher, standing over the traditional tomb of our Saviour, is to modern Christian pilgrims, who flock to it at the Easter feast, what the Temple was to the Jews in the days of Christ at the season of the pass-over-feast. It is a patched-up work of varied architecture, in general appearance very dark and gloomy, but very picturesque and impressive. From the Church of the Holy Sepulcher we make our way direct to the Mosque of Omar, standing on Mount Moriah where the glorious Temple of the Lord once stood. The top of this mountain was enlarged by Solomon, and leveled over and formed into an elevated platform, containing about thirty-six square acres, nearly one-sixth of the whole area now within the walls of the city. It is called by the Mohammedans Haram esh Sherif—the noble sanctuary. This name is well chosen, for the top of this hill has been dedicated to religious worship from time immemorial. Tradition says that on this mountain Melchizedek offered sacrifices, and that on the rock on which the Temple of the Jews stood, and over which the mosque of the Mohammedans now stands, Abraham was about to offer Isaac when a voice from heaven stayed his hand,

and directed his eyes to a ram caught in the bushes which he took and substituted for his son, typifying that Jesus, as the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, has been substituted for man, and, dying in his stead, takes away the sin of the world.

Standing here on the mount by the Mosque of Omar, where Jesus stood by the Temple of Herod, we look around, and see a city surrounded by walls along which rise towers and turrets, including some magnificent buildings from out among which rise domes and minarets and spires; but, do we now see anything that Jesus saw? We see nothing that his mortal eyes ever beheld except the everlasting hills around the city. We have not walked on a foot of street on which his holy feet ever trod. The Jerusalem in which Solomon reigned, which Herod adorned, which Jesus saw and wept over, is a thing of the past, dead, buried and lost from human sight. The Jerusalem which we behold is an old city, but an older Jerusalem, and a still older Jerusalem, and many older ones, lie buried beneath it. The Jerusalem of to-day is but a tomb over the grave in which Jerusalem the beautiful, the glorious, the holy city of God, and the Jerusalem which

Jesus saw, lie buried deep under the debris and ruins of the ten times trodden-down city. Not a house now stands that Jesus ever saw, and the streets on which he walked are buried from ten to one hundred feet below the streets on which one walks to-day. Not one stone has been left upon another. It is only the explorers, who dig down deep under the heaps of ruins, that can show us anything of the city that Jesus saw. We look out over a city that contains less than fifty thousand inhabitants, all told, within and without its walls, but Jesus looked over a city that had more than one hundred thousand inhabitants, and was, perhaps, at the time, crowded with not less than a million of visitors. Tents were pitched in all the streets, on all the flat-roofed houses, and over the hills and valleys of all the adjacent country.

Of course the most conspicuous, the most magnificent and glorious object of all that were to be seen at Jerusalem in the days of Jesus, was the Temple. In general appearance it must have resembled a huge fortress. Within the outer walls was a series of enclosures, the walls of which were lower as they neared the center. Between these walls were terraces forming so



many courts that communicated with one another by steps. These courts were placed one above another, and ran from east to west. The first, which included all the rest, was of great extent. Within the center the Temple proper arose which, Josephus tells us, "was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, which at the first rising of the sun reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it, turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's rays. But this Temple appeared to strangers, when they were coming from a distance, like a mountain covered with snow; for as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceeding white. On its top it had spikes with sharp points, to prevent any pollution of it by birds sitting upon it."

This Temple, which was built to be a house of prayer and worship, was in the days of Christ desecrated, just as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is to-day, by being turned into a house of trade. The gateways and open spaces around the holy church at every Easter season are crowded by dishonest vendors of fabricated and false relics; and they even creep into the church

and try to force a sale of their counterfeit relics on those worshiping at the altars. Nay, worse than this! Some of the priests, while officiating, will sell the very tapers off of the altar. On Easter Sunday I approached the Altar of the Crucifixion and asked one of the officiating priests to give me one of the multitude of tapers burning there. He pretended to be horrified at the bold request, and, speaking French, replied, "C'est impossible!" But I answered, "Mais, monsieur, c'est possible pour le prix," showing him a silver coin in value about a shilling. He looked covetously at the money, and reaching down under the altar took from a box an extinguished candle and offered it to me. I shook my head and said, "Mais non, monsieur; n'est pas celui-ci; donnez moi celui-la pour le bishlik," pointing to a burning taper on the altar. Looking around to see that he was not observed, he took the burning taper from off the altar and blew it out, and handed it to me, saying, "Pour l'amour de Jesus." But he took the money all the same.

Just so low and empty as this was the Temple service in the days of Jesus. The Sadducean priests, who ministered at the altar, smiled cov-

ertly at the rites they observed. They were unbelieving and hypocritical formalists who made a trade of their sacred office. The courts of the Gentiles were filled with whole herds of oxen and flocks of sheep; and there were there, men with large wicker-cages filled with doves, and long rows of money-changers sitting at their tables wrangling in the most unseemly way as they cheated in taking change for the Jewish

shekel which every Israelite had to pay into the treasury of the Lord once every year, as a redemption-money for his soul. At the sight of the Saviour's holy indignation boiled over; taking a scourge of small cords, he drove them out of the Temple, and the sheep and the oxen; and he turned over the tables of the money-changers, pouring their money out on the floor; and said to those who sold doves, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

This transaction, done in the presence of a vast multitude, filled all the people with astonishment, and threw the guilty ones into consternation. It produced a profound sensation throughout all Jerusalem and started a wave of glory that reached unto the ends of the earth.

It is some time since we have had a good Bible reading. Let us have one in connection with this topic. For it is the Bible that tells us what to do with our troubles.

What God did for a boy who was in trouble, Gen. 21:17.

How he saved another boy from pain, Gen. 22:1.

There were Jews there from all nations, and they carried the report of it home with them. What does it mean? Who is this that dares to claim the Temple as *my* Father's house, setting himself above all others, and excluding all others from all right and possession in the Temple? Is not God our Father, and is not the Temple *our* Father's house? Who is this that claims a sonship with God in which no one else can share? With this claim he had exhibited a majesty and might of authority before which neither man nor beast could stand.

It is not said that he struck man or beast with the scourge. It is not to be supposed that he did. It is nowhere else intimated that he ever struck man or beast with his hand. "Scourge" is a stronger word than the one in the original Greek. It means a little whip, which, in the east even at the present day, is frequently carried in the hand as a symbol of authority. Our head-dragoman always carried a whip in his hand, but I never knew him to strike man or beast with it. He would "pop his whip" to call attention to his orders, or to emphasize them. The "small cords" of which Jesus made the scourge were, perhaps, the slender rushes that

were littered down for the cattle to lie on, or the small bands of grass with which the bundles of hay were bound. He lifted up this scourge in his hand as the symbol of his authority; and from before his face, in which his consuming zeal for the purity of his Father's house blazed out in the glory of his divine dignity and authority, all panic-stricken, men and beasts, rushed pell-mell from the Temple, and sought to hide themselves from his flaming indignation.

By this act the great issue was made, and made in the most distinct and emphatic way. John had appeared before him as his forerunner, and now the Lord came suddenly to his Temple, to purify it, as it had been predicted the Messiah should do. Mal. iii. 1. There was no obscurity or ambiguity about it—by this act Jesus stood in the Temple at the Jews' passover, and proclaimed himself to be the Messiah of the Jews, the desire of all nations, and the Saviour of the world. Nothing less than this was the significance of his act; and this all the Jews, both people and priests, well understood.

Should they receive him as their long expected Messiah? That was the question that was then forced upon them. They were obliged

to meet it. He made the issue, and they could not avoid it.

When men began to recover their wits and to gather their thoughts about them, the Jews, recognizing the full significance of the transaction and the great issue involved in it, came to him and said: "What sign showest thou unto us that thou art the Messiah, seeing that thou doest these things which no one but the Messiah has the authority to do?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up." In saying this he did not, as some have mistakenly supposed, point to his body. He pointed to the Temple, the building which he had just cleansed. That was the thing that was to be destroyed and rebuilt. So the Jews understood him, and so he intended to be understood. But when he said, "In three days I will raise it up," he did not mean, and he did not mean to be understood as saying, that he would raise up the material edifice of the Temple; he had then reference to the temple of his body, that is, to the church in the Christian dispensation which should arise out of the overthrow of the Temple worship as the end of the Judaic dispensation. In this declaration Jesus had no

reference to the material destruction of the Temple, nor to its material re-erection; but to the destruction of its spiritual life and significance which was accomplished by the Jews in their rejection of him, and to the re-establishment on earth of the spiritual life and significance of the church in another form, which was accomplished in his resurrection from the dead.

The Jews did not destroy the material edifice of the Temple. That was the work of the Romans. The Temple and the Temple service had no life nor religious significance except as it pointed to and typified the Lord Jesus as the coming Messiah of the Jews; and hence, his rejection by the Jews when he came destroyed its spiritual life and religious significance, and his resurrection from the tomb revived and rebuilt on earth the real life and religious significance of the Temple in the church of the Christian dispensation, which is veritably his body, the Temple in which the Lord now tabernacles among men. It was as much as if Jesus had said to those Jews, "I am the Messiah, but I am not come, as you expect and desire, to perpetuate and glorify Judaism and the Temple service, which you have destroyed by reducing it

to a dead and meaningless formalism. I am come to displace the Temple and its service by fulfilling in my body all that has been typified therein, and to replace it on earth by a spiritual organization that shall come forth on the third day after the complete destruction of the spiritual life and religious significance of the Temple and its service; and, the accomplishment of all, which neither the Jews nor the disciples of Jesus could then fully understand, shall be the sign and infallible proof, that I am what I claim to be, the Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world."

Thus Jesus declared, in terms which could not be fully understood until illuminated by his resurrection, that he had come as the Messiah, not to destroy but to fulfill. It was the work of the Jews to destroy; Jesus came not even to revolutionize religion, but to evolutionize the spiritual life of the new dispensation out of the dead formalisms of the old which had served its end, and had therefore come to its end. Christianity is not a new religion introduced into the world by Jesus, but the only true religion of the living God that had been in the world from the beginning, and hence it is the continuation of



the life of the religion of Judaism in new forms of worship and administration. For this reason the Temple shall fall and decay as a dead body, and the church will arise in its stead, and live on earth as the spiritual body of Christ, in which he forever tabernacles among men.

## XI

## A NIGHT IN JERUSALEM

## WHERE HE WAS INTERVIEWED BY NICODEMUS

At the time of the passover Jerusalem was always crowded to overflowing. Multitudes came to the great feast from every part of the land and from the principal cities of far distant nations. The streets were thronged. The houses were all full. The neighboring hills and valleys were black with tents and alive with people. Jesus remained in the city during the passover-week.

On the great day of the feast he performed many miracles at the Temple in sight of all the people; and many believed upon him and became his disciples when they saw his miracles. The authorities were obliged to take notice of Jesus and his miracles, and of his claim to the Messiahship based upon, and attested by, his miracles. They were not performed in a corner,

but in Jerusalem, and at the very door of the Temple.

And yet, in the face of all this, M. Ernest Renan has said: "There is not a solitary exception to the rule, that miracles are never produced before those who are able or permitted to discuss and criticise them. Credulity on the part of the witness is the essential condition of the miracle. A miracle never takes place before an incredulous and skeptical public, the most in need of such a convincing proof. In other words, miracles only exist where people believe in them. Discussion and examination are fatal to miracles. A miracle at Paris, for instance, before experienced *savants*, would put an end to all doubts. But, alas! such a thing never happens."

Let us take all these objections and apply them to the miracles of Jesus, and see how empty and futile they are. The miracles of Jesus were performed in the open air and in broad daylight, and in presence of an incredulous and disbelieving multitude; and the multitude that was influenced by every conceivable reason to deny and to disprove them, admitted them and tried to explain them away. Vast

numbers, seeing them, and seeing that they could not be explained away, believed in his miracles and became his disciples. His miracles were universally discussed and closely examined, and were, on such examination, admitted and received as genuine.

But they were not performed at Paris, and before experienced *savants*! Paris was not in existence then, neither were the experienced *savants* born; but Jerusalem was in existence, and the most learned and critical men of the world were gathered there. In the midst of that city, at the very doors of its great Temple, on the great day of the feast, in presence of the assembled nation, under the eyes of the most learned and most experienced of the age, in the presence of the most critical and most incredulous, these miracles of Jesus were performed and submitted to the examination and criticism, and to the open and secret discussion of the most learned and competent, not of friends, but of foes. The conditions laid down by M. Renan were exemplified in rigor and to the extreme. Miracle itself could not have called together a more critical, and, at the same time, a more inimical, board of examiners than that to which

the miracles of Jesus were submitted for examination and report.

And, besides, many of the miracles were of a nature not to require, or even to admit of, anything more than the exercise of common sense, and of the testimony of the five senses, to test their reality and genuineness. Those who were known to be blind received sight, who were known to be deaf received hearing, and who were known to be maimed were made whole. The learned doctors of the law and the rabbis of the schools sat in critical discussion and examination of his miracles, and reported: "We know that this man is from God; for no man can do these miracles, *which he doeth, except God be with him.*" What more could be demanded? What more was possible? M. Renan was not born then; but, perhaps, he would not have believed, if he had seen the miracles. There were those who saw them, and did not believe; but they did not deny his miracles. They admitted them, and tried to get around them by artfully attributing them to Satan himself.

This brings us to a consideration of the circumstances that brought about the night-inter-

view between Nicodemus and Jesus. This man was a Pharisee, and of the rulers of the Jews. It also appears that he was not merely a member of the Sanhedrin, but that he also held in the court a most prominent and responsible official position. He was the teacher of Israel,—the *didaskalos*. The Sanhedrin was both a civil and an ecclesiastical court, and its officers consisted of a president, who presided, the lawyer, who sat on the right hand of the president, to whom all questions of law were referred, and the theologian, who sat on the left hand, by whom all theological points were decided. This last is the position that Nicodemus held.

This Nicodemus came to Jesus by night—most likely the night of the great day of the feast on which Jesus had cleansed the Temple and performed miracles on the Temple-plateau in presence of all the people. He did not come on his own sole responsibility, but as the representative of others who thought as he did, and who had sent him to interview Jesus on certain points involved in his public works and words of the previous day. He said to Jesus, “*We know;*” and Jesus replied to him, “*Ye receive not.*” Why these plurals? In a private interview,

in which such weighty topics were discussed, we cannot suppose that the plural could be used for the singular, by such persons as Jesus and Nicodemus, in the way of etiquette, like rhetoricians or high court diplomates. Nicodemus came for others as well as himself, and spoke for them while speaking for himself; and this fact seems to have been well understood by Jesus, and recognized and emphasized in his answers. Well, then, whom did Nicodemus represent? It seems that he must have been sent from the Sanhedrin of which he was the theologian—the teacher authorized to speak decisively on all points of doctrine and questions of prophecy.

In view of what Jesus had done during the day, of the claims he had advanced, of the authority he had asserted, and of the miracles he had exhibited, the Sanhedrin could not be silent. Jesus, with his claims to the Messiahship, could not be ignored, nor could his case be postponed. The Jewish authorities must deal with the question. It was thrust upon them. Jesus had entered the Temple and had claimed it as his Father's house; and he had driven those out who were there by the permission and authority of its constitutional control. He had stood in

the courts of the Temple and performed miracles to prove the rightfulness and divine authority of his claim. Many, believing in his name when they saw the miracles he did, were becoming his disciples. He had also spoken of the destruction of the Temple. A word that cut to the quick, and was never forgotten. The issue was made. It had to be met.

The Sanhedrin was obliged to meet and consider the case. It must have met that afternoon. It considered the claims of Jesus. The members were not prepared to admit them. Perhaps there was no single member ready to receive Jesus as the Messiah. They considered his miracles. They could not deny them. They were forced to admit that they were real and genuine, and, if so, that Jesus must be a teacher sent from God. They found themselves ready to receive Jesus, on his miracles, as a prophet—as a teacher sent from God—if he would give up his claim of being the Messiah. They appointed and commissioned Nicodemus, the teacher of the Sanhedrin, to go and see Jesus, and to tell him that the Sanhedrin was ready to recognize him as a teacher come from God, but not as the Messiah, and to ques-



tion him as to the nature and extent of his claims.

The Sanhedrin continued in session till toward the going down of the sun. It could not sit after sunset. That threw the interview of Nicodemus with Jesus into the night; and this was the only reason why the night was chosen, except, perhaps, Jesus was so continuously engaged in the day that there was no opportunity for a private interview with him.

When Nicodemus came to Jesus he began to lay before him the proposition authorized by the Sanhedrin, by saying to him:

“Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.”

Jesus did not wait for him to finish what he had to say, but broke in upon him in the most solemn way, saying to him, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

It was as much as if he had said, “I know what you are about to propose, and in the most solemn manner I tell you I cannot accede to it, because it is not true; I am more than a teacher sent from God; I am the Son of God, come down

from heaven to establish the kingdom of God on earth, and no man can see that kingdom unless he be born again. It is not more light, but another life, that men need; and I have come to give it to them." Jesus answered not only the words that Nicodemus had said, but also the thoughts that were in his mind, as yet but half expressed.

Nicodemus was confused, and he attempted to recover himself by trying to force into the words of Jesus a literalness which they could not bear, and which they were not intended to carry. He said, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

In his mind the reference was, no doubt, to Judaism; and his words were as much as if he had said, "Is the kingdom of God just now about to be born into the world? Is not Judaism, which is summed up and represented in the Temple which you invaded to-day, the kingdom of Jehovah on the earth? It is old. It cannot be reborn, any more than a man, when he is old, can enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born. It may be reformed, but cannot be reborn." To this Jesus replied, "Verily,

verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus was all the time trying to make of Christ's personal reference a national application. Jesus spoke of the new birth of the individual man who would enter into his kingdom, but Nicodemus had come to him as the representative of the highest tribunal of the nation, and had in his mind a national question, involving the life of the national religion which he represented; and seeing this, Jesus, in his second answer, had reference to the ministry and baptism of John in their relations to his own ministry and the baptism which he had come to give.

John's mission was to the nation of the Jews as a nation, and he preached repentance and baptism of water for the remission of sins and as a preparation of the nation for the coming of the kingdom of God, which he declared to be at hand.

The end of John's ministry was a national reformation which Nicodemus seemed to think was all that was needed, or possible; and he, speaking for the Sanhedrin, was ready to receive

Jesus as a teacher come from God to carry forward and to complete the reformation begun by John, of which the baptism of water was the sign and seal.

“My ministry,” said Jesus, “goes beyond that of John, and is higher; his prepared the way for the coming of the kingdom of God, and mine opens the kingdom of heaven on earth for which his prepared the way. If men have so far misunderstood John’s ministry and his baptism that they think that he proposed nothing more than a mere reformation of old forms and practices as the condition required for admission into the kingdom of heaven, which he declared to be near at hand, they have fallen very far short of comprehending it; for, it is not the improvement of an old life, but the beginning of a new life, that is required; and in order to enter into that new life one must be born, not only of water into the promise of national reformation, but also of the Spirit into the power of the new life of the kingdom of God on earth. All who are thus born of the Spirit come into my kingdom, and none others. They see in me not merely a prophet, but the Messiah, not merely another teacher come from God to give more light to

men, but the Son of God come down from heaven to earth to give a new life to men. I am, therefore, first the Messiah of the Jews; and, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever of the Jews believe in him, should not perish, but have eternal life; but I am more than the Messiah of the Jews—I am the Saviour of the world; for, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever of the human race believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world—not only Jews through Judaism—but the whole world through him might be saved.”

Thus was Nicodemus convinced that Jesus would not consent to be received merely as a teacher come from God; but that he claimed to be, at once, the Messiah of the Jews, and the Saviour of the world—the Son of God from heaven become the Son of man on earth that the kingdom of God might be born into this world, and that men might be born of the Spirit into the kingdom of God on earth.

What immediate effect this interview had on

Nicodemus we do not know. He departed in silence, and seems to have gone away halting between two opinions, not fully convinced one way or the other.

It put him upon observing the future course of the Lord without prejudice against him. He did not become his disciple, and secretly serve him as did Joseph of Arimathea. But he carefully observed him, and the truth made gradual progress in his mind; and finally he was fully convinced by the scenes of the crucifixion, that Jesus was the Christ; and then he unreservedly yielded himself to the accumulative proofs of his Messiahship, and became his disciple, and boldly united with Joseph of Arimathea in burying the body of the Lord. The power of his death overcame the timidity of Joseph, and wrought full conviction in Nicodemus's mind.

Neither do we know what kind of a report he made to the Sanhedrin, nor what effect it produced upon that august body. As it does not seem that the members of that high court took any further steps in the case at the time, it is more than probable that they were not able to come to any definite conclusion among themselves as to what to do. They never forgot,

however, the declaration of Jesus, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up." That was kept alive in their memory, and was brought up as a charge against Jesus in his final trial before the Sanhedrin, which, at the last, condemned him to death because he made himself the Son of God. This is an additional proof that we are correct in our interpretation, that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night as the authorized commissioner of the Sanhedrin. As Jesus would not consent to take his position as one of the prophets—as a teacher come from God—they kept alive the original charge against him, that he made himself the Son of God. Jesus was, after three years' delay, sentenced to death on this original indictment.

## XII

## FROM JUDEA INTO GALILEE AGAIN

## HE MUST NEEDS GO THROUGH SAMARIA

How long Jesus remained in Judea after his interview with Nicodemus, where all he went, and what all he did, are things that we can never know. They are not recorded. All we know is, that Jesus and his disciples went into the rural districts of Judea, and tarried there for a while, and that his disciples began to baptize those who came to his ministry, and that John was somewhere in the same region in Ænon near Salim, baptizing because there was there a sufficiency of water to supply the necessities of the multitudes that were still resorting to his ministry. There John bore an additional glorious testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus, saying that he was come from above, and was above all; that he was the Son of God, and that the Father loved him and had committed all things into his hand, and had given him the Spirit not



by measure, and that God had sent him into the world to speak the words of God unto men, and that, "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." It seems that this glorious testimony of John to Jesus was occasioned by certain Jews raising the question with some of his disciples as to the relative importance of their master's baptism and that of Jesus, alleging that, since Jesus had begun to baptize also, John's baptism was rendered not only superfluous, but nugatory. To this John replied in sublime fidelity to his own mission, "This is just as I have declared from beginning; he that cometh after me is mightier than I, and he must increase, and I must decrease." In consequence of this controversy between the Jews and John's disciples, and because he knew that the Pharisees were making all the use of it possible against his own ministry, Jesus left Judea, and departed again into Galilee; and, by the road he selected for the journey, he must needs go through Samaria.

We do not know where Jesus started from, but suppose he set out from Jerusalem, or its vicinity. We have, as thousands of others

have also done, traveled over the same road by which he must have gone, passed over the same mountains on which his holy feet must have trodden, and drank at the same fountains, along the way, at which he and his disciples must have quenched their thirst. What a privilege, and how full of solemn thought! What precious lessons can be learned from such a journey! Leaving Jerusalem by the Damascus-gate, we had our last, long, and lingering view of the holy city, as he must have had, from the crest of Scopus on which the army of Titus encamped when he came and began the ruin and wide-spread waste that reign, as a perpetual desolation, over all things which our eyes now behold. The scene was not one of ruins and desolation, as it now is, when Jesus viewed it as he departed on this journey from Judea into Galilee. Scopus is the northwest spur of the Mount of Olives, and from its summit the view of Jerusalem and the surrounding mountains is very fine and impressive. In the days of Jesus everything was in the highest and most perfect state of improvement and cultivation. The mountains were terraced to their tops, and clad with vines and orchards, amid which stood the elegant

mansions of the rich and the charming homes of well-to-do people, embowered in trees and flowers, all fragrant with sweet odors. From no other point can one so clearly see that "Jerusalem is compact together and beautiful for elevation." It is here that all coming from the north catch their first sight of the holy city, which bursts, all at once, upon the vision as they rise to the summit. The first Crusaders came this way, and when they reached this point, and the holy city, seated on the mountain-tops like a queen on her throne, flashed upon their view in a sudden vision of beauty, they were not able to restrain their tears, nor to withhold their shouts. They made the blue heavens ring with their joyous exclamations; and then, weeping for joy, they fell upon their knees and baptized the sacred soil with the tears of their gratitude for being permitted to see the holy city which they had come to redeem from the hands of infidels and oppressors.

There is still a sort of beauty in the view, but it is the beauty of weeping widowhood and mournful desolation. The city, standing amid gloomy and ghastly ruins, has about it a ragged and funereal appearance that suggests the

thought of a widow weeping in torn and tattered weeds, which, by the richness of their faded materials, evince a state of former wealth and glory, from which she has fallen into a condition of poverty and shame. As I gazed on the scene of desolation, a sense of loneliness and sadness crept into my heart, and there seemed to come a dimness over the face of nature because there had arisen a moisture in my eyes. All around are seen woodless, barren, and rocky hills, with no green to relieve the eye save the somber green of a few dust-covered old olive trees, scattered sparsely on the mountain slopes, and looking like battle-soiled and worn-out soldiers creeping back in disorder and disgrace, after defeat, to hide themselves behind the rocks. On every flattened or rounded crest there were ruins that mark the site of some ancient town, each of which is replete with biblical and historical interest. In the northwest Neby-Samwill rises above the plain, marking the site of old Mizpeh, where Samuel, the last of the judges, was buried, and Saul, the first of the kings, was crowned. A little northeast are the ruins of Nob where David, fleeing from Saul, eat the shew bread which ordinarily should have

been eaten by the priests alone, and where he took possession of the sword of Goliath, the giant whom he had slain, to which, above all others, he was entitled, though it is doubtful whether the means he used to obtain it can be approved. Moving northward, and making a slight detour to the right, we came to a hill called by the Arabs, Tuli-el-Ful, which has been identified as the ancient Gibeah of Benjamin, called afterwards Gibeah of Saul because he became the most prominent man of the tribe of Benjamin in the Old Testament times as Paul the Apostle was in the New Testament times. Here we stand on a spot, now having scarcely a trace of ruins to mark it, which will be forever memorable as the scene of bloody and terrible events. It was here, in the days when there was no king in Israel, that the atrocious crime recorded in Judges xix and xx, was committed against the wayfaring Levite and his concubine that led to a terrible war, which came well-nigh ending in the complete extermination and utter extinction of the tribe of Benjamin from the family of Israel. In this place was the residence of Kish, and here Saul, the first king of Israel, was born. This was the first capital

of the kingdom, and here Saul reigned, on an elevation overlooking the whole surrounding country. It was here that David permitted the Gibeonites to slay seven sons of Saul for their murderous crimes; and here was the scene of Rizpah's maternal devotion, keeping watch over the dead bodies of her sons, day and night, for so many weeks, protecting them from "the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the field"—an unparalleled exhibition of maternal grief and love which has been celebrated in poetry and painting, and which the world can never forget while mothers love their children living, and grieve for them when dead.

As we rode forward through a rocky and rugged region we came to a place in the folds of the mountains that is associated with the name of Jesus by tradition. It is ancient Beeroth, now called El Bireh, which means the spring. There is here a bold spring of good water from which a small rivulet flows away, murmuring over the rocks. The place has some interesting ruins, among them a portion of an old Crusading church. A tradition says that this is the place where Mary and Joseph missed the Child-Jesus on their return from

the passover-feast at Jerusalem, to which they had taken him when he was twelve years of age. It is ten or twelve miles north from Jerusalem, and has been from time immemorial much used as a camping-place by north-bound caravans for the first night out from Jerusalem. We lunched at the fountain, and it was quite pleasant to think that we were drinking out of a spring out of which our Saviour may have drank as he passed this way. Leaving Bireh we soon passed the never clearly-defined boundary between the territories of Judah and Israel, and came to the site of old Bethel, now called Betin. Here it was that Abraham pitched his tent and erected an altar to God. Here it was also, years afterwards, that Jacob, fleeing from Esau, and having no tent to pitch, laid himself down on the roadside to sleep, using the hard stones of the place for his pillow. It is possible that the stones he used may have been the very ones that Abraham had used in the construction of his altar. Anyway, he found himself in the house of God, and saw in his dream a ladder let down from heaven, on which the angels descended and ascended; and here God confirmed to him the covenant made with

Abraham. In after years this sacred place was desecrated by Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who taught Israel to sin, by erecting here a temple for the worship of the Golden Calf. A tradition says that the temple of Jeroboam was erected on the loftiest elevation, and rose so high that the priests of the idol-worship could look down upon the priests worshipping Jehovah on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. It was by the altar of the Golden Calf in this temple that Jeroboam was standing when, at the rebuke of the fearless prophet of Jehovah, his hand was withered, and the pagan altar was riven from top to bottom. Since then it seems that the curse of God has rested upon this place. It is not so much as mentioned in the New Testament; and, though Jesus must have passed by it, he did not deign even to look at it so as to associate his name with it. The patriarchs called it Bethel, the house of God; but the later prophets, after the altar of the Golden Calf had been erected there, called it Beth-avan, the house of nothing; and Amos predicted that the place would come to naught. It is now, indeed, nothing more than an ordinary barren hillside, over which the road passes with nothing to mark clearly the moment when one reaches or leaves it.



As we journeyed on over mountains and through plains we came to the uninhabited town of Selun, which is, undoubtedly, the site of ancient Shiloh, where the ark of the Lord rested so long. Here we found the ruins of an ancient city on a slight eminence, rising from a somewhat extensive plain. Of the tabernacle in which the ark rested there are, of course, no remains. There is, however, on the summit of the hill, the remains of what was first a Jewish synagogue, then a Christian church, and then a Mohammedan mosque, and which is now a moldering ruin. To relate and comment on all the memorable events that cluster around the name of this once sacred place, would require too much space, and lead us too far away from our purpose in this work. The ark of God, that rested here for so many centuries, was at once the most impressive and the most expressive type of Jesus Christ. We cannot pass on from the site of old Shiloh without a word about the ark that remained here so long. Why did the children of Israel hold this very curious sacred vessel in such high esteem? At times it seems that they had for it an almost superstitious regard. There was a typical dispensation, and

the ark of the Lord was the highest type of all. It was the type of their promised Messiah in the manifold relations of his person, nature, work, and redemption. And as such it was the symbol of the presence of the Lord with them, as his chosen and peculiar people. In this ark, then, we find the most expressive and instructive type of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The ark was a double chest, one containing the other. It was a chest of the finest wood incased in a chest of purest gold. The precious metal incased the finest wood within and without. In this we have a type of the dual nature of Jesus Christ, his perfect humanity embraced within his absolute divinity.

2. The ark contained shut up within it, the two unbroken tables of the law, given on Mount Sinai. The two tables first given were cast down upon the earth and broken, and their broken fragments were left outside the ark upon the earth. In this is typified the twofold fact that the law of the Lord is contained in the person of Christ Jesus in its unbroken perfection, and that outside of Christ the law of the Lord, broken in the hands of man, rests upon the world. And further, the unbroken law in

Christ has no power of condemnation against those who believe in him, because it is fulfilled and shut up in him by his perfect obedience; but the broken law, outside of his atonement, is a power of condemnation resting upon the world, which can give to it, at best, only a broken and fragmentary obedience.

3. The mercy-seat was upon the ark, over the lid under which the unbroken law was shut up. This shows that the Gospel is a provision of mercy dispensed to men from the seat of fulfilled law and satisfied justice. There are many other respects in which the ark of the Lord, either in its materials, construction, or use, symbolized some aspect of the person, nature, or work of Jesus Christ, the Messiah of the Jews, and the Saviour of the world, of whom it was the great type.

Leaving Shiloh we hastened over the mountains and through the valleys until we came to Jacob's well, near Sychar, where we came upon the very footprints of our Saviour, and could almost hear the echo of his voice lingering in the mountains, repeating his words to the woman of Samaria: "I that speak unto thee, am He." As we advanced the char-

acter of the country rapidly changed. We were no longer in a wilderness, but in the midst of a scene of real and rare beauty. Fertility and fruitfulness greeted the eye on all sides. Everywhere there was water and verdure and shade, and yet no wild and dense thickets to give the landscape a gloomy aspect, nor impetuous mountain torrents rushing noisily down steep declivities and rolling tumultuously away through sloping and rock-filled valleys. The Koran says where there is water there is life; and this plain, which is "the parcel of land that Jacob bought and gave to Joseph," and in which Jacob's well is found, is well watered and full of life. There are no less than twenty-seven large sized springs, besides a great many smaller ones, that pour the streams of their riches into it, keeping it always fresh and green. Fine groves of deep-green fig trees and dark-green olives, and luxuriant vineyards of vigorous vines, and rich orchards of almonds, apricots, and pomegranates, all covered with a flood of white, pink, and scarlet blooms, beautified the valley; and numerous birds flitting among the trees and filling the shady recesses with their melodious songs, gave to the lovely scene a charm which words

cannot describe. The beauty of this charming place was greatly enhanced by reason of its contrast with all other places that we have yet seen in this worn-out land of universal wastes and perpetual desolations. It was in this lovely valley that Abraham first halted and pitched his tent when he came into the land of Canaan from his own far-off country. This is the Plymouth-rock of the Jewish people, the birth-place of the greatest nation that fills a page in the volume of human history.

On the two sides of the valley are twin mountain ridges, rising up above all the other mountains of Samaria, very much alike in shape and size, but quite different in character. One of them, Ebal, is bare and sterile, and the other, Gerizim, is fertile and fruitful, from base to summit.

It was in this beautiful green valley, between these two towering mountains, that Joshua, when he had gotten possession of the land, gathered all the thousands upon thousands of the Israelites, men, women, and children, and caused "the blessings and curses of the law" to be read to them, the blessings from fertile and fruitful Gerizim, and the curses from bare and

barren Ebal. There is no visible reason why one of these mountains should be fertile and the other sterile, and fanciful minds have imagined that the fertility of Gerizim is due to the fact that the blessings were read on it, and the sterility of Ebal to the fact that the curses were sounded from its summit; but it is more reasonable to suppose that they were always as they are now, and that Gerizim was chosen for the blessings on account of its fruitfulness, and Ebal for the curses on account of its barrenness.

The valley between these two mountains is so wide that it has been assumed that it is impossible that the voices of the readers on the opposite mountains could have been heard by the people encamped in the valley between them, and by the readers themselves so as to enable them to alternate with one another in their reading; and infidels have made merry over the assumed incredibility of this biblical narrative. Of course, there is an easy way of answering this sneering objection by assuming that the whole transaction was miraculous; but we are not in favor of assuming a miracle when the event, however wonderful in itself, can be explained as the result of natural causes. This

law of interpretation diminishes the number of supposed miracles, but increases the credibility of the real ones. And so we tried the experiment to test the question, whether readers on the opposite mountains can be heard by one another, and by those in the valley; and though we were pressed for time and the experiment was made under most unfavorable circumstances, yet we saw and heard enough to convince us that, if the day was calm and the readers possessed strong and clear voices, every word would be distinctly audible from mountain to mountain, and all over the valley, owing, partly, to the peculiar conformation of the hillsides, forming, as it were, a double amphitheater, and partly to the acoustic quality of the dry atmosphere enabling it to convey sounds to an immense and amazing distance. The experiment was completely made in April of 1880 by an Episcopal clergyman and a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Harry Jones, Prebendary of St. Paul's, London, and Rev. Dr. Hoge, Presbyterian pastor in Richmond, Va., and the Rev. Mr. Jones thus reports the results: "We spent a day there, and after ascending to the summit of Gerizim, tested the acoustic property of the valley be-

tween the two hills on which were set the blessings and the cursings. I was on the slope of Mount Gerizim, while Dr. Hoge went some distance up that of Ebal, the space between us being between half and three-quarters of a mile. Indeed, as I saw the doctor ride down from the spot on Gerizim, where we stood, cross the valley, and creep up the side of Ebal till his horse looked no bigger than an ant, it seemed almost foolish to make the experiment we contemplated. I fancied that it would be impossible even to hear his voice over the chasm beneath us. We had arranged to give signals. He was to take off his hat, which was covered with a large white puggery, for me to begin; but the distance between us was too great for me to distinguish any such indication. However, at last, seeing that he had fairly stopped, I read aloud, slowly, one of the Psalms for the day, feeling all the while that I might just as well have addressed the house of commons from Lambeth Palace. Then I paused. I had understood the doctor to say that he would recite the thirty-first Psalm, and I turned to it in my prayer-book. Great was my surprise when, from the little dot on the hillside I heard, in his voice, across the val-



ley: 'The Lord is my shepherd,' etc. 'It is the twenty-third!' I exclaimed to his friend, who had remained with me. This was a severe test. It was made doubly so by a party of Turkish soldiers who, hearing me, came out of some barracks which lay beneath us, and began talking. When I rejoined the doctor I found that he had heard me plainly. Indeed, he remarked on the difference between the version of the Psalms I had read and that he was familiar with in America. Two companions who remained in the valley between us distinguished every syllable with the greatest ease."

This establishes the credibility of the narrative in the book of Joshua, and shows that there was no miracle in the transaction in his day; or if there was, it has been left fixed permanently on the place, and repeats itself through all centuries to all who make the experiment on the spot. Many other supposed miracles would resolve themselves into the results of natural causes if we could only get into the exact situation of their occurrence, and thus put the question to the test on the experimental system.

## XIII

## AT JACOB'S WELL

## WHERE HE MET THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

In this valley, just where it opens into the beautiful little plain of Moreh, is Jacob's well, where our Saviour sat and talked with the woman of Samaria. When and why Jacob dug this well in the midst of an abundant supply of water, is a question that one is forced to ask, and for which only a conjectural answer can be found. On this question both the oracles of God and the histories of men are silent. In Gen. xxxiii: 18-20, we read that Jacob, when he returned from Padan-aram into the land of Canaan, came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel. In this account there is nothing

said about his digging a well. And in Joshua xxiv: 32 we read that the children of Israel brought the bones of Joseph out of Egypt into Canaan, and buried them in the parcel of ground which Jacob had bought of the sons of Hamor, and that that parcel of land became "the inheritance of the children of Joseph." Neither in this place is the well mentioned. The well is not mentioned in our Holy Scriptures until we find Jesus at it in conversation with the woman of Samaria. Undoubtedly, the well was known as Jacob's well when John wrote his gospel. He simply says: "Now Jacob's well was there." The woman said, Jacob himself drank of the well, his children and his cattle. She may have been mistaken, but no doubt what she said had been handed down by tradition, and was universally believed. There is no good reason to doubt that Jacob dug the well. But why did he dig it? There is an abundant supply of water all around. A bold and perennial stream runs near by. Why did the woman of Samaria come so far to get water out of this particular well? It is true that she may not have come from Shechem, as was formerly supposed, but from Sychar, the site of which is marked by the mod-

ern village of Askar at the foot of Ebal, much nearer than Nablus, which now marks the site of ancient Shechem; but even then she had to come past living fountains and across a bold, flowing stream in order to reach the well. Dean Stanley suggests that Jacob, in his characteristic prudence and caution, went to all the labor and expense of digging this very deep well, in the midst of an abundant natural supply of water, in order to be independent of his neighbors for his water, and thereby to avoid all causes of quarrel with the tribes among whom he had settled. But since there were there so many natural springs and streams, and some of them on the parcel of ground which he had bought, I cannot see why he should dig an expensive well, nor how it could keep him out of trouble with his neighbors any more than the natural springs that were on his own land. For these reasons I feel myself forced to the conclusion that there must have been some religious motive for digging the well. It must have been in some way connected with the worship of the altar El-elohe-Israel. All the fountains and streams around may have been dedicated to the worship of one or another of the imaginary deities worshiped

by the tribes among whom he had settled. He wanted water for his family use, and especially for his religious ablutions, which was not, in the eyes of the surrounding inhabitants, consecrated to any false deity. This same reason may account for the woman of Samaria coming by bountiful fountains and crossing a bold, flowing stream to get water out of Jacob's well. It was in her eyes a holy well, and she had come to get holy water for religious purposes. This view of the case, and it seems to be the only one that reasonably explains all the difficulties, gives a deeper significance to all reference to water in the conversation between Jesus and the woman. In her eyes the water of that well was sacred water, having in it a religious potency. She had come to get it for a religious purpose and use. This also explains why she was so much surprised that Jesus, being a Jew, should ask of her, a woman of Samaria, a drink of the holy water which she had drawn out of the sacred well for religious use. It was not contrary to law or custom in the days of Jesus for Jews to obtain from Samaritans a supply of necessary food and drink. Were not his disciples at that very moment gone over into the Samaritan city to pro-

cure a supply of food? Did not Jesus and his disciples, on the invitation of the Samaritans, go over into their city and abide with them for two days? Is it not well known, as Stier says, that necessary food and drink in traveling were expressly excepted in the law, forbidding general traffic between Jews and Samaritans? The Greek word *sugchraomai* used in the explanatory clause thrown in by the evangelists, "for the Jews have no *dealings* with the Samaritans," may be properly translated have no *communion*; that is, they do not enter into commercial relationship with them in business, nor religious fellowship with them in worship. Of course, the Samaritan woman was surprised at the seeming readiness of the Jew to enter into religious communion with her by drinking of the holy water which she had drawn from the sacred well. If, indeed, the woman came to the sacred well to get water for a religious purpose, the conversation had a religious turn, and a religious significance in her mind, as well as in the mind of the Saviour, from the beginning. Jesus answered the thought that was in her mind as well as the words that fell from her lips; and he began from the first to reveal himself to her as the Messiah

whom the Samaritans were looking for, as well as the Jews. Jesus went on to convince her that there was something better than the best that Samaritanism or Judaism had to offer, and that he had come into the world to give it—the true gift of God, the water of a spiritual life springing up within the soul and flowing out in a stream of everlasting life. This was better than the holy water of Jacob's sacred well, and the woman, awakened and half understanding, began to pray for it: "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." As yet she had no clear conception either as to who Jesus was, or as to what the living water which he had to give might be, but she was beginning to understand that it was not water itself for the thirsty throat, but something spiritual for thirsty souls, of which water was the symbol. Thus there was awakened in her soul a thirst for that living water, and a desire for the blessings flowing from it, of which she, as yet, could only dimly conceive.

But she must know both herself and Jesus better before she could receive the water of life from him; for she can only know Jesus as a Saviour by first knowing herself as a

sinner; and so, he speaks the word that turns her eyes in upon herself: "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." This word flashed upon her a new light, bright as the lightning of heaven; and in it she saw herself as she had never seen herself before:—she saw herself a sinner, and confessed, "I have no husband." Jesus answered, "Thou hast well said; thou hast had five husbands, and the man whom thou now hast, is not thy husband; thou hast spoken truly." This word turned her eyes, in the new light then shining around her, upon Jesus, and she saw in him a prophet; but whether he was a Jewish or Samaritan prophet, she did not know. He was himself manifestly a Jew, but as he had asked of her a drink of the holy water of Jacob's well, sacred to the Samaritans, her mind was thrown into confusion. She did not know whether she should come to him through the religion of the Samaritans or through that of the Jews; and so she appealed unto him, as to a recognized prophet, to solve the question for her. Jesus' answer was, "Neither as a Samaritan nor as a Jew, but simply as a sinner coming to her Saviour, she might come to him; for the hour had come when neither by the Samaritans



in Gerizim, nor by the Jews at Jerusalem, was God truly worshiped. For God is a spirit, and cannot be worshiped in empty forms and unspiritual ceremonies, but must be worshiped in spirit and truth; and all who, in sincerity and truth, seek after God in their worship, shall find him, and be found of him, no matter how imperfect and erroneous the outward forms and ceremonies may be. Salvation is of the Jews, but it is not for the Jews only; it is for all who will worship the Father in spirit, with sincere intentions of mind and honest purpose of heart." A new faith was struggling into birth in her heart, and its new hope was lighting up her soul; and so she said, half believing and half hoping, "I know that the Messiah cometh, and when he is come, he will tell us all things." To this Jesus simply said, "I that speak unto thee, am He." That was all; but that was enough. She believed. She was saved.

But this woman was a sinner. Is that compatible with the idea that she came to the sacred well of Jacob to draw holy water as an act of worship, or to carry it home with her to be used in religious ablutions? Why not? She loved her sin, and did not want

to give it up, and so she was vainly trying to wash it white in holy water that she might keep it. Many before her, and multitudes since her day, have tried to do the same thing. Her secret sin was prompting her to multiply her open acts of ceremonial worship. Her five husbands had been lawful husbands, and, no doubt, her separation from them had been by lawful means, either by death or by divorce in due forms of law. Or, it may be that they, one after another, had put her away. She may have been more sinned against than sinning; and yet, she was herself a sinner, in having the man she then had who was not her husband. She does not seem to have been an altogether fallen woman. She was not shameless. She had not altogether abandoned hope. She had not given herself over, soul and body, to a life of open and shameless sin. Her sin was secret. She was trying to keep her sin and to hide it; and at the same time she was seeking to ease her conscience, to atone for her sin, by excessive religious services. Hers was only a common inconsistency in human nature.

But did Jesus really intend to drink of the water the woman of Samaria drew as holy water

from the sacred well? Not necessarily so, no more than he intended to pass on when "he made as though he would go further," when he and the two disciples, going to Emmaus, drew nigh unto the village whither they went. When he said to the woman, "Give me to drink," it was to bring on the conversation which ended in saying unto her, "I that speak unto thee, am He." The first and the last words in his mind were connected, and the first was spoken that it might lead on to the last. In this Jesus revealed himself as the Messiah of the Jews, but as sent also to the Samaritans. They were lost sheep of the house of Israel. Jacob was also their father. Jesus' mission was to the Jews; but, as belonging with the Jews, he numbered the Samaritans and the publicans whom the Jews disowned and rejected. Hence, when he went in to dine with Zaccheus, he said, "This day is salvation come unto this house, for he also is a son of Abraham." He entered into Samaritan villages, and many Samaritans believed upon him. The blessed influence of this visit of Jesus among the Samaritans, and, no doubt, also the prayers and labors of the woman of Samaria who was converted at Jacob's well, continued to be felt

by this peculiar people, and brought forth precious and abundant fruits after his ascension; for, we read in Acts viii: 5-25, that Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things that Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. Jesus himself planted the seed from which this rich harvest grew; and, no doubt, the woman of Samaria watered those seeds with the tears of her repentance over sin and of her gratitude for forgiveness, and cultivated them by telling the story of her own conversion far and wide among her people, and nourished them by her constant prayers for their salvation.

Before leaving this most hallowed place we look around to see if there are any signs of the Samaritans lingering about it. Up there, on the green summit of Gerizim, are the remains of the temple of the Samaritans; and there, and there alone, the annual feast of the passover is still celebrated every year. The Samaritans, according to the most recent reports, have been reduced to one hundred and fifty souls, and it is not likely that their numbers will ever increase. In a few

more decades they will have become extinct. They have a small synagogue in Shechem, the last refuge of this now dying sect. They claim to have the oldest copy of the Pentateuch in the world, which they showed to us, as they do to all visitors, for a consideration. It may throw some light on present Pentateuchal controversies if competent scholars shall ever be permitted to use it. For the present it exists only as a venerable and sacred curiosity.

Within a stone's throw of Jacob's well is Joseph's tomb. From this tomb some day his mummy may be exhumed. At the head and foot of his grave are two pedestals, the tops of which are hollowed out like wide, shallow cups. One of these belongs to the Jews, and the other to the Samaritans, and in them both Jews and Samaritans offer burnt offerings of shawls and silk fabrics. The same practice, it is said, is observed by the Jews once a year at Meirun, in upper Galilee, over the tomb of the celebrated Rabbi Simeon Bar Jochai. It is curious to know that burnt sacrifices are still continued as acts of worship by Jews and Samaritans, and it is equally curious to note that they have substituted costly fabrics of cloth for animals.

A delightful ride of about an hour and a half brings us from Nablus to the site of old Samaria. A more beautiful site for a city does not exist on earth. From out of the bosom of a wide and fertile plain there rises, gently sloping upward, a large, round, and flat-topped hill, and all around the central hill the plain is surrounded by picturesque mountains. On this hill stood the ancient city of Samaria, and over it now lie the ruins of the Roman city of Sebastieh. Of the earlier city of Omri and Ahab no trace remains, but the ruins of the later city are numerous and striking. The most important of these is an avenue of Corinthian columns, still standing along the whole brow of the hill. The prophecy against Samaria runs thus: "I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and as plantings of vineyards; and I will cast down the stones thereof into the valley." Riding through the plantings of vines on the summit of the hill, among the standing ruins, and looking down from the heights upon the heap of stones in the field which has been poured down into the valley, it is impossible not to be profoundly impressed with the literal and exact fulfillment of the prophecy against the city that once lifted its head as a rival of Jerusalem.

Every hill and dale and place and object that our eyes beheld as we journeyed along, teems with biblical and historical interest, and clamors for notice; but if we should describe all we see, and discuss all we describe, we would never get to the end of the chapter. We must condense our descriptions. From old Samaria we passed over the mountains and crossed the beautiful plain of Sileh, going out through a narrow valley into the plain of Arrabeh, a rich pasture-field where Joseph found his brethren with his father's flocks. Here we find the ruins of Dothan on a hill at the bottom of which there is a bold fountain, and a bountiful supply of water. And here also we found shepherds with their flocks, and the dress of the men reminded us vividly of Joseph's coat of many colors. Their cloaks were striped and checked with many different and very bright colors woven or worked together. Did Joseph's coat make such a profound impression as he journeyed along this way that the people then caught the fashion of it, and have never given it up for all these thousands of years? Who knows?

We cross the plain and climb up again among

the mountains, and descending the slopes we come to Jenin, old Engannim, a place of gardens and rich fertility, where we find our tents pitched for the night. We rise early in the morning and begin our journey over the far-famed plain of Esdraelon, known in the Bible as the plain of Jezreel. This is the largest and richest, the most fertile and the most famous plain in all the land where Jesus lived. It covers about one hundred square miles, and the soil is yet so rich and fertile that I have seen wheat growing on it in some places that would yield from forty to sixty bushels to the acre. What would this rich plain yield if it were under improved cultivation and freed from the depredations of the wasting Bedouins, who still rush in and steal the crops and drive away the flocks and herds as the Midianites of old used to do? It has been the famous battle-ground of all ages. Across it swept the chariots of Sisera, and Gideon and his three hundred men dashed over it, driving the hosts of Midian and Amalek before them. In the middle ages the lances of the Crusaders here flashed in the sunlight, and in modern days the soldiers of Napoleon made this plain roar with the sound of musketry and



cannon. Toward the eastern end rises Mount Gilboa, on the slopes of which Saul and Jonathan fell; and at the foot of Gilboa, on a low, flat-topped hill, is the site of ancient Jezreel, now only a miserable cluster of wretched mud hovels called Zerin. Here stood the "ivory palace" of Ahab and the gilded temple of Astarte, and the splendid house of Jezebel, from a window of which she was cast down on the street and left to be eaten by dogs. But these events are all too well known to need repeating, and too horrible to dwell upon.

Since leaving Shechem, all along this journey we have not come to any place with which the name of Jesus is mentioned; and yet we know that he journeyed this way, and the holy impress of his footsteps is felt, if not seen, all along the roads by which we go. He traversed these paths afoot, but his journey was not made alone, nor in silence. His disciples were with him, and, as they walked on together, he taught them, drawing lessons of wisdom and warning from all things seen along the journey. What unrecorded proverbs and parables may have fallen from his lips as they went through vineyards and cornfields, or rested in the shades of fig trees and olive groves.

The boundary lines between Samaria and Galilee were never fixed with any precision, and now it is impossible to tell exactly when we pass out of one province into the other; but I suppose we might say that Galilee begins with the rising ground of Little Hermon. Jezreel is perched on a spur of Mount Gilboa, and between it and Little Hermon there spreads out a strip of the plain that is very rich in beauty and fertility. Crossing this we soon arrive at the modern town of Sulim, which marks the site of ancient Shunem, the home of the good Shunammite, the great woman of the village, who made a little chamber on the wall of her house for Elisha, in which she put for his use a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick. She was unambitious and content to "dwell among her own people," though Elisha thought that she was far superior to her humble station in life, even fit and worthy to be the queen on the throne, or the wife of the captain of the host. When a son was born to her in her advancing years, the cup of her happiness was full. But a few short years afterwards there came a dark and dreadful day to her home. The child suddenly sickened and died. She

laid the dead child on the bed of the man of God, and went in all haste across the plain to Mount Carmel to bring the prophet to her home. He came, and went in and shut the door, and alone with the dead child he began to pray unto the Lord. After much prayer, hard efforts, and repeated use of means, the child sneezed and opened its eyes, and slowly revived into life again. The mother, after long and anxious waiting, was called in, and he said to her, "Take up thy son." Then she fell at his feet and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son and went out. This is the most notable and touching miracle of the Old Testament, a miracle not wrought *by*, but *through* the prophet. The power that worked the miracle was not in the prophet, but came from above in answer to his prayer; and it was only by hard struggling and repeated efforts that the prophet could command it. What a contrast between this and the miracles of Jesus! Jesus performed his miracles without effort, as easy as he could speak a word or lift his hand. The power was *within himself*. At Nain, less than an hour's ride from Shunem, Jesus gave a striking illustration of the ease with which he performed his miracles.

Leaving Shunem, and passing out through luxuriant orange groves and corn-fields, we enter a narrow and rocky road by which we climb up the shoulder of the mountain and come to a poor village, perched upon the point of a hill, and looking down upon the rich valley below. It is Nain, where lived the widow who had an only son. This town is not far from Nazareth; in fact, from the hills above the town the white houses of Nazareth can be seen. One day when Jesus, followed by his disciples and a great crowd of people, was entering this town, he met at the gate a funeral procession going out, bearing the body of a young man to the tomb, and he was "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." It is not at all improbable that Jesus knew the young man and his widowed mother. He had grown up in their neighborhood. It may have been that he had heard of the young man's sickness, possibly of his death, and had come out of his way to the city for the express purpose of raising him up. The circumstances were most pathetic; he was an only son, and his mother a widow. He may have been a friend and companion of Jesus in the days of his youth. At all events, the human sympathies

of the heart of the divine Saviour were touched to the bottom. A group of rock-hewn tombs of the ancient burial-place of the city remain to the present day, and a steep path leads up from them to the gate, out of which the funeral procession was passing just when Jesus and his company had come to the entrance. Here Jesus, the Prince of Life, met Death face to face. Which will give the road to the other? They meet in the gate of the city—Jesus, who came into the world to conquer Death and to snatch the victory from the grave, and the grim monarch of Death bearing a trophy to the grave. Which will turn back and follow the other? It was a custom among the Jews in the days of Christ, amounting almost to a law, that whoever met a funeral procession should turn back and follow the sad march of the mourners to the grave; therefore, when Jesus met the funeral procession at the gate of Nain it was necessary for him either to raise the dead man to life and send him back, alive, to his home, or to turn back himself with the mourners and to follow his corpse to the tomb. There the issue was made. There the great battle between Life and Death must be fought. The moment when two great

monarchs meet in battle array is full of intensest interest and excitement. The spot where they do battle, and one wins the victory over the other, is made forever famous in the history of the world. Such was the meeting between Jesus and Death in the gate of the city of Nain. There Death dared to measure his strength with the arm of Jesus. Jesus met the issue, and conquered without a struggle. He snatched the trophy from the triumphal car of Death, and turned his triumph into defeat. Calm and with the majesty and might of heaven, he commanded the triumphal procession of Death to halt. He came and touched the bier, and they that bare the dead stood still. He had already said to the mother, "Weep not;" and now he said to the dead man, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise." Death, defeated, fled in confusion away, and the victim that Death held, released, sat up and began to speak. And he delivered him, her only son, restored to life, to his mother. The victory was complete. Sorrow was turned into joy, and mourning burst forth into songs of rejoicing. It is only he who has power to bring the dead back to life that can say to bereaved mothers, "Weep not." It is only the religion

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that preaches the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and brings life and immortality to light, that can stay the tears that gush out of broken hearts and fall from burning eyes upon cold faces that cannot feel their scalding drops. The religion of Jesus makes life worth living because Jesus is stronger than death. He is the life of the living, and the resurrection of the dead.

Descending from Nain, and crossing a strip of the plain, we enter the narrow passage, already described, through the mountains of Galilee, and soon we find ourselves at Nazareth again. On his return from Judea, coming through Samaria, he came to his own city, and was there rejected and cast out; and then he went into Capernaum on the shores of the little sea, to find there, henceforth, his home.

## XIV

## IN THE SYNAGOGUE OF NAZARETH

## FROM WHICH HE WAS CAST OUT AND DRIVEN AWAY

Our four written Gospels are not biographical in purpose, nor are they strictly chronological in the order of the events they narrate. It is impossible to construe them into a perfect harmony; but there is no such disagreement among them as should give the candid mind, when the different aim of each is kept in view, the least uneasiness as to the truthfulness and entire trustworthiness of their several narratives. In our sketches, which do not pretend to be a life of Jesus, we shall not attempt to be more exact than the inspired evangelists. And so, without argument, we assume that Jesus went directly to Nazareth on his return from Judea through Samaria into Galilee. We do not know on what day of the week he arrived, but, perhaps, it was only one day before the Sabbath. He was at first kindly received by his fellow townsmen,



but there seems to have been a lack of heartiness and fullness in their reception. They were mystified in their minds. He was accompanied by his disciples. It seemed so strange to them that Jesus, whom they had known for nearly thirty years as the son of Joseph, the town carpenter, whose mother and brothers and sisters were living among them, should go off for a few months, and then return and walk along their streets with a band of disciples who claimed for him that he was a great prophet. Nay, more! It was whispered around that he not only claimed to be a prophet, but the greatest of all prophets, the Messiah, whose coming all the prophets had foretold. It was too much for them. They could not think it possible that so great honor was conferred on their little city. They could not concede that great honor to their fellow townsman. The claim was so high that the very thought of it overwhelmed them. They would say to one another: "Why, he is not a learned man! He has never studied in any of the great schools! He has never sat at the feet of any of the great teachers! He is just a common man like ourselves. He is just one of us. But here he is followed by a band of disciples;

and he sets himself up to be the greatest teacher of all!" Was it unnatural that they should think and talk in this way? Is it not just about what the citizens of any community would do if one should arise out of their midst from the middle walks of life and present himself to them as the Son of God? Jesus was prepared to find, on his return, that it is hard for a prophet to gain recognition in his own country, among his own kin, and in his own house. For this reason, after having performed the miracle at Cana, and a few more at Capernaum, he had gone away and filled the world with the fame of his mighty works done in Judea and Samaria. That fame should have prepared the way for his reception as a prophet in his own home. It had prepared the way for his general reception in Galilee, and the Galileans were, in general, receiving him as a prophet. Almost in sight of Nazareth he had raised the widow's son to life. In view of all this, constituting such a sufficient and solid foundation for their faith in him, he marveled in his human mind at the unbelief of his fellow townsmen. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands on a few sick folks and healed them. These cures he performed,

no doubt, very privately, possibly at his mother's house where the sick were brought, or came to him secretly. He did nothing to provoke into an outburst of wrath the opposition he found in the town against him, and the high claims which his disciples made for him. On the Sabbath he went into the synagogue with the family, as had been his custom for more than a quarter of a century. His attendance there, under the circumstances, was necessary, for if he had not gone to the synagogue, as was his custom, his absence would have been noted and attributed to a wrong motive. People would have said, seeing that he had set himself up as a great prophet, he had become an undevout and impious neglecter of the house of God and of the usual forms of worship. Jesus could not have stayed away from the synagogue in order to avoid any difficulty that his presence would be likely to provoke. Being in Nazareth, it was a matter of necessity for him to go to the synagogue. Neither could he have avoided a visit to Nazareth on his return from Judea without involving his work in dishonor at the outset. If he had gone all around the town "where he had been brought up," people would have said that

he did not dare to put his claims on trial before those who had known him from his youth up, that he dared not to face his old neighbors and acquaintances with his high pretensions to the Messiahship. He knew this, and therefore, when the storm began to rise against him, he said to his neighbors, in explanation of his presence in Nazareth and in the synagogue, "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb: Physician, heal thyself. Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country." Why did not Jesus, right there and then, perform some wonderful miracle and overwhelm his neighbors with astonishment, and drive them into silence, if not into conviction? Such a work would have been totally out of keeping with his whole life. It was morally impossible. Jesus never performed a miracle in answer to the demand of unbelief, or just to show that he had power to work miracles. This was the misuse of his miraculous power to which the devil had tempted him when he tried to induce him to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, and thereby to astonish the people into faith.

But why did he stand up to read, and why did he sit down to preach after reading? The necessities

of the circumstances also required this of him. It had been his custom for years to take his turn in reading and expounding the Scriptures in the synagogue at Nazareth, and now, after an absence of some months, he had returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and had been teaching in their synagogues through all the regions around about as he approached Nazareth, being glorified of all. It was expected of him, and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him, waiting for him to begin. The circumstances demanded that he should speak. Silence would have brought upon him a storm of indignation. And speaking, he was obliged to expound the passage just read, which was the passage appointed to be read that day; and, expounding it, he was obliged to speak the truth which God's Spirit had put in the passage which, in God's providence, was assigned as the text for that day. The circumstances around him compelled him, not, however, reluctantly, to proclaim himself in the synagogue of Nazareth to be the Messiah foretold and promised in the prophecy which was the appointed lesson for that day. When he began to preach all bore him witness, and

wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. I suppose he began by expounding the meaning of the prophecy, to tell what the Messiah would do when he should come to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and to heal the broken-hearted. While he thus spoke of the blessings that the Messiah's coming would bring, all drank into their hungry hearts the precious words proceeding from his mouth, like the parched and thirsty soil drinks in the drops of summer's gracious rains. But he could not close without saying unto them, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears—I that speak unto thee am he of whom the prophet speaks." With this a murmur arose in the audience. They began to say, "Can this be possible? Is not this Joseph's son? He cannot be our Messiah!" "Yes," said Jesus, "I am the Messiah. Many in Judea, in Samaria, and also in Galilee have received me, and from me have received the blessings that the Messiah brings." This produced a great sensation, and an uproar ensued. Jesus stood calm, collected, dignified, and awed the riotous assembly into momentary silence. Then he began to say unto them, "What you do is wrong, but not strange; for, as the proverb says,

a prophet receives the honor of a prophet more readily among strangers than among his own kinsfolk and neighbors. As a general rule, the prophets have been rejected by those to whom they were especially sent; but when rejected in one place, or by one class, they have been received in another place, or by another class. There was Elijah, who was sent to the king and people of Israel, and when they rejected him he found refuge with a woman of Sarepta, a city of Sidon. And there was Elisha, to whom all the lepers of Israel might have come and been cured, but not one of the many of them that were in Israel came to him for cleansing; but Naaman, the Syrian, came to him and was cleansed. If you reject me, others will receive me; for a prophet is not without honor save in his own country and among his own neighbors." These calm and kind words only filled them with wrath. They were enraged, and rose up and roared against him. They cast him out of the synagogue, and thrust him out of the city, driving him along to the brow of the hill whereon their city stood, intending to cast him down headlong, and then to stone him for what they considered his blasphemies in claiming to be, not only a prophet,

but the Messiah promised in all their prophecies. But when they got him to the brink of the precipice, he turned and stood, looking his fierce and furious persecutors in the face with a mingled look of sadness, sorrow, and serene majesty which overawed them. No one was bold enough to push him over; no one brave enough to cast a stone at him. And walking back toward them, they fell apart in dismay, and "he passing through the midst of them, went his way;" and the mob stood paralyzed and powerless, gazing upon him as he majestically and serenely walked away, never again to return into their city. At last the physician had healed himself; the miracle that his fellow townspeople had demanded of him now fell upon them with overwhelming power. It was a miracle whose mysterious power was felt by every one of them. It paralyzed them so that they stood with the stones in their hands to stone him, powerless and motionless, while gazing upon him as he passed out through their midst and went away. We cannot conceive of Jesus as escaping unnoticed, by reason of the confusion of the tumult around him, nor as striking his persecutors blind, nor as making himself invisible in order to escape from them.



Either one of those ways of escape would have robbed the miracle of its divine dignity and glory. He went out through the midst of them with all their eyes fixed full upon him, gazing at him in wonder and helpless astonishment as he moved majestically and divinely away. Thus he came unto his own, and his own received him not. But all did not reject him. Some followed him as he went away from his own city, and some came to him after his departure, and some remaining behind believed on his name. And as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name.

From Nazareth Jesus went to Cana, where he had performed his first miracle, and from there to Capernaum, where he made his future home; but we do not know whether he went directly to Cana that Sabbath afternoon, or whether he went about through the villages preaching in their synagogues, and came into Cana some days later on in the week. Did he have no regrets in leaving forever the home where his childhood had played, and his manhood had labored? As he stood on the hill, looking, perhaps for the last time, at the beautiful city where he had lived so

happily in the home with his mother, and worked so cheerfully with Joseph in the workshop of the village carpenter, did unbidden tears gush forth from his eyes? If Jesus wept, he did not weep for himself, but wept over Nazareth as he afterwards wept over Jerusalem. His heart was broken, but it was by his own broken heart that he was sent to heal the broken hearts of others. If Nazareth will not hear, he will go and preach the acceptable year of the Lord in other villages to all who will lend him a listening ear. I cannot think that Jesus lost an hour from his holy work, or that he passed a village in silence as he went, rejected, from Nazareth to Cana, and thence to Capernaum.

## XV

## ON THE SHORES OF THE SEA OF GALILEE

## WHERE HE DID MOST OF HIS MIGHTY WORKS

While Jesus was waiting at Cana, where he had made water wine, a certain nobleman of Capernaum, having heard that he had returned from Judea into Galilee, came to him and urged him to hasten to his home and heal his son, who was at the point of death. It seems that this nobleman was on his way to Nazareth, naturally expecting to find Jesus, on his return into Galilee, at his old home. But Jesus was going forth to meet him. He is always going forth to meet those who are coming out to seek him. The word translated, nobleman, is in Greek *basilikos*, meaning one of the royal family, or an officer of the royal household. It may have been, as Origen thinks, one of the household of Cæsar who happened to be at that time in Galilee on business, or, more probable, it may have been

an officer of Herod Antipas; possibly Chusa, whose wife Joanna, Luke mentions as one of the many women "which ministered unto him of their substance." It may have been by the miracle of the healing of her son that she was converted, and then out of gratitude she joined the company of women who journeyed with him, supplying his daily wants, as he went throughout every city and village, preaching the gospel to the poor and healing the broken-hearted. Jesus did not go down with the nobleman, but dismissed him with the assurance that his son would live and get well. He believed the word of Jesus, and went his way to find that the fever had left his son at the very hour in which Jesus had said to him, "Thy son liveth." He himself believed, and his whole house.

The next day Jesus, accompanied, as it seems, by his mother and his brethren, followed the nobleman into Capernaum where, it also seems, the holy family henceforth made their home. It appears that Joseph was dead, as neither here, nor anywhere after this date, is any mention made of him. It also seems that his sisters remained behind in Nazareth where, perhaps, they were married.

The journey from Kefr Kenna, Cana of Galilee, where Jesus made the water wine, is not very interesting in its scenery, nor do we pass many places of great interest on the way. The road leads by the modern town of Lubiyeh, where the French, in 1799, fought so heroically against the overwhelming forces of the Turks; and soon after passing this town we saw, rising to the north of us, Karn Hattin, where Saladin, in 1187, so terribly defeated the Franks, and gave the death-blow to the power of the Crusaders in Palestine. Since that day Mohammed, the false prophet, has held sway in the land where Jesus the Saviour lived. This mountain is a two-topped hill with one peak rising much higher than the other. It looks like the huge head of a bull tossed up in the air with one horn sawed off a little above the middle. A Crusading tradition names it the Mount of the Beatitudes, and gives out that the Sermon on the Mount was preached on its flat summit. The situation is very suitable for the assemblage of a large multitude, and the locality is very convenient both to the hill country and sea-plains. In this case, as Dean Stanley says, the guess of the Crusader may have fallen upon the right place. But

we do not know where that wonderful sermon was preached, except it was on some mountain in this region where there was a "level place" (mistranslated plain in Luke iv: 17) on which Jesus sat, and around which the multitude stood, listening to him "who spake as man never spake."

Riding on for about an hour through a hilly country, we found ourselves on the crest of a high hill where the first glimpse of the Sea of Galilee burst upon our eyes, making our hearts beat quick and warm with mingled and crowding emotions. It was late in the afternoon when we reached the spot where we stood gazing at the sea, so full of precious memories. The slanting rays of the sun gleamed over the lake, baptizing the purple waters in a flood of heavenly light. No air was stirring, and the little sea was calm and quiet, like a child sleeping in the lap of the encircling mountains whose distant peaks were gilded with the golden rays of the setting sun. Below, as we looked down, our eyes fell upon dark and dirty Tiberias, the only city now left standing on the shores that were once so crowded with cities teeming with life, and roaring with the rush of business and the activities of pleasure.

This little sea fills the largest place in the life of Jesus, for on its waves and around its shores most of his mighty works were done; and it will always fill a large place in the minds and hearts of all who love his name. It was first called the Sea of Chinnereth, the "sea of the harp," because its shape resembles that musical instrument, and in the soft murmurings of its gentle waves the sweet music of the harp is perpetually heard. It was next called the Sea of Gennesaret, from the plain of Gennesar, so rich in fertility and beauty, which lies on its western shore. This plain is about one mile wide and four miles long. Josephus gives the following graphic description of it as it was in the days of Jesus. "Its nature," says he, "is as wonderful as its beauty, the soil being so fruitful that all sorts of vegetation grow upon it; its temperature is so well mixed that plants of every climate, those requiring the coldest, and those requiring the hottest air, walnuts and palms, grow here side by side. One may call this place the ambition of nature where plants that are naturally inimical are forced to agree together. There is here a happy contention of the seasons, each laying claim upon the spot for the whole year

round, the principal fruits of the four seasons growing and maturing together for ten months in the year, and fruit of some kind being in season every month in the year. And besides its good temperature, it is well watered with abundant fountains. The people of the country call it Capharnaum." Perhaps this name was derived from Capernaum which, according to the latest and best authorities, was situated at its northeastern extremity, where the ruins of Khan Minyeh are now found. Gennesar means the Paradise of the Prince, and the Sea of Gennesaret is the Sea of the Paradise of the Prince of Life, who came to make of all the world a paradise of salvation, and to bring back to our fallen earth an Eden of sinless plenty and pleasure.

In the synoptic Gospels it is called the Sea of Galilee; but in the fourth Gospel, written last of all, it is called the Sea of Tiberias, showing that, after the death of Jesus, the sea on which most of his mighty works were done took the name of the Roman emperor under whose reign he was crucified. But above all these names, it is now called the Sea of the Messiah, by Jews and Christians alike. To us it is the Sea of the Messiah who has come, but to the Jews it is the Sea of the Messiah yet to come.



Prof. Delitzsch tells us that the Jews have a tradition, very old and very widely spread among them, that the Miriam fountain was a rolling rock that accompanied the children of Israel over hills and through valleys during their forty years' wanderings in the wilderness, constantly flowing out a stream of water for their daily supplies; but at the death of Moses, this moving rock-fountain disappeared, God having hid it in the midst of the Sea of Galilee, but in such a manner that he who looks northward toward this sea from the hill of Jishimon, in the country of Moab, can always see it in the shape of a small sieve; and this tradition says, "Here where the deliverance of Israel from Egypt came to its close in the sinking of the fountain-rock, in the Sea of Tiberias, shall the future salvation of the Jews begin by their Messiah rising out of the sea, and gathering the scattered tribes together, and going with them in triumph to Jerusalem, where he will set up his throne." Hence the Sea of Galilee is called by the Jews the Sea of the Coming Messiah. Of course, we Christians know, as our great apostle has taught us (I Cor. x:1-4), that the rock which followed Israel, and which the Jews call the Fountain of Miriam, was

Jesus the son of Mary, and hence we know that the Messianic deliverance has made its beginning in truth and reality at this God-chosen sea. It is, indeed, the Sea of the Messiah, but of the Messiah who has come.

In the days of Jesus this sea was the center of a wide extended commerce, and its shores were crowded with great cities, among which was Capernaum, in which was the Jesus-home. All the great caravan routes coming from Egypt and all the regions south, and from the ports of the great western sea, and leading out to Damascus and into all the regions beyond, converged to, and diverged from, the Sea of the Messiah, and passed by the Jesus-city. At that day there was, perhaps, no other place on all the earth where Jesus would have met with so many people, coming from and going to so many different parts of the world; and, manifestly, this was the reason why he spent so much of his time on the shores of this sea. What a busy scene its shores must have then presented. Josephus informs us that there were not less than four thousand vessels of various sorts, Roman war-ships, merchant-vessels, pleasure-yachts, and fishing-smacks, plying its waters day and

night. It is a wonder how they could move about on so little a sea without collisions almost every hour of the day. We are also informed that the sea was then, as it is to-day, full of fish of various sorts, some of them of most excellent quality, and that fisheries on its shores were a large and important business.

But how changed are all things to-day on the waters and along the shores where such crowded and bustling activity once existed! There are now only six small boats on this sea, and they are old and poorly manned, and by no means safe when a sudden storm, as frequently happens, rushes down upon them. Of all the cities that crowded the shores in the days of Jesus, only Tiberias remains, and of the ruins of the others it is not easy to determine which pile marks the site of any particular one of them. It is generally admitted that the present miserable mud-village of Mejdal points to the site of ancient Magdala; but the locations of all the rest are in dispute. Where are those "cities wherein most of his mighty works were done," and which Jesus upbraided because they repented not? Where are Chorazin and Bethsaida, against which Tyre and Sidon shall rise up in the day

of judgment and condemn them? Where is Capernaum, once exalted to heaven as the Jesus-city, and now cast down to hell because, as a city, it cast out Jesus? In the day of judgment Sodom shall rise up against it and condemn it.

Of all the cities around the Sea of Galilee in which Jesus preached not one is now standing, and the very sites of most of them are uncertain, or absolutely unknown. Of all the cities that were then standing on the shores of the Sea of the Messiah, Tiberias alone now remains. This is the one city in which Jesus did not preach, and within whose gates he never entered. In his day it was a Roman city, and immediately after his death the name of the Roman emperor, under whose reign he was crucified, was given to it. It is the one city that was not included in the doom he pronounced against the cities of the sea, and it is the only one that has survived the decay of time, the destruction of war and the shocks of earthquakes. It has often changed masters. It has stood under the control of the West-Roman emperors, of the East-Roman emperors, of the caliphs, of the Crusaders, of the Turks, and, for a short time, under Napoleon Bonaparte. It is now under the crushing heel of the Ottoman empire.

In the days of Jesus the Jews would not enter it because it was built over a graveyard, and was dedicated to a pagan idol, and was crowded with pagan temples, and over every gate was an idol image, under which whoever entered the city must pass. It then had the curse of the Jew upon it, but the Jews' curse did not destroy it. But all the cities around it on which the curse of Jesus fell, have fallen into ruins, have crumbled to fragments, and most of them have sunk into absolute oblivion. But the Jews have long ago lifted their curse from Tiberias, and made it one of their holy cities. It became, in the early Christian centuries, the gathering-place for all those agitations of the Jews which aimed at their self-preservation, and attempted to hold the Jewish people together in their spiritual unity and greatness. After the Sanhedrin was driven out from Jerusalem it wandered about, and finally found its resting-place in Tiberias, the city of the deep valley. Here was located for centuries the greatest Rabbinical school since the days of Jesus, and here are buried Moses Maimonides, Rabbi Akiba, and many others of their most famous masters and teachers. The Messianic hope of the Jews is now turned to Tiberias.

From Tiberias, they say, the deliverance of Israel shall come, and here again the great Sanhedrin shall be brought to life, and here the resurrection of the dead shall take place forty years earlier than anywhere else.

Of all the dirty places in this dirty land, modern Tiberias is the most dirty. It is filthy and squalid beyond expression. Cattle are slaughtered in the public streets, and the filth is never removed, and nothing is ever repaired. The city swarms with parasitic vermin that infest the public streets. An Arab proverb says, "The king of the fleas has his throne here." If this be so, all modern travelers can testify that his throne is surrounded by countless armies which are fearless and fearful in their attacks on all who dare to enter their royal city. A large portion of the present inhabitants are Jews of the laziest and lowest sort. They wear corkscrew curls, fur-caps, and long gabardines. If Palestine is to be restored to the Jews, and to be restocked with such Jews as live here, there is yet reserved for this degraded and desolate land a lower depth of ruin and misery than the human mind has yet been able to picture to itself.

This one city on the Sea of Galilee which was

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never blest by the presence of Jesus in it, stands here, walled off to itself in its degradation and wretchedness, to show us what the world would be if Jesus had not come into it with his redemption and salvation; and the ruins of the cities around the sea, in which he preached and which rejected his gospel, show us what the world would come to be if Jesus should be cast out, and his redemption refused.

## XVI

## CAPERNAUM—HIS OWN CITY

## WHERE HE LIVED IN THE JESUS-HOUSE

Two places contend for the honor or dishonor of being the site of Capernaum. Tell Hum at the northern extremity of the sea, and Khan Minyeh at the northwestern corner. Tell Hum means, as some think, the ruins of Capher Nahum, or village of Nahum. The most interesting remains found there are those of a synagogue, apparently belonging to the Roman period. It was built of white marble, and among the ruins of it have been found sculptures of the seven-branched candlestick, the paschal lamb, and the pot of manna. We would love to think that in these well-preserved ruins we have the remains of the very synagogue in which Jesus preached on the Sabbath-days, and performed some of the most wonderful of his mighty works. But the evidence inclines us, as already intimated, to believe that Capernaum was located at Khan



Minyeh, the House of the Heretic. A volume might be filled with arguments and citations of weighty authorities in favor of either one of these places as against the other; but without entering into the controversy, or presuming to dogmatize on the subject, we settle down on Khan Minyeh as the site of "his own city," in which was the Jesus-house, contemptuously called, in his day, by the unbelieving Jews, "the house of the heretic," and ever since known as such in tradition. In this city Jesus had a house, not a home, for home of his own he never had. It was the house where he taught, and where he could always be found when in the city. It was not Peter's house, as some suppose, nor a home in which he and his mother and his brethren lived, but a public sanctuary in which were established the official headquarters of his holy ministry. It is spoken of in the Gospels as "the house," and was doubtless known by his friends and foes as "the Jesus-house." It seems that his mother and brethren had a separate house in which they lived. The Jesus-house is spoken of frequently, but always simply as "the house." It was the official home of Jesus and his disciples. It may have been a "hired house," like

that in which Paul lived and preached at Rome, engaged and maintained by his friends and followers as the place where he met with his disciples in council, and where he received and blessed all who sought the benedictions of his holy ministry. While this house was known among his friends as the Jesus-house, it was known among his enemies as the house of the heretic; and the memory of this unfriendly name is perpetuated in the name, Khan Minyeh, by which the supposed site of the Jesus-house is known at the present day. It seems that when he first went to Capernaum to make his home there, he lodged with Peter while this house was being procured and prepared for his use; and while staying in Peter's house he healed his wife's mother of a fever, and healed many others that were brought unto him sick, or possessed with devils. On the Sabbath-days he went into the synagogue and taught, and cast out devils; but on the week days, and the hours of the Sabbath-days not devoted to public worship, he taught in his own house, and healed all who came, or were brought unto him. The life of Jesus at Capernaum was a life of incessant labors of love and mercy. In order to see how full his

life was of gracious words and good works, let us try to follow him through one day's work in his own house and in the synagogue. In order to do this we must call to our aid a subdued and sanctified imagination to gather in and to fill out the fragmentary accounts scattered through our Gospels, and to combine and enlarge them into a picture of his life set in the framing of the customs of the people by whom he was surrounded. In a work so responsible and so delicate I would not dare to follow my own unaided and unguided imagination. Selecting among his words, and condensing his sentences, I follow the lead of Doctor Franz Delitzsch, late professor in the university of Leipzig, than whom a more competent and safe guide cannot be found among all the writers of this nineteenth century. In his charming little book, "A Day in Capernaum," he pictures something like the following: It was the time of the change of the middle night-watch to the third; the starry heavens glittered in all the glories of a diadem enshrined in diamonds and precious stones. At that early hour people had already begun to gather in front of the Jesus-house, and from moment to moment the scene was becoming more alive. From dif-

ferent directions were heard in the silent night air the dull sound of the steps and voices of the new comers. Here came a man carrying his child upon his back, whose suffering head was hanging down over his shoulder; there came two who were carrying a third in a hammock, and as they, before they bring him to the much-longed-for house, let him down upon the ground once more, he is heard lamenting about the hardness of his bed. A camel is seen coming along the sea-shore, accompanied by an old and a young man, and which, in the woman's saddle, is carrying a thickly-veiled and decrepit woman. Led and carried, more and more sick persons arrive, until the place in front of the house has become like a hospital, in which the cries of pain uttered by the sufferers, mingling with the subdued and often rough voices of their attendants, create a dull din.

When the early dawn took a reddish hue, a man in a blue cloak and a pale-red tunic came down from the upper part of the city, and passed through the narrow streets. His countenance was as pale as the sweat-drops which covered his chin and forehead. The night watchman, when he saw him, stepped reverently aside, and trembled

through and through, when, with a gentle greeting, his eyes, filled with love and deep earnestness, met his. After standing for a while, as if spell-bound, he followed him at a distance as quietly as possible. He whom he followed hastened, or, rather, moved along with inaudible steps. He was plainly and neatly, but not richly, clothed; he walked rather bent forward than perfectly erect; he made the impression of a man who in his heart was carrying a heavy burden; but who was carrying it willingly and not by compulsion. The gentle majesty of an exalted sufferer hovered over him. As he turned the corner and saw the multitude of sufferers, he, indeed, for a moment, as it were, recoiled; but looking upward with a countenance drawing in and sending forth heavenly light, he was at once again collected, and stepped forward.

The multitude, seeing him, turned in an instant from the house and looked towards him; and all stretched out their arms in petition and intercession to him. "Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" cried out an old man, who stood in front, who had himself experienced the healing power of this miraculous physician, and now was constantly bringing other sick peo-

ple to him. Out of the throats of the multitude a variety of greetings met the longed-for Helper, accompanied with gestures imploring assistance. With a motion of the hand and a ruddy gleam overspreading his countenance, he quieted the commotion and restored silence. Those of the sick who still had control of their limbs, threw themselves in a row upon their knees before the door of the house; but the path, which had been left for him to pass through between them, was very narrow, because all were anxious to get as near him as possible. He passed through slowly, and only by steps, and his whole appearance showed the intensity of his feelings in his work. To the right and to the left they greedily caught hold of the ends of his garment, they kissed them and drew them as near as possible to the localities of their sufferings. The nearer he approached the house the greater became the excitement, especially among those behind him. The ecstasy of those who felt a new life coursing through their members—through their souls as well as through their bodies—broke out in words of exulting gratitude, and, when one raised his voice in the words of the Psalmist, saying, "Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone

doeth wonders," the whole multitude—as though it were a congregation assembled in the house of worship—answered, "Blessed is the glorious name of his kingdom forevermore."

Jesus was returning from the mountain, where he had spent the night alone in prayer, when he found this multitude around the Jesus-house waiting for his appearance to cure their sick. When he had cured all he entered the house and hastened to his own room where, tottering to his couch at the side of the wall, he fell upon his bed, all broken down under the burden of the many sicknesses and sufferings which he had taken upon himself from the sufferers whom he had just healed.

Refreshed by a short sleep, and re-invigorated by his frugal morning meal, he was soon ready to begin the work of the day. The sun was already rising in full splendor, and the birds in the thick foliage of the trees around the house were filling the air with the melody of their morning hymn. He opened the door and invited the crowd standing without to enter.

Then he stood in his house preaching the Word of God to the multitude that was fast becoming a solid mass around him, concerning the

salvation that had been promised and had now appeared. The crowd became greater and greater, so that all space within doors and in front of the house was entirely filled and packed with people.

Then there came four men bearing one sick of the palsy in a bed—perhaps the poor man had just been stricken down by paralysis and was at the very point of expiring, so that his friends thought that his case would not admit of the least delay,—and, when they could not come nigh him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was, and let down the sick man on the bed right in front of Jesus. And when he saw their faith he said unto the sick man, “Son, thy sins are forgiven thee.” Then certain of the scribes who had crowded into the house, said in their hearts, “This man is a blasphemer because he pretends to forgive sins which none but God can do.” He knew their thoughts and said unto them, “That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I now say unto this sick man, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk.” And immediately he arose, and took up his bed, and went forth before them all. With this the scribes were con-



founded, and all the people were amazed, and went out glorifying God, and saying: "We never saw it on this fashion before."

Just then there came rushing in a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, and falling down at his feet besought him that he would come to his house: for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a-dying. He made no delay, but rising, with his disciples he followed the man. When he came into the street the people thronged around him; and there was in the crowd a woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years, and who had spent all she possessed on physicians without being healed. She came behind him and touched the hem of his garment and was healed. He at once asked, "Who touched me?" His disciples said, "Master, the multitude throng thee." "Yes," he replied; "but somebody hath touched me, not as the multitudes press upon me, but with faith that hath drawn virtue out of me to heal." The woman then came forward and fell down before him and declared before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. He said to her, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go

in peace." While they were thus delayed, how anxious the father was lest his child should die before the good physician should reach her; and how he plead with him to hasten his steps, and how his heart came nigh breaking when a messenger rushed up and said, "Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master." But Jesus looked upon him with infinite compassion and said, "Fear not; only believe, and she shall live." He then went on and entered the house, silenced the mourners, and raised the maid to life, and turned the mourning into joy and the weeping into singing.

As he came out of the house to return unto his own house two blind men followed him, crying unto him, "Thou son of David, have mercy upon us." He went on, not seeming to hear them; but they followed on, and pressed into the house after him. Then he spake to them, saying unto them, "Be it unto you according to your faith." Immediately their eyes were opened.

And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And

he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils. And, though lying down late at night, the next morning he rose up a great while before day and went out into a solitary place to pray. What a day! How full of works! How good! How gracious! How mighty! The Jesus-house was a fountain of blessings.

While living in Capernaum many were the works like these that he did. Many other days were crowded and overflowing with great works and gracious words. Nor were his words and works confined to the city of Capernaum. He went all over Galilee, into all their cities, into all their villages, out on the mountain-sides and on the mountain-tops, preaching everywhere to the poor, healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out devils, thus filling the whole land with the fame of his works and the flame of his love. Every year he went up to the great feasts at Jerusalem, carrying his miracles and ministry down the Jordan on the eastern side, back into Judea and to Jerusalem, and then back again through Samaria into Galilee.

Time fails us, and we cannot follow Jesus in all these journeys, and listen to all his sublime

lessons, and contemplate all his mighty works. This little book is not meant to be biographical in its order, nor exhaustive in its descriptions and discussions. Its purpose is to give a pen-picture of some of the prominent points in the life and doctrines of Jesus the Christ, and of the land in which he lived. Therefore, without following him through his wanderings, we meet Jesus again on his return to the Sea of Galilee. A great multitude is now following him from Galilee, from Judea, from Jerusalem, from Idumæa, from beyond Jordan, and from Tyre and Sidon. This great multitude daily increases as the people, far and wide, hear of all the great and gracious things that he is daily saying and doing. But as his friends multiplied, his enemies increased both in numbers and virulence. We cannot begin, in a little work like this, to gather up and set in order a history of all the great and mighty works Jesus did in Capernaum, on the sea, and in the cities and regions round the sea.

Among other miracles, he, at the solicitation of the rulers of the synagogue, healed the son, or favorite servant, of a certain Roman centurion, in whom he found, pagan though he was,

the greatest faith of all. This Roman centurion, either out of policy or out of generosity, had built for the Jews a synagogue. In that synagogue Jesus frequently preached, and there, in presence of all the multitude, he performed many of his most mighty works. He healed the sick and cast out devils; and the devils, fleeing from his face in consternation and agony, cried aloud and bore unwilling, and at the same time unwelcome, testimony to his divinity and Messiahship. In his preaching he taught, not as the scribes, but as one having authority inherent in himself. All the people were amazed, and said among themselves: "What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? Who is this that hath authority to command the unclean spirits, and power to enforce obedience?"

As his work went on he began to proclaim himself, more and more clearly, to be the Son of God, come down from heaven to earth to be the Brother of all men. Both friendship for him, and enmity against him, went on intensifying. A crisis was fast approaching. His enemies saw plainly that they must crush him or all the world would rush into his arms. His mother and brethren became alarmed and tried

to arrest him in his work, and to withdraw him from before the public. But he told them that there is a higher kindredship than that of blood—the kindredship of spirits; and hence he claimed and acknowledged as mother, and brother, and sister, whosoever doeth the will of his Father which is in heaven. His enemies began to formulate their charges against him—he was, they said, a companion of publicans and harlots, a glutton and a wine-bibber, a false prophet and a deceiver, a Sabbath-breaker and a blasphemer, and one possessed with the spirit of the very prince of devils. And as he had been, at the beginning, driven out of Nazareth from the home of his human life, so now he is driven out of Capernaum from the home of his divine life on earth. Henceforth, the Jesus-house was left empty. It stood as an object of veneration to his friends, of execration to his enemies, and of awe and fear to all. It was known as Khan Minyeh, the House of the Heretic, and by this name the site of it is marked even to the present day,

Jesus Christ came to the earth as the Messiah of the Jews, but he returned to heaven as the Saviour of the world. His mission to earth was

to seek and save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but his ministry on earth was for the salvation of all the world. Twice only during his mortal ministry did he go outside the limits of the land of the Jews, and in neither instance did he offer himself to the Gentiles. His Gospel was not to be offered to the Gentiles until after he was rejected by the Jews to whom he was sent. But while on earth he did not withhold the benedictions of his ministry from any, Jew or Gentile, who came to him with the cry of need and the petition of faith. But his mission was to the Jews, and his ministry of humiliation on earth was performed within the Promised Land of the chosen people.

The two times that he went beyond the limits of this land were exceptional episodes in his life. Both of the journeys were made towards the close of his ministry, and it seems that his purpose was to withdraw his disciples into retirement, somewhere outside the land of his humiliation, that he might impart to them some peculiar lesson, or make before them some peculiar display of glory, which was inappropriate to be made within the land where he was to suffer and to die.

The first of these journeys was made to the coast of Tyre and Sidon where he met with the woman of Canaan, in whom he found a great faith, and whose daughter, that was grievously vexed with a devil, he healed. His stay on this journey was short, and he returned to the Sea of Galilee, seeming not to have found it convenient to accomplish the purpose he had in view. He then departed and went into the coast of Cæsarea Philippi, beyond old Dan which marked the northern limits of the Promised Land. He was absent on this journey more than a week, and during the time he unfolded himself more fully to his disciples, and instructed them more thoroughly in the mystery of his person and in the nature and purpose of his mission and ministry on earth, and revealed to them clearly the fact of his approaching death and resurrection. He climbed upon the heights of Mount Hermon, and took with him the three of his disciples, with whom he was most intimate and confidential, into a solitary place apart, and was, in their presence, transfigured until his face did shine as the sun and his raiment became white as the light. This transfiguration took place outside the land of the ministry of his



humiliation, and was to the chosen three a glimpse of the glory of the kingdom into which he would come after being rejected by the Jews. It was incompatible with the purpose of his mission to the Jews for this exhibition of the glory of his coming kingdom to have been made in the land of his humiliation, or to any except these who already firmly believed in his divinity. The divinity of Jesus was veiled in his humanity during his ministry of self-sacrifice, but here the veil was for a moment drawn aside, and the glory of his divinity was flashed upon those whose eyes were prepared to behold it.

On his return from this journey, it seems that he lodged for a while, privately, in the Jesus-house in Capernaum, and then left Galilee, never to return there again in mortal flesh.

## XVII

## AMONG THE SHEPHERDS OF PERÆA

## WHERE HE SPAKE HIS GREAT PASTORAL PARABLE

As already repeatedly stated, this book does not pretend to be, in any sense, a life of Jesus; therefore, we have not been careful to follow a strict chronological order in the events of his life which we have brought under review and into discussion. We shall not attempt to follow our Saviour, in geographical and chronological order, through the closing months of his earthly ministry. The attempt to do so has been frequently made, but has never been successfully and satisfactorily carried out. It seems, however, that, on his final departure from the Jesus-house in Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee, he went to Jerusalem, and that he remained in the holy city and its neighborhood for several weeks, finding refuge and rest in the hospitable and congenial home of the orphan children at Bethany on the eastern slope of Mount Olivet. During

this time he performed some of his most wonderful works and spake some of his most significant parables. The chief priests and scribes saw that the drift of his preaching was against them and the dead formalism in religious life and worship in which they were leaders. They set themselves against Jesus, and so stirred up the people against him, that he was in danger of being stoned. From this deadly persecution he retired with his disciples, into Peræa on the east side of Jordan. How long he continued there we do not know, but it seems certain that he was there for several weeks, perhaps months. That region is now, as it was in the days of Joshua, "a place for cattle." It is a long, narrow strip of country, extending from the Dead Sea to the Sea of Galilee, and from the river Jordan out into the mysterious hills of the mountains of Moab and Gilead, whose long horizontal outlines, overshadowing heights and deep purple shade, are seen from the Mount of Olives, and from almost every other mountain elevation in western Palestine. We do not certainly know whereabouts in this region he found refuge when he was driven out from Jerusalem by the cruel persecutors who sought how they might lay

hands upon him and bring him to death, but it is likely that it was somewhere among the hills of the Gilead mountains, near the place where David fled for refuge when his son Absalom drove him from his throne in Jerusalem. When thus driven from his home, he went, weeping, over the Mount of Olives and across the river Jordan to Mahanaim, where his friends and defenders rallied around him.

The natural scenery of the region is wild, but picturesque and charming. There forests of old oak trees are still to be seen, and birds of a tropical plumage dart in and out among their moss-covered branches. When one climbs some elevation and looks around, he sees in all directions olive groves, gardens with fig trees growing among the cucumbers, luxuriant fields of wheat and barley, and numerous fertile meadows between the hills, and countless herds of dun-colored cattle and flocks of white sheep and black goats grazing in the valleys and on the mountain slopes. Brilliant flowers, thick-foliaged plants and sweet-scented shrubs grow everywhere according to their own sweet will, in rich abundance and wild confusion. In the spring the black tents of the Arabs are

seen in all directions amid their swarming herds and multitudinous flocks. The land is now, as it has always been, a land of shepherds, vine-dressers and tillers of the soil. It is the land which the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh desired because "it was a place for cattle," and which was given to them that they might build in it "cities for their little ones and *folds for their sheep.*"

In the days of Jesus this region was inhabited by a simple-minded and pure-hearted rural population that was comparatively uninfluenced by the ecclesiastical controversies and political agitations that kept the inhabitants of western Palestine in a perpetual fervor, if not fever, of excitement. Those plain country people, mostly shepherds and vine-dressers, were not irreligious nor unintelligent, nor totally illiterate. They had their schools and synagogues in every village and city. Like all Jews at that day they were expecting the speedy appearance of the long waited-for Messiah. They were the "common people" who heard Jesus gladly. Great multitudes crowded to his ministry. Many believed upon him. His ministry among them was short, but very significant. It was not attended with

many miracles, but was rich in discourses and parables. While among these country people and shepherds he spake some of the sweetest and sublimest words that ever fell from his lips. His discourses sprung from the occasion of the moment when uttered, and the drapery of his Peræan parables was taken from the every-day pursuits, habits and customs of the common people among whom he was sojourning.

Many of his allusions and parables were directed against the Pharisees and scribes of Jerusalem who had sent spies after him into his retreat to hang upon his words, hoping that he would let fall some unguarded expression which might be contorted into an accusation against him. They were performing the very meanest office which malice and envy ever prompt the wicked and unscrupulous to engage in, catching at the words of one whom they supposed to be unsuspecting in order to wrest them to his confusion and ruin. But Jesus knew them, and, with a masterful hand, he tore off their mask and exposed their base and malicious hypocrisy.

It was in Peræa that our Saviour delivered the following long list of parables,—the Unjust Steward, the Unjust Judge, the Rich Man and

Lazarus, the Importunate Widow, the Pharisee and the Publican, the Barren Fig-tree, the Laborers in the Vineyard, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven hid in the Meal, and, crowning all, the great pastoral parable of the Good Shepherd seeking his lost sheep and the Faithful Wife seeking her lost piece of money, culminating in the pearl of all his parables, that of the Good Father and his Prodigal Son. Some of these parables had been spoken on previous occasions, but were here repeated with such slight variations as adapted them to the scenes and circumstances then surrounding him. It would require a volume to show how all these parables sprung out of the occasion of the moment of their utterance, and how they fit in with all the circumstances then surrounding the speaker and his hearers. We have space to do this for only one of them. The two greatest of all our Saviour's parables are the double parable of the good shepherd seeking his lost sheep and of the faithful wife seeking her lost piece of money, and that of the loving father receiving back to his home and heart his prodigal son, all showing how great the joy is, in heaven and on earth, over the lost sinner when he repents and

returns. These two parables have taken hold of the heart of humanity as no other words have ever done. Their simple stories have been written in poetry, sung in song, portrayed on canvas and chiseled in marble. They are divine and matchless. They are miracles in words. The key to their interpretation is this glorious fact:—God is our Father and Heaven is our Home, and our Father wants all his children to come home and live with him; therefore, God is seeking his lost children to save them, and heaven is filled with joy over every soul that is found and restored.

When Jesus was in Peræa living among the common people who heard him gladly,—eating at their tables and sleeping in their beds and speaking words of forgiveness, of hope and of courage to all, even to the publicans and sinners, who came to hear him,—certain hypocritical Pharisees and scribes, who came from Jerusalem, murmured against him, saying: “This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” Then spake he unto them this parable, not these parables—the great pastoral parable of the good shepherd and the faithful wife.

In the parable the shepherd and the woman



seeking, and not the sheep or piece of money that was lost, is the great point. Jesus meant to show the Pharisees and scribes how God seeks the lost sinner to save him, and how finding and saving the lost fills all heaven with joy—not how the sinner came to be lost. God seeks the lost sinner till he saves him, as a good shepherd seeks his lost sheep till he finds it, and as a faithful wife seeks her lost piece of money till she finds it; and then, for the moment, greater is the joy over the lost when found than over that which had never been lost. This is the soul of the parable, all the rest is drapery. While this parable was spoken to the Pharisees and scribes, to silence their unjust murmurings, it was intended also for the instruction and encouragement of the common people who heard it, and, therefore, every point in the comparison was drawn from common occurrences with which they were perfectly familiar.

The story of the shepherd seeking his lost sheep was but the simple recital of what frequently happened at that day among the shepherds who were then listening to his gracious words, and of what still happens frequently in the pastoral regions of Palestine on both sides the Jordan. I have seen

the story reproduced in every point before my own eyes. Once when riding over the Judean hills I saw a shepherd, just before the going down of the sun, seeking a lost sheep. He was running along the mountain sides, looking into the ravines, all the time calling his lost sheep by name. Passing on I came upon his flock in the wilderness, left in charge of a little boy of about ten years of age while he was gone to seek the lost one. "This," said I to my dragoon, "is a beautiful illustration of our Saviour's parable; let us wait here awhile; perhaps the shepherd may find his lost sheep and bring it in, and then the illustration will be complete." And behold, while we were waiting, the shepherd had found his lost sheep, and came in sight, rejoicing, as he brought it back on his shoulders. As he came up he called unto some other shepherds who were leading their flocks home, saying, "I have found my sheep that was lost." They shouted back the congratulations of their joy with him. The flock also showed evident signs of joy at seeing the shepherd returning with the lost one on his shoulders. When he put the poor, trembling sheep on the ground it stood a moment, looking nervously around, and

then pushed its way into the very middle of the flock, seeming to be trying, instinctively, to avoid all danger of being left behind again.

But, in order to be saved, the lost sinner must not only be sought and found and brought back to the flock, but must also be kept and developed into a saint, and thus, in the church, be prepared for heaven. God in Christ, the Good Shepherd who loves the sheep and lays down his life for them, is seeking lost sinners to save them, and in the church he keeps sinners, when found and restored, through the power of the Holy Ghost, unto the day of their perfect salvation. Hence, in order to give the assurance that God will keep the found and saved sinners from falling and present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, our Saviour changes the comparison from the good shepherd who seeks his lost sheep till he finds it, to that of his faithful wife, in her home, seeking her lost piece of money, lighting her candle and sweeping her house and never ceasing her search till she finds it. The woman, as a Christian symbol, always represents the church. As the shepherd represents Christ seeking the lost who have wandered away from the flock,

so the woman represents the church to whose care and keeping sinners are committed when found and restored to the fold.

The woman in the parable, the shepherd's faithful wife, is the church in its membership, her house the church in its organization, and the candle she lit is the Holy Spirit guiding, by the light of the Word, the church in all her work and worship. Then, the lost piece of money does not represent an unconverted sinner, but a back-slidden church-member, or a neglected Christian duty. The coin was not lost in the wilderness, but in the house. The woman did not seek for it out-of-doors, but within her home. It is by the fidelity of the church to her divine Husband that the children, when found and committed to her care, are kept from the evil in the world; and it is only by so keeping them, that the church itself is made perfect.

Those Pharisees and scribes, who were murmuring against Jesus for receiving and eating with publicans and sinners, claimed to represent the church of God on earth. The parable was spoken to them, and it condemned them, and the whole Jewish church which they represented, for their infidelity to God, the Saviour of sinners,

whose espoused Bride they claimed to be. In what they complained of in him, God was, like a good shepherd, seeking the lost to save them; and their murmur against him was an unconscious confession on their part that the church, as represented in them, was, like a faithless wife, untrue to God, because it was not caring for and keeping that which had been committed to its charge.

All this was clearly understood by those who heard our Saviour, and will be more clearly understood by us when we consider the peculiar custom of the people in regard to the ten pieces of silver, one of which the woman in the parable had lost.

In traveling through that country one will not fail to notice that almost every woman wears around her neck strings of silver coins. He will see some with four or five such strings wound around their necks and hanging in loops over their breasts. The common explanation given to the traveler is, that those coins constitute the marriage dowries of the women who wear them, and that every woman on the day of her marriage gives her coins over to her husband. This was the explanation first given me by a native

of the country, who added: "So you see, a man in this country when he marries knows exactly what he is getting; he sees the woman's face, what she is, and her fortune around her neck, how much it is." But this explanation, which may amuse and satisfy most tourists, leaves out a very important part of the truth. On the day of marriage the husband gives the wife a string of coins in exchange for those he receives from her, which constitute the "ten pieces of silver" referred to in the parable. Those "ten pieces" the wife is ever afterwards to keep and to wear as the symbol of the marriage tie binding her to her husband, and as a pledge of her fidelity to her marital vows.

When a young man in that country contemplates marriage he selects a coin of a particular date and value, and he lays it aside. Then he watches, day after day, till he finds ten other coins of the same date, the sum of whose value shall be equal to the value of the larger coin originally selected. These he gets a jeweler to fasten together, five on each side of the larger piece, so as to make of them a handsome string of silver coins. This string of coins is called "the ten pieces of silver," though, in fact, it

contains eleven. The ten small coins, which are of equal date and in sum of equal value with the larger one, are the significant parts of it. This, on the wedding day, the bridegroom presents to his bride as the symbol and testimonial of their marriage. To her it is the same as the wedding-ring is to the bride in our own land. Her care in keeping it, is a measure of her marital affection and fidelity. The neglect or loss of it would be a cause of jealousy; indeed, the loss of one of the small coins from the string would be sufficient to justify her husband in issuing a bill of divorce, taking away the remainder and turning her out dishonored from his home.

This beautiful oriental custom, which was, no doubt, prevalent among the common people in Peræa in our Saviour's day, throws a new light on the last half of his great pastoral parable, and connects it intelligently with the first part, and at the same time elevates the behavior of the wife, who had lost one of her "ten pieces of silver," into great dignity and solemnity. If she had simply lost a small piece of money her loss would not have been worthy of the great ado she made about it. To call her friends and neigh-

bors together to assist her in her search for a lost dime or shilling, or to rejoice with her when she found it, would have been simply ridiculous. But now we see that the lost piece of silver was more precious to that wife than the lost sheep to its shepherd, or the prodigal son to his father. Her honor, her happiness, her home was at stake. No wonder she lighted a candle, swept her house, and searched diligently till she found it. No wonder her neighbors were concerned for her at her loss, and rejoiced with her when she found the lost piece.

The parable in its application to the Jewish church in its then fallen state, would imply a faithless wife who had lost one of her "ten pieces of silver," and who was unconscious of her terrible loss, or shamelessly unconcerned about it. The faithful wife, becoming conscious of her dreadful loss and danger, and rising up in whole-souled earnestness to seek her lost piece of money, determined never to give over the search till she found it, represents the church, under the ministry of Jesus, becoming conscious of her deadness and shame, of her unfaithfulness and disgrace, and rising up under the quickening and guiding light of the Holy Spirit, and calling to



all her members to bring them again into the activities of their Christian duties, and into the enjoyment of renewed religious life.

We have not space to enter into a discussion of the great parable of the "prodigal son," over against which our Saviour's great pastoral parable is balanced. While the one we have unfolded shows how God's sovereign, self-moving love seeks the sinner in his lost and ruined estate, the other shows how the sinner wanders away from his God, and then, when he comes to himself in conviction and repentance, how he rises up in a nascent faith and returns to his father-God who receives him with full forgiveness and overflowing joy.

The joy over the repentant and returning sinner is the diadem of grace with which both these great parables are crowned. Greater than the joy of the shepherd over finding his lost sheep, than the joy of the wife over finding her lost piece of silver, than the joy of the father over finding his lost son, is the joy of God our Saviour in the presence of the angels over every sinner that repents and is saved; and as the joy, for the moment, over the lost sheep that was found was greater than that over the ninety and nine

that had not strayed, as the joy over the one piece of silver that was found was greater than that over the nine pieces that had not been lost, and as the joy over the prodigal son that returned was greater than that over the son that had never left his father's home,—so, at the moment of restoration, is the joy, on earth and in heaven, greater over one sinner that repents and returns than over all just persons who, at the time, need no repentance.

It is not because the one soul, at the moment of being saved, is more valuable, or more valued, than the souls already saved, but, because, by a law of human nature universally understood and appreciated, the heart experiences a more vivid joy for the moment, in the act of receiving back that which had been lost than in the continuous possession of that already in safe keeping. The ninety and nine left in the wilderness, the company of the saved and safe ones, were not forgotten; the shepherd, while seeking the lost sheep, was all the time thinking of the flock from which it had strayed; and when he found the lost one he returned with it on his shoulders, rejoicing, and restored it to its place among those from whose company and fellowship it had wandered away.

Suppose that a little child of a large family should wander away and be lost in a wood where it was exposed to devouring beasts, would not the father leave the household and go in search of that lost child till he found it? When found, would he not take it up in his arms and bring it home, rejoicing, for the moment, with a greater joy over that one child that had been lost and was found again, than over all his other children? Would not the whole household be thrilled and filled with joy over that one child that had been, as it were, dead and was alive again? Likewise there is a commotion of joy over every sinner that repents, for the moment, more than over all just persons needing, at the moment, no repentance. For the moment they, the just ones, are seemingly, but not in reality, forgotten. How sweet and precious it is to learn from the lips of Jesus that this law, so clearly traced on earth, is but the shadow and type of the same great law existing in heaven where it prepares for repenting and returning sinners, not a bare refuge of escape, but a joyous welcome that flings the gates of salvation wide open for their abundant entrance into the joy of the Lord, amidst the rejoicings of the angels.

## XVIII

## AT JERICHO GOING TO JERUSALEM

## WHERE HE DINED WITH ZACCHEUS

During the period of Christ's sojourn in Peræa, Lazarus, whom he loved, sickened and died. When the sickness of Lazarus began to be grave and alarming the sorrowing sisters sent for the loving Jesus, but he did not hasten to come to their relief. Lazarus died and was buried. On the fourth day after his death Jesus came. He wept with the bereaved sisters, and in the presence of the multitude, he called Lazarus to life from the tomb. This was the most notable of all his miracles, and it produced a profound sensation. Thereupon, the chief-priests and Pharisees caused a meeting of the Sanhedrin to be called, and urged prompt and energetic action against Jesus, because he was doing many miracles and it seemed that all men would believe upon him. They did not pretend to deny his miracles, but made them

an argument why he should be forthwith arrested and brought to trial, and gotten rid of by a speedy death. There was an indictment then pending against him which had been lodged in the Sanhedrin at the very beginning of his public ministry, when he first purged the Temple. Jesus had not been brought to trial under that indictment for two reasons: first, because they saw that the issue of the trial must be either an acquittal or the death-sentence; and to have acquitted Jesus would have been to acknowledge his Messiahship, and there were those in the Sanhedrin who could not be brought to vote for his death; and, secondly, there was no one bold enough to apprehend Jesus and to bring him to trial. There was a divine majesty in the meek and lowly Jesus that overawed all, and no one dared to lay hands on him until the divinely appointed time for his sacrifice had arrived.

In the meeting of the Sanhedrin, called on occasion of the resurrection of Lazarus, Caiaphas, being the high-priest for that year, endeavored to secure, in advance of his arrest, the unanimous agreement to vote for his death. The Pharisees and chief-priests would not dare to proceed to trial against Jesus until they were

made certain of the death-sentence in advance, because an acquittal, or a divided jury, would have been disastrous to their cause. In pleading for this the high-priest was made to utter an unconscious prophecy: that it was expedient that Jesus should die for that nation—that One should die for all.

Then and there the old indictment was taken up and the death-sentence against Jesus was formally agreed upon and voted in advance of the trial, and before the arrest of the prisoner; and from that day forth they took counsel how they might bring him to trial and rush him through to death. In consequence of this, Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews at Jerusalem, but went back into the country east of the Jordan, on the borders of the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and continued there with his disciples until the time of his offering drew near. This city has not been localized. It cannot be identified with Ephron of II. Chron. xiii. 19, for that was near Bethel, and it is clear from the text that Jesus went somewhere beyond Jordan in Peræa. It was from this retreat that he was returning when he passed through Jericho where he dined with Zaccheus.

Modern Er Riha, the miserable Arab village of mud huts, which is now pointed out as Jericho, was not the Jericho of Joshua's day nor the Jericho of Jesus' time. The former was situated at the so-called fountain of Elisha, and the latter near the reservoir, still in a good state of preservation, which Herod constructed to supply water for the baths of his Jericho-palace. In the days of Christ this Jericho was the chief city of an exceedingly rich and fertile valley. It was large and wealthy, and was handsomely laid out in broad streets, and surrounded by a delightful grove of palm-trees. Hence it was called the City of Palms. The roads leading into it were broad and well paved, and were shaded by long rows of low-branched and wide-spreading sycamores. In the city were many magnificent and handsome residences and grand public edifices. The beautiful and fastidious Cleopatra was charmed with the place, and Antony took possession of both the city and surrounding plain, and gave them, as a choice present, to the infamous woman with whom he was infatuated. She, after growing tired of the handsome gift, sold the city and plain to Herod, who, when he came into possession of it, adorned

the city with all the display of wealth and architectural taste for which his reign was famous. He made Jericho his winter-resort, and built there for himself a grand palace.

Such was the city when Jesus passed through it on his way to Jerusalem, where he was going to his betrayal and crucifixion. There is now hardly a vestige of its past greatness and glory left. The whole region around is a scene of melancholy ruins and utter desolation.

As he came into the city a great multitude thronged around him, filling the street and blocking the way. In that multitude there was a little man of a short stature who was very anxious to see Jesus, but he could not see over the shoulders of the people, nor get near him for the press. Perhaps, also, he was repulsed by the people because he was "the chief of the publicans." But he was a man not to be easily thwarted in his purpose; and so he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree that he might see Jesus as he passed under its overhanging boughs. Jesus had his divine eye upon him all the time he was trying to see him. He saw him when he stood on tiptoe trying to look over the heads of the crowd; saw him when he



tried to push his way through the press to get near him and was driven back, with insulting words, by the people who would not allow a vile publican to touch them; saw him when he ran ahead as if he had given up the effort in despair; and saw him, when, seeking a contrivance to help him to his purpose, he climbed up into the tree.

There were, no doubt, hundreds of others in trees, on fences, on the house-tops, and looking out through windows, to see Jesus as he passed by; but the motive with them was an idle curiosity to see the man of whom all the world was then talking, while the motive of Zaccheus was far different and deeper: he wanted "to see Jesus, who he was." He wanted to see if there were any tokens in his appearance that would stamp him as the Messiah for whose coming he was waiting and longing. When Jesus came under the tree he stopped and looked up, with that personalizing and seeking look which made Zaccheus feel that he was seen and noticed, and said to him, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

Zaccheus was envied by the people because he was rich, and was despised because he was "chief

of the publicans;" and when they saw Jesus, self-invited, go home with this man, they all murmured, saying that he was gone to be guest with a sinner. Such is human nature. If one opens his mouth to defend one in public life against whom party prejudice has heaped up false accusations, how often is it said, "If you defend that man, you are no better yourself?" The disciples of Jesus went with him, and also, it seems, many others. Zaccheus stood up and said, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I take anything through false accusations, I restore fourfold." This was not a profession of what he was going to do for the future, but a declaration of what he had been doing in the past. Thereupon, Jesus said, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." Such was the man whom Jesus visited. His visit did not make him such, but was made because he knew that he was such a man. He went to rescue the name of an honest man and faithful Jew from the cloud of vile slanders that narrow-minded and bigoted prejudice had heaped upon it. This was the lesson of Christian fairness which he paused to teach on his way to his own heartless betrayal

and cruel crucifixion under false and malicious charges.

He had given sight to one blind beggar as he entered the city, and now as he left the house of the rich man whose good name he had rescued from foul slanders, he came upon blind Bartimeus to whom he gave sight, thus showing that his mission of love was to rich and poor alike.

Near Jericho, rising abruptly from the plain, begins a high and rugged mountain ridge, called by the Arabs *Jebel Karantel* and by the Christians *Mons Quarantana*—forty days' mountain—which is the traditional site of the forty days' fast and temptation. From the summit, which is very difficult to reach, a large portion of what was then the Jewish world, and much of the regions beyond, can be seen. It may have been from this point that the devil showed Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time." We do not know. But in the day of Christ the view from the top must have been one of surprising beauty and magnificent grandeur, an almost overwhelming display of the wealth and glory of the kingdoms of this world. It is now a scene of utter desolation. The

last temptation may have taken place on the lofty summit of this mountain, but we do not think that Jesus spent the forty days of his fast in any one particular place. It is more likely that he wandered about from place to place in the wilderness of Judea.

It would be interesting to describe the road that leads up from Jericho to Jerusalem, along which our Saviour must have traveled; but we must content ourselves by saying, in general appearance it resembles the rest of the wilderness of Judea which we have already abundantly described.

Toward noon we began to ascend the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives. On this mountain we determined to spend the remainder of the day. At its base our Saviour was betrayed unto the shame of the cross, and from its summit he ascended to the glory of his throne. Every foot of it is hallowed by associations with his name. We first entered the town of El-Azarieh, which now marks the site of ancient Bethany. The name El-Azarieh means the town of Lazarus, the Moslem mistaking the L of his name for the article. It is now a dirty Mohammedan village, containing about forty mud huts, and some

ancient ruins. Of course it does not now bear the remotest resemblance to the Bethany in which Lazarus and his sisters lived, in whose happy home Jesus was a frequent and welcome visitor.

According to the best authority Bethany means the house of dates, as Bethpage means the house of figs; but some would translate it, "the house of poverty," while others think the name means, "the home of comfort." We were shown here some improbable, not to say impossible, sites. Among them the house of Mary and Martha, and also that of Simon the leper. We were also shown the so-called castle of Lazarus, a very ancient tower, older, perhaps, than the days of the Crusaders. But there is not the slightest probability that it was ever the castle of Lazarus, or that Lazarus ever had a castle at all. We were also shown the so-called tomb of Lazarus, which may be authentic; but, if so, it has been so changed that Lazarus himself, if he should return to earth again, could not recognize it except by its location. There is no reason to suppose, on the one hand, that Bethany in the days of Jesus was a fashionable suburban city filled with the homes of the rich who lived

in castles and palaces; nor, on the other, that it was a poverty-stricken hamlet, such as El-Azarieh is to-day, inhabited only by the poor and degraded. It was, no doubt, a beautiful, palm-shaded and quiet rural village, inhabited by a well-to-do and a well-behaved people, living in that most desirable of all social stations, just midway between oppressive wealth and pinching poverty. It was just such a town, near the great city, as would be most attractive to Jesus, the model man, and its inhabitants were just such people as would be most likely to give shelter and welcome to such a personage.

## XIX

## ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES OVERLOOKING JERUSALEM

## WHERE HE BEHELD AND WEPT OVER THE CITY

The Mount of Olives is not a single elevation, but a long, mountainous ridge, or rather a short chain of mountains, on the east side of Jerusalem, separated from the city by the deep valley of the Kedron. It is five or six miles long when its two outliers, Scopus on the north and the Mount of Offense on the south, are reckoned as parts of the mountain. On the Mount of Olives proper there are three peaks, or rather rounded elevations. The highest, being four hundred feet above the Temple-plateau on Mount Moriah, commands a full view of the city and surrounding country. Coming from Bethany we ascended this mountain by a pathway along which, no doubt, Jesus often walked. When we reached the summit the city burst suddenly into view. I saw before me, separated from the mountain

on which I stood by a deep valley intervening, a city surrounded by walls, having numerous domes, towers, minarets and spires, shooting up all over it. At first the view, in point of grandeur and impressiveness, fell below my expectations. There was only a far-off resemblance to the many pictures I had seen, and to the one I had painted in my own imagination. But slowly, and by degrees, I began to get the places and objects in view reduced to order, and located in their proper relations to one another, and then, the holy city, with all its varied associations, began to make upon me a more proper and a profounder impression. Gradually my soul was filled with a sense of awe and a spirit of worship.

And this is Mount Olivet indeed, the veritable mountain over which Jesus walked, down the slope of which he rode when he entered Jerusalem in triumph, and around which cluster so many of the most precious and interesting events of his life on earth. But it is not now as it was when he saw it. There are no palm trees growing on it, not many olive trees, not many trees of any kind. In his day it was covered with shady groves and adorned with



luxuriant gardens, and clothed with verdure and beauty from base to summit. It is now almost bare, and looks barren. A few olive trees grow here and there, with dark-green leaved fig trees between them. It is now principally a place of ruins and tombs, presenting a scene of deadness and desolation, in the midst of which stand a few monuments and memorials of its departed life and dead glory.

My first desire was to find, if possible, the spot where Jesus stood when he viewed the city and wept over it, and, in infinite sadness, predicted its fast coming downfall and doom. I found the ledge of smooth rock, so graphically described by Dean Stanley, and by him proven to be the place where Jesus stood when he beheld the city, and wept over its sin and coming ruin. "Nowhere else," says he, "on the Mount of Olives is there a view like this. By the two other approaches, one over the summit and the other over the northern shoulder of the hill, the city reveals itself gradually. Here the city and the Temple suddenly burst into view, producing the sudden and affecting impression described in the Gospel narratives. The traditional spot of the lamentation is at a place, half way down

the mountain, to which the description is wholly inapplicable, whilst no tradition attaches to this, the only road by which a large procession could have approached; and this, almost the only spot of the Mount of Olives which the Gospel narrative fixes with exact certainty, is almost the only unmarked spot—undefiled or unhallowed by mosque or church, chapel or tower—left to speak for itself. Here the Lord's feet stood, and here his eyes beheld what is still the most impressive view which the neighborhood of Jerusalem furnishes; and the tears gushed forth at the sight."

At this point, with feelings of awe and reverence, I stood and viewed the city—not the city over which Jesus wept, but modern Jerusalem which has been built over the grave in which the bones and ashes of ancient Jerusalem lie buried. The most prominent object that met my eye was the Harem esh-Sherif—the noble enclosure covering the plateau of Mount Moriah on which the Temple stood. This enclosure embraces about one-sixth of the entire area within the present walls. Viewed from this spot, one sees on it an imposing superstructure, or rather, a collection of imposing edifices. The

Dome of the Rock rises in the center, like a king in his glory, and on the southern wall stands the mosque of Aksa like a queen in her beauty; and all around stand tall cypresses, waving their lofty green boughs, like plumed knights, serving their king and their queen. Some tall, slender minarets are seen, pointing heavenwards, like gigantic lances held by giant-attendants whose bodies are not seen. But how much greater, grander and more glorious must have been the Temple and its surroundings on which Jesus looked, and of which he, weeping, said, "Not one stone shall be left on another!"

Looking over the Dome of the Rock to the western side of the city I saw near the Jaffa-gate, through which I entered on my first visit to the city, the square tower of David, and near it a slender minaret rising toward the sky, as a painful reminder that the city of David is now in the hands of Moslems, with whom mosques take the place of synagogues, and minarets the place of spires.

Away down on the lower end of the hill of Zion stands a mosque over the so-called tomb of David, in which, an old tradition says, is the upper room where Jesus ate the last passover-

supper with his disciples, and instituted the Christian sacrament of the Holy Communion-Supper, and where the disciples were assembled in prayer when the Holy Ghost descended upon them, as it were, in cloven tongues of fire. Down there in the Jewish quarter are two domes, one of them quite conspicuous because painted green, which are the two principal synagogues now standing in the city of their fathers. In the Armenian quarter were plainly seen the Church of St. James and the convent and the Patriarch's Palace. And over in the Christian quarter the domes of the rotunda and choir of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher were plainly in view.

From my standpoint I looked down into the deep valley of Jehoshaphat, through which runs the brook Kedron, now always in the summer dry. I could see where the valley comes sloping around the northeast corner of the city, and, following down the valley with my eye, I could see it bending in a southwest direction to meet the valley of Hinnom coming around the city from the west side, and where the two meet between the Pool of Siloam and Job's Well, and forms what was called Tophet in the days

of Moloch worship, and afterwards the king's garden.

Descending by a stony path we came to the traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane, located just where the mountain slope begins to widen into the valley. The tradition that localizes our Saviour's agony here, can be traced back nearly to his day, and the place tallies in all points with the biblical narrative and description. There can be but little doubt of this being the place where our Saviour agonized and was betrayed. It is to me the most interesting spot on all this earth. There stands in one corner of it seven old, gnarled and now decaying olive trees, clustered together. They are carefully guarded by an iron railing around them, and have stones piled over their now slowly decaying roots. These are said to mark the spot of the agony. They are supposed to be plants grown up from the roots of the veritable trees under which our blessed Saviour suffered when his soul was sorrowful even unto death, and the sweat fell from his face, as it were, in great drops of blood. From the roots of these trees, now very old, numerous branches are now shooting up, which will take their places in the

years to come. Thus, from century to century, these sacred trees propagate themselves, and their succession may continue to mark the place, until he shall come to gather the redeemed out of the world for whose redemption he paid the bitter price in his agony in Gethsemane's dark and doleful shade.

While in the garden, Jesus was betrayed by Judas into the hands of his enemies, and was led away to trial, first before the Jewish Sanhedrin, and then before the Roman court presided over by Pontius Pilate. It is not our purpose in this little book to enter into a detailed study of these trials. Let it be sufficient for our present purpose to say, that it seems to us that the indictment of the Sanhedrin against Jesus was first formulated at the beginning of his ministry when, at the passover, he first purged the Temple, driving out those who sold oxen and doves and overturning the tables of the money changers. As we have seen, in that act, Jesus stood in the Temple, and proclaimed himself to be the Son of God and the Messiah of the Jews. The great Sanhedrin was then called together and began the trial of Jesus; and, not being able to come to an agreement as to what they should do, they

sent Nicodemus to Jesus, proposing to him that he should abandon his claim to the Messiahship, and take the role of a prophet, signifying that they were ready to receive him as *one* of the prophets on account of his miracles. The proposition of this compromise Jesus rejected, asserting his Messiahship more emphatically than before. Thus, then, that first indictment hung over his head during all his public ministry, but his enemies were never able to apprehend and bring him before them for trial.

Three years later Jesus again entered the Temple and took possession of it, and driving out those who bought and sold in its porches and open courts, he filled the holy place with the glory of his own presence and the majesty of his miraculous works. This second purging of the Temple brought matters to a crisis. The chief-priests, scribes and elders saw that they must act at once, and bring the case, which had been pending so long, to an issue. They determined to delay no longer, and they sought how they might destroy him. The case had become desperate, and they saw that they must destroy Jesus without further delay, or all the world would go after him. The people were astonished

at his doctrine, and very attentive to his teaching. The case was urgent; and so the priests bribed Judas, and he betrayed the Master into their hands. They brought him to trial under the original indictment of blasphemy in claiming to be the Son of God and the Messiah, and in threatening, as they said, to destroy the Temple. The second count in their indictment they could not sustain, though they had suborned false witnesses to swear against him; to the first count Jesus confessed in open court, and thereupon they rushed upon him, and passed sentence of death against him. But they could not execute their own sentence until it was ratified by the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilate. Pilate pronounced him innocent, but finally, borne down by the clamor of the Jews, he pronounced sentence of death upon him, and condemned him to the cross. Thus, in his weakness, Pilate lost the most glorious opportunity that mortal man ever had—the opportunity of saving the Saviour of the world.



## XX

## MOUNT CALVARY

## WHERE HE WAS CRUCIFIED

Where is Mount Calvary on which Jesus was crucified? No one ever goes to Jerusalem without asking this question; and no one, except unthinking and credulous pilgrims who take the word of their priests as if it were the word of the Gospel, can be satisfied with any of the answers yet given. For more than a thousand years the whole Christian world, the critical and credulous alike, accepted, undoubtingly, the traditional place, now pointed out under the roof of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, as the true site of Calvary where our Saviour was crucified. During this long period the whole world accepted without doubt or hesitation the vault over which the holy church is built as the tomb in which our Lord was buried, and from which he rose on the third day in glorious triumph over death and the grave. It was for the recovery

of this site of Calvary and of this tomb that the Christians waged against the Mohammedan usurpers the long-protracted and bloody wars of the Crusaders. They were the soldiers of the cross, fighting in undoubting and uninquiring faith for the rescue, from the hands of Moslems and unbelievers, of what they believed to be the sacred spot where Jesus had been crucified, and the holy tomb in which his body had been buried. This was the continuous and unquestioned belief of the church for more than a thousand years. But now for more than a hundred years doubts have been thrown upon these traditional sites of Calvary and the tomb. The first expressions of doubts as to the genuineness of these holy sites were received with astonishment and horror. This doubt was first suggested by a Saxon, named Kortens, who visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in 1738. He was made incredulous by the multitude of impossible sites that he found crowded under the sacred roof, and he was disgusted with the gross superstitions with which the church was then degraded and disgraced. When he saw the absurd superstitions and the baptized paganism that had grown up around the tomb he could not bring his mind

to believe that his Saviour's body had either rested in, or risen from, the place then so desecrated. On his return to Germany he published his doubts. His book started an inquiry which, at first, received but little attention; but the inquiry has gone on increasing until now it is one of the live questions of the age. Around the tomb of Jesus a new crusade is raging to-day, but it is a war, not of swords, but of words.

Mr. Kortens' chief reasons for rejecting the traditional sites of Calvary and of Joseph's tomb were sentimental; but, just a hundred years after his day, scientific research took up the question. Dr. Edward Robinson in his "Biblical Researches," which were made in 1838, has presented strong reasons why he rejects the sites of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, holding them to be entirely apocryphal. But if the Altar of the Crucifixion in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher does not stand on the true site of Calvary, where was Calvary, "the place of a skull," on which our Saviour was crucified? A new Calvary has, of late years, been discovered in the knoll over the so-called grotto of Jeremiah, just outside of the present Damascus-gate. A German writer,

named Otto Thenius, was the first to direct attention to that knoll as the true site of Calvary. Since then Mr. Fisher Howe, a Christian merchant of New York, and the Rev. Dr. Charles S. Robinson and others, have argued strenuously in favor of this new site of Calvary.

In this modern dispute as to the true site of Calvary the Catholics, in the main—Latins, Greeks and Armenians—are on one side, and the Protestants on the other, though some Catholics hold with the Protestants, and many Protestants yet hold with the Catholics thinking that the reasons assigned for giving up the time-honored traditional sites are not conclusive. But, one may say, there are now two Calvaries pointed out—the Papal Calvary under the roof of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and the Protestant Calvary over the so-called grotto of Jeremiah.

The worst that can be said against the Papal Calvary is, it is inside the present walls; the best that can be said in favor of the Protestant Calvary is, it is outside the present walls. But the present walls were built by the great Solyman the Magnificent, in the year 1542 A. D. Nobody knows with certainty where the walls

ran in the days of Christ. The site of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher may have then been outside the walls, and the grotto of Jeremiah inside; or, both places may have been inside. The data needed to settle this question are not in existence to-day, and perhaps never will be again. As between the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and Jeremiah's grotto, the preponderance of probabilities favor the traditional site under the roof of the holy church. I know of nothing except Protestant prejudice, supported by a fancied resemblance of the knoll outside the present Damascus-gate to a skull, in favor of the new Calvary, which many, all too hasty, are ready to accept. One can see an imaginary skull in the hill just as one sees elephants, towers and towns in the far-off banks of clouds, when he tries to find them. Many are ready to accept a new site for Calvary on such shadowy evidence in order to get rid of the Papal Calvary around which ignorance and priestcraft have heaped such a pile of superstitious nonsense. But there is a nonsense of prejudice as well as of superstition; and in avoiding the one many have fallen into the other.

The pivotal question is, Where was the Roman

pretorium in which Pilate passed sentence of death on Jesus, and from which the sad procession started to the place of execution, Jesus bearing the cross on which he was to be crucified? It is extremely improbable that the procession passed through the heart of the city to a distant place of execution. The city was crowded with people, and the public mind was inflamed, and there was imminent danger of a dreadful and disastrous riot breaking out at any moment. The Jews feared nothing more than an attempt to rescue Jesus, and so they would wish to have him hustled out at the nearest gate, and the sentence executed in all possible haste. Pilate had yielded to the demands of the mob which terrified him into a concession which he did not wish to make. It is impossible not to suppose that Jesus was rushed out of the city at the nearest gate, and driven to his crucifixion in furious haste.

When Pilate, terrified into the terrible deed, yielded to the bloody demands of the many mouthed mob, he said to the centurion, "I, miles, expedi crucem—Go, soldier, hasten the cross." There was no delay. The Romans wanted to get the dreadful business off of their

hands as soon as possible. So did the Jews, because the next day would be with them a high Sabbath, and because they feared that reluctant Pilate might change his mind, or the friends of Jesus might rally and rush in and rescue him from their hands. There can be no doubt but that Jesus was driven out at the nearest gate, and rushed to execution as soon as sentence of death was passed upon him. What gate was that? The answer depends upon the question, where was the Roman pretorium? Was it in Herod's palace that stood on the site of the citadel, called David's Castle, near the present Jaffa-gate? After the expulsion of Archelaus this became the pretorium, or residence of the Roman procurator. Was Pilate, with his wife, lodging here when Jesus was brought before him? If so, then sentence of death was passed upon Jesus near the Garden Gate, called by Josephus Gate Gennath, and Jesus was hurried through that gate to the place of execution, the site of which is now, in highest probability, occupied by the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which may have at that time been outside the walls.

Among the last utterances on this point Rev.

Dr. Cunningham Geikie says: "The position of Calvary is not easily settled; for recent discoveries of remains of the second wall seem to show that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which, at least from the time of Constantine, has had the sad honor of being regarded as built on the sacred height, was in our Lord's day outside the city, and may thus, after all, be the genuine Golgotha. Of late years, a swell just outside the Damascus-gate, bearing in its outline some resemblance to a skull, has been thought to have been the scene of the crucifixion, especially as the highway to the north passes before it, so that crowds could watch the execution, as it is said in the Gospel really happened, and as, moreover, the place of stoning, where Jewish criminals were put to death, lay at its foot. But the glimpses found of the second wall shake this theory very much, and leave the whole question in doubt."

If it could be proven that the Roman pretorium, where Pontius Pilate passed sentence of death on Jesus, was in Herod's palace, that would be a strong argument in favor of the time-honored tradition that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher covers both Golgotha, where



our Saviour was crucified, and the tomb in which his body was buried. But, according to the highest authority, it is more probable that Pilate's residence when he sojourned in Jerusalem, was in the Castle of Antonia where, it is certain, the Roman soldiers were quartered. There was a palace in connection with this tower.

On this supposition, which the weight of both the circumstances of the case and the authority of learned men favor, the trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate took place at the northwest corner of the Temple-plateau. There the sentence of death was passed upon him, and from there the sad procession to the cross started. We cannot imagine that it proceeded clear across the city and went out on the side where the Damascus-gate stands, nor through the heart of the city to the present location of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

We are inclined to think that Jesus was rushed through the gate of St. Stephen, and that he was crucified somewhere on the brow of Mount Moriah or on the slope of Olivet. This view has had, and still has, the support of some of the ablest men. The probabilities all point in

this direction. We know that the ancient walls at this place must have stood just where the modern walls stand. There was no other place for them. We know that there was a gate just where St. Stephen's gate now is. The road from Jericho and Bethany led into the city through that gate. Along this road Simon of Cyrene may have been coming from the country when he met the procession going out. This was a much traveled road, and hence the passers-by, who, when they saw Jesus on the cross, railed upon him. The place was so near the walls around the Temple-plateau that the chief-priests, scribes and elders, without leaving the sacred enclosure, could have looked on and replied to the derisions of the rabble. It is not likely that they, who would not enter Pilate's judgment hall lest they should be defiled, would have followed through the streets to the more profane place of the Roman crucifixion. From the walls of the Temple-enclosure they viewed the scene, and conversed with the people around the cross.

Around the place were gardens with tombs in them. Among these tombs there is one most remarkable, known at the present day as the

Virgin's Tomb. This tomb of the mother of Jesus has for me an unspeakable fascination. It is the most interesting place of all on this sacred mount where every spot is crowded with interest. It is very near Gethsemane, on the slope of Olivet, just a little to the left of the road that leads from St. Stephen's gate across the valley, and over the mountain into Bethany and down to Jericho. It is a rock-cut tomb hewn out in the solid rock in the side of the mountain. Tradition says that in this tomb the body of the mother of Jesus was buried. Descending forty-seven steps, to a depth of thirty-five feet below the level of the entrance, we find a rock-cut tomb containing an empty sarcophagus. Here, tradition says, the Virgin Mary was buried, and that her body disappeared from the sarcophagus in her assumption. I know that travelers are shown, as I was myself, an empty tomb at old Ephesus called the tomb of the Virgin Mary. But that tradition has not the shadowy foundation of probability to rest upon. It is almost beyond a doubt that John remained in Jerusalem until after the death of Mary, and that she died and was buried in the city where her son was crucified. In the Virgin's Tomb there are a

number of niches, including those in which the ashes of Joachim and Anna, her parents, and of Joseph, her husband, are said to repose.

I cannot help thinking that this tomb may have been, originally, the real tomb of Joseph of Arimathea in which the body of our Lord was laid when it was a new tomb, and had never been used. Joseph was a rich man, and had prepared this tomb for his family burying-place. On the resurrection of Christ it was transferred to his mother as a burying-place for the holy family. If this was, indeed, the case, then the crucifixion must have been somewhere near this tomb. From this it would seem most likely that Jesus was crucified on the slope of Mount Olivet, just above Gethsemane, where he suffered and was betrayed; on the mountain from the top of which he viewed the holy city and wept over it, from the summit of which he ascended to heaven, and on which he will descend again to judge the world.

But how do we account for the existence of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, dating back to so great antiquity and claiming to cover the spots where Jesus was crucified and buried? There were two Helenas that were great builders

at Jerusalem: St. Helena the mother of Constantine, and Helena, Queen of Adiabene, a convert to Judaism. The Christian Helena built churches and the Jewish Helena built palaces. Under Julian the Apostate the Christians were driven out and their churches were destroyed, and the Jews were restored. On the return of the Christians they inquired for the site of the Church of St. Helena, and were, through the ignorance of the then inhabitants, directed to the ruins of the palace of Helena the Jewess. They cleared away the debris, and built the new church on the wrong site. This accounts for the blunder without attributing the intention of deceiving to anybody. It may yet be discovered that the original Church of St. Helena was located on the Mount of Olives, possibly over the Tomb of the Virgin. Researches have not yet been turned in this direction.

It is difficult for the mind to be satisfied with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher as marking the places of our Lord's crucifixion and burial. It seems to me impossible to accept the new site over the grotto of Jeremiah. There is nothing to support it except its fancied shape; but, if the shape is so like a skull to-day, how did it

escape attention and identification for so many centuries? The sufficient and satisfactory answer to this, is the fact, the grotto has assumed its present skull-like shape, so far as it has any, within the last century. The two cavities, called the eye-sockets, were made by quarrying in the side of the hill within the last one hundred years. The conclusive evidence of this fact was laid before me by Mr. Paul, a learned Armenian of Jaffa, in the manuscript of a book that he is preparing for the press. But, even with these modern cavities for eye-sockets, is there such a striking resemblance to a skull, that the skull-like shape forces itself upon the unprompted notice of the observer? I do not think any one except Mr. Talmage, or some one with a mind constituted like his, could be bold and reckless enough to venture an affirmative answer to this question. As there are none so blind as those who will not see, so there are none so keen-sighted as those who are determined to find what they want to see. Mr. Talmage wanted to see a skull, and he found a skull both in the inside and on the outside. He says, "Within, the grotto under the hill has the shape of the inside of a skull."

Once, when tramping through the Alps with three other gentlemen, one exclaimed, "Look, that chain of mountains over there has exactly the shape of a camel; there is the hump on his back, there is his long, crooked neck rising up into that peak, which is his head." All looked, and all saw the camel. It is true that it looked a little more awkward and out of proportion than the living camel does. But it started us, and we gave free play to the imagination. We had no difficulty in finding, in the mountains and clouds, elephants, horses, flying dragons and sailing ships. But of these reflections here we make an end, believing that it is just as impossible to fix upon the exact spot where Jesus was crucified as it is to fix upon the month of the year, and the day of the month, on which Jesus was born.

While all the well-informed know that there is no evidence that Jesus was born on the twenty-fifth day of the month of December, yet all the world will go on celebrating that day with hymns of praise to his holy name; and while those who have inquired know that there is no convincing proof that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher covers the place of the cross and the

tomb of the Crucified, yet multitudes of pilgrims and tourists will continue to journey thither, and worship there as at the most holy shrine on earth. And while in my own humble opinion, I believe that the site of the crucifixion was just outside the gate on the east side of the city, somewhere on the brow of Mount Moriah or the rising slope of the Mount of Olives, I know not where it was, and I know that I never will know. But some Protestants think that we must find and establish a new site for Calvary in order to get rid of the mass of silly and superstitious sites and rites that ignorance and credulity have crowded into the Church of the Holy Sepulcher; but a change of location would not bring about this result, nor a change of masters. There is superstition among Protestants as well as with the Latins and Greeks, and it is a superstition that has not the plea of antiquity and tradition to apologize for it.

At Jerusalem I had painful evidence that some Protestants are already making a superstitious use of the imaginary site of Calvary over the grotto of Jeremiah. A Presbyterian minister, whom I shall call the Rev. Dr. McFlimsie, went with a small party on Easter morning to



the supposed skull-shaped knoll and there administered to them the Lord's Supper, partaking of it himself, having sent a cablegram, the day before, to his congregation in distant America to be in the home-church at sunrise engaged in the holy supper, so that, in some mystical way, the influence of a holy communion on his supposed Calvary might reach his far-away congregation. At the hotel he was forward to tell all who would listen what a blessed communion-season he and his little company had enjoyed on the very spot where Jesus was crucified, and how he hoped and believed its blessed influence would reach, and be felt by, his dear people from whom he was separated by the breadth of two oceans. That same man, in that same conversation, expressed himself as offended and disgusted in the extreme with the superstitious flummery which he had witnessed that same day in the Easter-services in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, saying that he felt that he had violated the sanctity of the Lord's holy day by being present there simply as a spectator. Bah! What folly and fanaticism reign in the souls of some who set themselves up as shining lights to guide the deluded into truth and righteousness!

We cannot leave this subject without calling attention to the well known, but startling theory of Mr. Fergusson as to the site of the Holy Sepulcher. He maintains that the Mosque of Omar is the Basilica of Constantine, that the mysterious rock which it encloses is that of which the Evangelist speaks, and that a cave about fifteen feet square in the side of the rock is the very cave in which our Lord was entombed. His argument, which is very ingenious, has been closely condensed by the Rev. Dr. Manning, and given in the following brief summary: "He pledges his professional reputation that the Kubbet es Sakhrah is a building of the date of Constantine, that it is not and never could have been intended for a mosque, that it does not possess a single characteristic of Saracenic architecture, but that in its main features it is identical with the sepulchral Basilica of Diocletian, at Spalatro, a type which Constantine is likely to have followed. The Golden Gate he regards as the grand entrance from the eastern side to the area of the basilica, and maintains that it is of the same style and date as the Dome of the Rock. Assuming the accuracy of his theory that the Temple occupied the southwestern angle of

the present area, he shows that there was ample space for the crucifixion and entombment to have taken place here without trenching upon the Temple precincts, from which it was separated by a deep pass or valley, now filled up. He also seeks to show that the indications of the Gospel narratives, the statements of Eusebius, and the language of early pilgrims agree in fixing upon this as the true site of the burial and resurrection of our Lord."

The fatal points against this theory are the historical facts, that the Basilica of Constantine was not built *over* but *near* the sepulcher, but the Kubbet es Sakhrah covers the rock; therefore, the cave in the rock cannot be the tomb in which our Lord was buried; and that Constantine's building was destroyed by Chosroes II., and the church that rose upon its site suffered the same fate under El-Hakem; therefore, the Mosque of Omar cannot be the Basilica of Constantine. But while these facts prove that the present Mosque of Omar cannot be the Basilica of Constantine, they leave all Mr. Fergusson's powerful arguments standing which go to prove that the crucifixion and burial of our Lord must have taken place on the east side of

the city, and near the Temple. Why may not the subterranean church, still in tolerable preservation, that stands over the traditional tomb of the Virgin be the crypt of the original church which St. Helena erected over the tomb of our Saviour? We have shown how the true site of the original basilica may have been lost during the long interval after Constantine in which Christians were banished from Jerusalem by Persian and Mohammedan conquerors, and how on their return the attention of Christians may have been fixed upon the site of the Jewish Helena's palace as the site of the Christian Helena's church. That mistake could have been easily and innocently made. De Vogue makes the present church over the Virgin's tomb date back to the fourth century. It is certain that there was a church over this traditional tomb in the fifth century, and that it then consisted of an upper and underground story. The Crusaders found here the ruins of the crypt. The church was rebuilt in 1161 by Milicent, daughter of Baldwin II., and wife of Fulke of Anjou, the fourth king of Jerusalem. But we do not dogmatize. We throw out the suggestion, as a bare possibility, that here we may

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have the crypt of the original Church of St. Helena, marking the true site of the tomb of our Lord. But this is only a conjecture.

The exact spot of the grave of the Man of Macedon, Alexander the Great, who conquered the world by deluging the earth in the blood of his fellow men, is not now known, and never will again be known with absolute certainty. We know that he was buried somewhere at the city of Alexandria in Egypt, which he founded and intended to make the capital of the empire of the world. All that human power and wealth could do, was done, to mark the spot and to perpetuate the memory of it to the end of time. His body was embalmed and put in a coffin of solid gold; that was enclosed in an encasement of solid glass; and that was sealed up in a sarcophagus of solid stone; and then the mummied body of the Conqueror of the world was buried in a rock-hewn tomb, and a stone monument was erected over it which was intended to be eternal. But long ago the monument has been thrown down and its stones scattered, the grave has been opened and the stone sarcophagus crushed into fragments; the glass encasement has been shivered into pieces; the

gold coffin has been stolen and melted down; the mummy has been cast out on the earth; and the grave has been filled up, and no mortal knows its exact site. Then is it a matter of wonder that the exact site of the tomb of the Man of Galilee whom the world crucified, cannot now be identified with absolute certainty? We know that he was crucified at Jerusalem just outside the city gates, and that his body was buried in a new rock-cut tomb, in a garden close by where his cross stood. All else is conjecture. But the more we think over the holy narrative of our Saviour's condemnation and crucifixion the deeper does the suggestion work itself into our mind, that Jesus must have been crucified somewhere on the east side of the city, just outside of what is now called St. Stephen's gate, either on the brow of Moriah, or, more probably, on the slope of Olivet. The Scriptures do not say that Golgotha was a hill, nor that it was called a place of a skull because it was shaped like a skull; though it may have been a skull-shaped knoll on Moriah or Olivet which long ages ago lost its shape.

On the hypothesis here thrown out every requirement of the Gospel narratives is met. It

was in a conspicuous place, nigh unto sepulchers and gardens, was outside the gate, was nigh unto the city, was on a leading thoroughfare coming up from Jericho, along which Simon of Cyrene may have been entering the city from the country, was so near the Temple-plateau that the priests could have looked on and conversed with the rabble around the cross without leaving the sacred enclosure, also so near Pilate's headquarters and the barracks of the Roman soldiers that the priests could have conversed with Pilate, as they did, about the title that was placed over his head, that the soldiers could have run out to bear to Jesus on the cross the vinegar which they gave him to drink, and that frequent messages could have been carried between Pilate and those around the cross.

And besides all these points, the Apostle, in Heb. ix: 13. and xiii: 21, connects the sacrifice of Jesus outside the gate with the sacrifice of the red heifer, which, as prescribed in Num. xix., was to be offered outside the camp. After the Temple was built this ceremony was always performed on the Mount of Olives over against the Temple. The sacrifice of that red heifer was a type of the crucifixion of Christ. There has

been no heifer offered by the Jews since his crucifixion. Jesus Christ in his crucifixion was the real whole burnt offering made for the sins of the people, and it is probable that it was made on the Mount of Olives, from which, forty days afterwards, he ascended to heaven. The ashes of the sacrificed heifer were to be kept in a clean place for the purification of the people. The body of Christ, gathered from the tomb, is kept in heaven; and through the sacrifice of his body, once offered on the cross, all who believe in him are pardoned, purified and saved.



## XXI

ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES OVERLOOK-  
ING BETHANY

## WHENCE HE ASCENDED TO HEAVEN

It was at the base of the Mount of Olives that Jesus was parted from his disciples when he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies and led away, bound as a prisoner, to the humiliation of his trials and to the shame and agony of the cross; it was on the summit of the same mountain that he was again parted from his disciples when he was received by the angels and conducted to the throne of his glory, where he now reigns until he shall return to earth again, in the company of the angels and in the majesty of his glory, to judge the world. We peer into the darkness of Gethsemane and, in the dim starlight, catch a glimpse of our suffering Saviour standing in the midst of his sleeping disciples. He had told them that his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and prayed them to wake and watch with him, and to pray for them-

selves. But their eyes were heavy with slumber, and he had been left to agonize and to pray alone. Three times had he been bowed down to the earth, in the dark shade of the old olive trees, under an unutterable agony so great that his sweat fell upon the earth, as it were, in great drops of blood. This agony he suffered alone, without even the solace of human sympathy. His disciples slept while their Master suffered. He comes to them the third time and finds them asleep, and says unto them, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." But then he adds, "It is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up and let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand." What does this mean? "Sleep on now, and take your rest. Rise up, and let us go." Does the last sentence contradict the first? So it seems on a hasty reading, and so it would be if the two sentences were spoken in the same breath. But when we consider the circumstances and find that several long hours intervened between the two utterances, we see that our Saviour's words are consistent, and that they present him in an attitude of infinite compassion. We do not think that it is possible to set in chronological order

all the events narrated by the four evangelists as occurring at our Saviour's last passover; much less, is it possible to make them synchronize with the order of progress authorized in the original institution of the paschal supper. We must remember what Dr. Farrar calls our attention to, that the Jews had made, before the days of Jesus, many radical distinctions between the Egyptian and the permanent passover. It had become impossible for the priests to kill all the lambs required, so vast was the multitude. The supper was no longer eaten standing, nor was the rule observed that forbade any one leaving the house before morning. There were many other deviations.

We suppose that Christ and his disciples gathered in the guest-chamber in the middle of the afternoon, that the feet-washing took place before the supper, that the passover was eaten about the going down of the sun, and, at its conclusion, the Lord's supper was instituted, and that Jesus and his disciples had left the house and were in the garden of Gethsemane in the early hours before midnight, and that the paroxysms of his agony were over by, or before, the midnight hour. What time, then, did the be-

trayer appear? Peter denied the Master at what the Jews call cock-crowing, that is, just before daylight. We cannot suppose that there was any delay between the arrest of the Saviour and his mock trial before Caiaphas. There was every motive to urge them to dispatch. They were exceedingly anxious to get Jesus into the hands of the Roman governor as soon as possible, because the next day was their preparation-day, and they wanted to get through with the bloody work so as to have the day for their religious rites; and they wanted to have the prisoner in the hands of the Roman soldiery before the city should awake, lest a rescue should be attempted. John places Peter's last denial after the condemnation by the irregular night session of the Sanhedrin, that is, just before day-break. We cannot suppose, considering the hot haste in which the Jews were moving, that more than two or three hours intervened between the arrest and the condemnation. That would fix the hour of the arrest between two and three o'clock in the morning. Now if Jesus returned to his disciples for the third time just before midnight—that is, between eleven and twelve o'clock, as we have shown good rea-

sons for believing he did—then, between the time when he said to them, not meaning to arouse them out of sleep that they might hear his words, “Sleep on now, and take your rest,” and when he said, “Rise up, and let us go,” there was a period of two or three hours. They had slept while he suffered, and now he waked and watched over them for two or three hours, while he was waiting the arrival of the betrayer. This harmonizes the apparent contradiction in the words of the Saviour, and presents the most exalted view of the absolute unselfishness of his character. He graciously permitted them to sleep and rest while he, himself exhausted, watched over them for long dreary hours in the darkness of that doleful and dreadful night.

But the supreme hour has come. Lo, he that betrayeth the Son of Man is at hand. There can be no more sleep. In a moment Jesus is betrayed by one disciple, deserted by all, and then denied by another.

We will not follow Jesus through his trials and the scenes of the last day of his mortal life on earth. The events of that blackest and brightest day in the world’s history constitute a study that moves the heart, and stirs the

thoughts, to their deepest depth; but, so many abler pens have described them, and more eloquent tongues have discoursed of them, and they are so familiar to all, that we pass over them, assuring our readers that we accept the facts of the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus, just as they are recorded in our Gospels, and most surely believed among us.

I believe that Jesus died on the cross, literally, of a broken heart. Otherwise mingled blood and water would not have flowed from his pierced side. I believe that he rose out of the grave in the veritable body that was nailed to the cross. Otherwise his risen body would not have borne the prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and of the spear in his side. I believe that the body of his resurrection was a real and material body, though it was dispossessed of many properties that belong to the human body before death, and possessed with qualities and powers that do not belong to our bodies in this mortal life. It could be touched and felt, and it could eat and speak and walk and act, and make its material presence perceptible, apparently, in a natural and materialistic way; and

yet, it seemed not to be subject to the ordinary laws of nature, as it could become invisible at pleasure, pass through closed doors and solid walls, and rise from the earth without wings or flight, gliding through the air into heaven.

After his resurrection he showed himself to his apostles and disciples by many infallible proofs, being seen of them, sometimes by one alone, sometimes by them in companies of two or more, one time by more than five hundred at once, for the space of forty days before his final ascension. One time he met with his apostles on the Sea of Galilee, where he discoursed with them, especially with Peter, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and giving commandments as to what they should teach and do after his disappearance from among them. It seems also, that, before this meeting, he had met with the eleven in a mountain in Galilee where he had appointed them an interview. And finally, when he had finished his post-mortem earthly ministry, he led his disciples out on the Mount of Olives as far as Bethany, and lifted up his hands and blessed them; and, while he was blessing them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven,

and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they stood looking steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said unto them: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Jesus brought his divinity down to earth from heaven, and he has carried his humanity from earth to heaven; and on the throne at the right hand of his Father in heaven, he reigns as God-man, man-in-God and God-in-man, and as, at once, our Lord and Saviour and Brotherman.

The Greek Church of the Ascension stands on the highest point of the Mount of Olives, and claims to cover the spot from which our Saviour ascended. The site is not well chosen, and is not supported even by probability. It is in full view of Jerusalem and not in sight of Bethany; while Luke tells us, that he led them out as far as Bethany, about a Sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem. Now, going over the brow of Olivet towards Bethany we come to a little, somewhat elevated, plateau on the side of the mountain, out of sight of Jerusalem and over-



looking Bethany, and just a Sabbath-day's journey from the city; here we find, beyond all doubt, the very spot from which our blessed Redeemer took his departure from his disciples on earth to his throne in heaven around which he is gathering all who believe in his name.

But is Jesus in his ascension clean gone from his disciples, never to return to them until he comes back in his majesty and glory to judge the world?

When he constrained his disciples to recognize the fact that his crucifixion was an event inevitable and near at hand, their hearts broke within them with terror and grief. He comforted them with the promise and assurance, "I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you." He also told them that he would rise from the grave, and reappear upon earth among them. This he did. But was that the fulfillment of the promise? If that was all, then the fulfillment was very meager and altogether unsatisfactory. The letter may have been kept, but the spirit of the promise was broken. After forty days he left them again; and if that short sojourn was all that the promise meant, then his second departure left them in a more desolate state of orphan-

age than the first had done. But his reappearance after his resurrection to his disciples, to whom he showed himself with many infallible proofs, was but the beginning of the real fulfillment of the promise. Just as he was about to take his second departure in his ascension, he renewed and enlarged the promise, saying: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." This was not a new promise, but a renewal of the first promise, enlarging it so as to embrace all who then believed upon him, and all who would thereafter believe upon him through their words. This promise, then, belongs as much to us as it did to the first disciples.

Is this promise fulfilled to us to-day? The ascended Jesus is invisible to our mortal eyes. How can there be any consolation in knowing that our Jesus is alive again, and that he has ascended to heaven and lives forevermore, if he never manifests himself to us? How can it take away the desolation of our orphanage, to know that our Jesus is living somewhere, if we can never know where he lives? The child of a wandering parent who has deserted it, who never communicates with it, is in a worse state of

orphanage than the child of a dead parent that sleeps silently in the grave. A Jesus forever withdrawn from us into the infinities of heaven, forever withholding his presence from us, would be to us a less Saviour than a Jesus forever buried in the tomb. But the plenitude of the promise implies a perpetual presence with us in the fullness of a conscious communion. Is this promise to-day fulfilled to the believers on earth? If so, how? It is fulfilled to all who have faith to receive it, but not by a corporeal or visible presence, but in a spiritual presence. Jesus has become invisible to our external sight, in order to become visible to our interior vision. He withdrew his corporeal presence in order to open the way for his spiritual presence. While he was on earth the veritable Christ was veiled in the flesh.

On the mount of transfiguration the flesh of Jesus was made transparent to the chosen three, and they caught a glimpse of the indwelling Christ. In the Christ of God we find our Immanuel. His presence is necessarily invisible to physical eye-sight. It is not the presence of a body among bodies, but of a spirit with spirits. It is incorporeal, and consequently invisible, but

none the less real and substantial. It is spiritual, and can, therefore, be manifested only to those who have spiritual discernment. It is not made to the world, but only to the spiritually minded. There are three realms of life possible and accessible to man. The animal life, which he lives, and in which he dies, in common with the beasts. In this realm he sees only what addresses itself to his corporeal senses; this much the beasts see in common with him. Then, there is the rational life in which man is elevated into a whole realm of existence and experiences above the beasts, and in which he sees what beasts can never perceive. And then, above this, there is the spiritual life of those, who, by faith and through the power of the Holy Ghost, are made new creatures in Christ-Jesus—who, as Jesus expressed it to Nicodemus, are born again and born of the Spirit from above; they are lifted up into a whole realm of life and new experiences of which the unregenerate and unspiritual have not, and cannot have, any proper or adequate conception. It is only to those who have entered this sphere of spiritual life, and so become endowed with spiritual discernment, that the real presence of the ascended

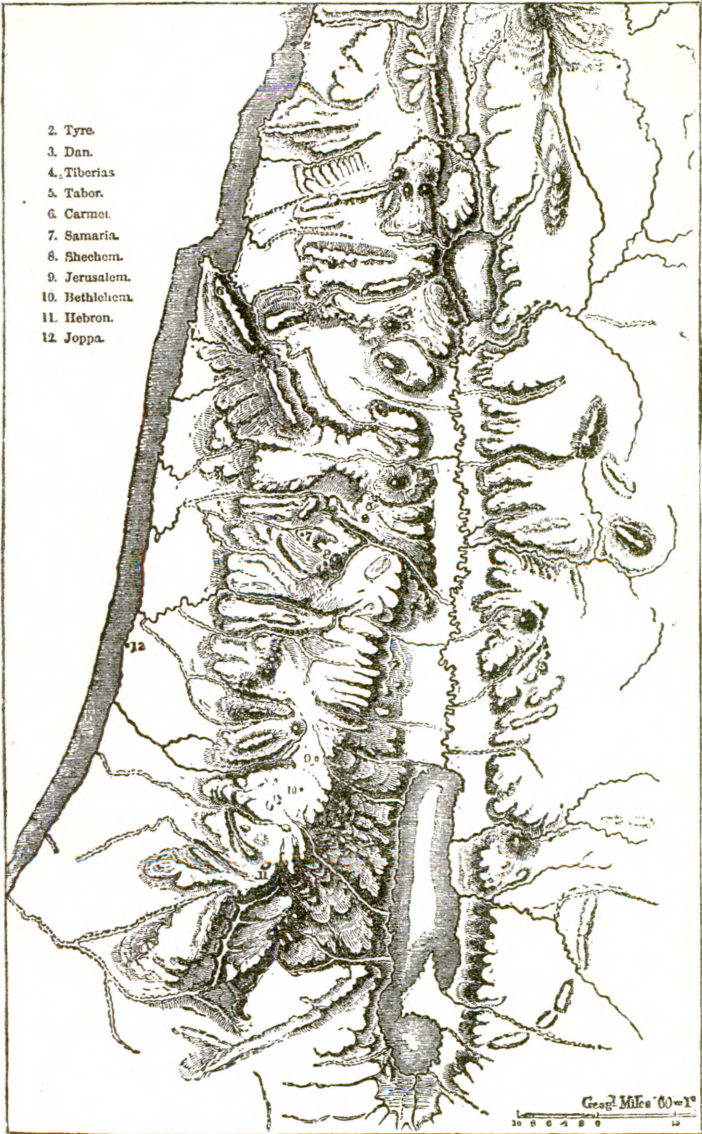
and invisible Jesus can be manifested. Thus it is, that the ascended Jesus manifests himself to his true disciples in a perpetual presence with them, which the world cannot see.

You may be learned in the lore of man and in the researchs of thought, you may have traveled far and wide and seen many countries and learned many languages, you may have dived deep in your investigations of nature and extorted from her many of her secrets, you may have made wonderful and surprising discoveries in earth and sea and air, you may know a thousandfold more about this world and its wisdom, than the humble disciple of Jesus who walks by your side; he may be an uneducated, an illiterate man; but if he be indeed a spiritual man, and you are unspiritual man, he has entered into a realm of life as much higher than the highest life you live as vision is above touch, as rational thought is above animal instinct, as spirit is above matter, as heaven is above earth. This is no dream of the mystic, nor figure of speech, nor flourish of rhetoric; it is a grand and glorious fact, a spiritual reality of which millions to-day have precious and priceless experience. This life has come into their

lives through their faith in him, and their love for him who was born at Bethlehem, who grew up at Nazareth, who was baptized in the Jordan, who was tempted in the wilderness, who made water wine at Cana's marriage-feast, who cleansed the Temple at Jerusalem and unfolded the nature of his kingdom to Nicodemus, who gave the water of life to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, who made the Sea of Galilee glorious with his mighty works done on its shores, who was crucified at Jerusalem, who rose from the dead, who ascended to heaven from Mount Olivet, and who will come again to earth to judge the quick and the dead. He, ascended and become invisible to mortal eyes, is with his children on earth, fulfilling his promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

It was an ancient myth that the Milky Way was the bright track made by the flashing wheels of the car of Phaeton, driving through the skies; but the Man of Calvary, ascending from the Mount of Olives to his celestial throne, has left across the heavens a brighter and more glorious pathway than the pale light of far-off stars. He has brought life and immortality to light, and

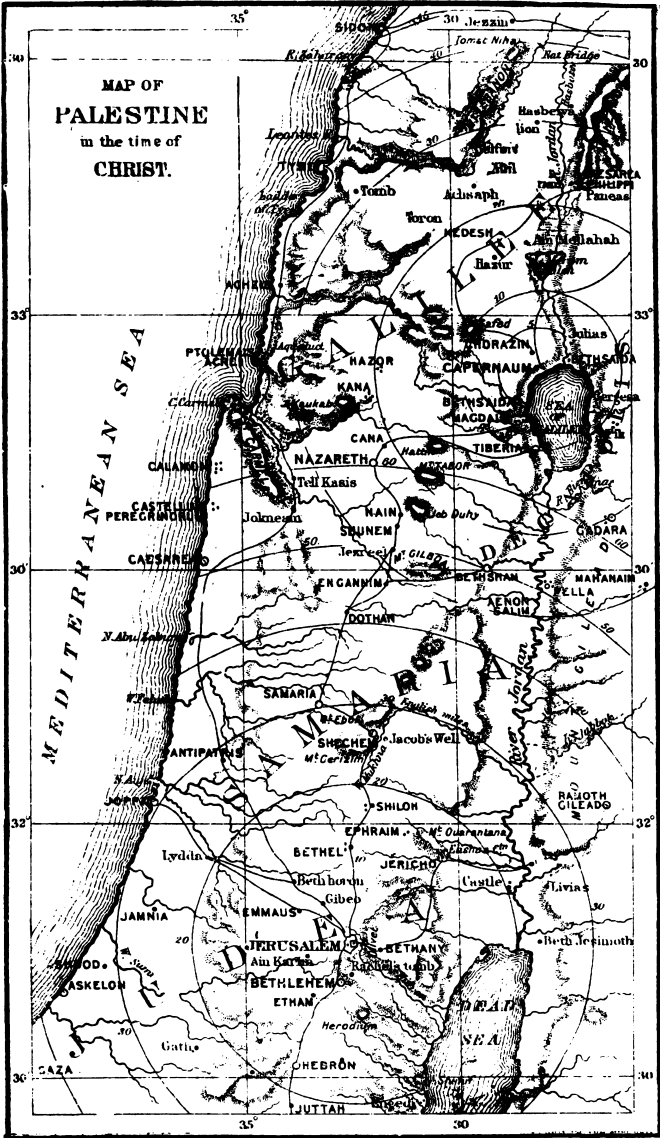
millions who believe in his name, have in all ages seen, and rejoiced in, his light. Apostles and disciples, confessors and martyrs, women and little children, have seen his light and followed on after him in its radiant way, and found that it leads into mansions of eternal rest.



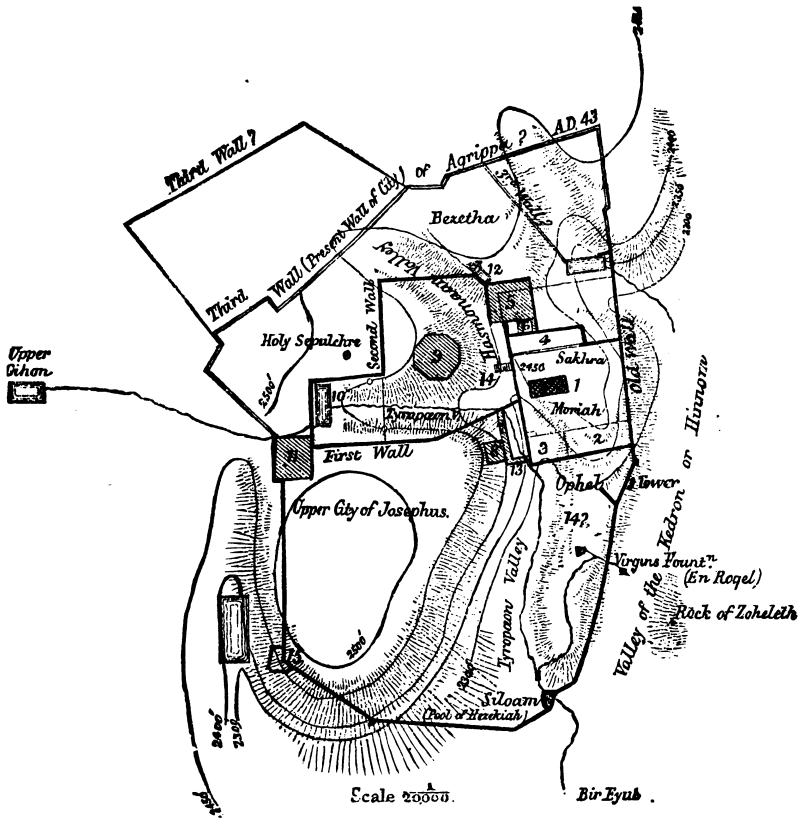
OLD TESTAMENT PALESTINE.



**MAP OF  
PALESTINE**  
in the time of  
**CHRIST.**



PLAN OF JERUSALEM AT THE TIME OF JESUS.



REFERENCE.

- |   |                   |   |
|---|-------------------|---|
| 1. Temple of Solomon.                     | } Herod's Temple. | 9. Zion and Acra.                         |
| 2. Palace of do.                          |                   | 10. Lower Pool of Gihon or Amygdalon.     |
| 3. Added on by Herod.                     | } Herod's Palace. | 11. Herod's Palace.                       |
| 4. Exhedra (The Tower, Baris or Antonia). |                   | 12. Bethesda.                             |
| 5. Antonia (The Castle).                  |                   | 13. Bridge built by Herod.                |
| 6. Cloisters joining Antonia to Temple.   |                   | 14. The lower City called sometimes Akra. |
| 7. Xystus.                                |                   | 15. British Cemetery A. D. 1870.          |
| 8. Agrippa's Palace.                      |                   |   |

## MODERN JERUSALEM.

### I. THE CHRISTIAN QUARTER.

1. Goliath's Castle.
2. Latin Convent.
3. Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
4. Greek Convent.
5. Coptic Convent.
6. Ruins of St. John's Hospital.
7. Greek Church. St. John's.
8. Residence of the Christian Bishop.
9. Church of the Greek Schismatics.
10. Tower of Hippicus. David's Tower.
11. Supposed site of the Tower of Phasaelus.
12. The Prussian Consulate.
13. Modern Evangelical Church.
14. Hospital and Syrian Convent.

### II. THE ARMENIAN QUARTER.

15. Armenian Convent, with the Church of St. James  
The only building in Jerusalem which presents any appearance of comfort.
16. Nunnery of St. George.
17. Barracks.

### III. THE JEWS' QUARTER.

The most wretched in the city.

18. Synagogue of the Sheperdim
19. Synagogue of the Portuguese Jews.
20. Mosque.

### IV. THE MOHAMMEDAN QUARTER.

21. Khan and Bazaar.
22. Mineral Bath.
23. Convent and Schools.
24. Institute for Blind Dervishes.
25. Hospital of St. Helena.
26. Reputed Site of the House of the Rich Man.
27. Reputed site of the House of St. Veronica.
28. Residence of the Turkish Pasha.
29. Arch of the "Ecce Homo."
30. Place of the "Scala Sancta," the Holy Staircase.
31. Pilate's House.
32. Place of Flagellation.
33. Ruins of a church. House of Simon the Pharisee.
34. Church of St. Anna.
35. House of Herod. Dervish's Mosque.





### V. THE MOORS' QUARTER.

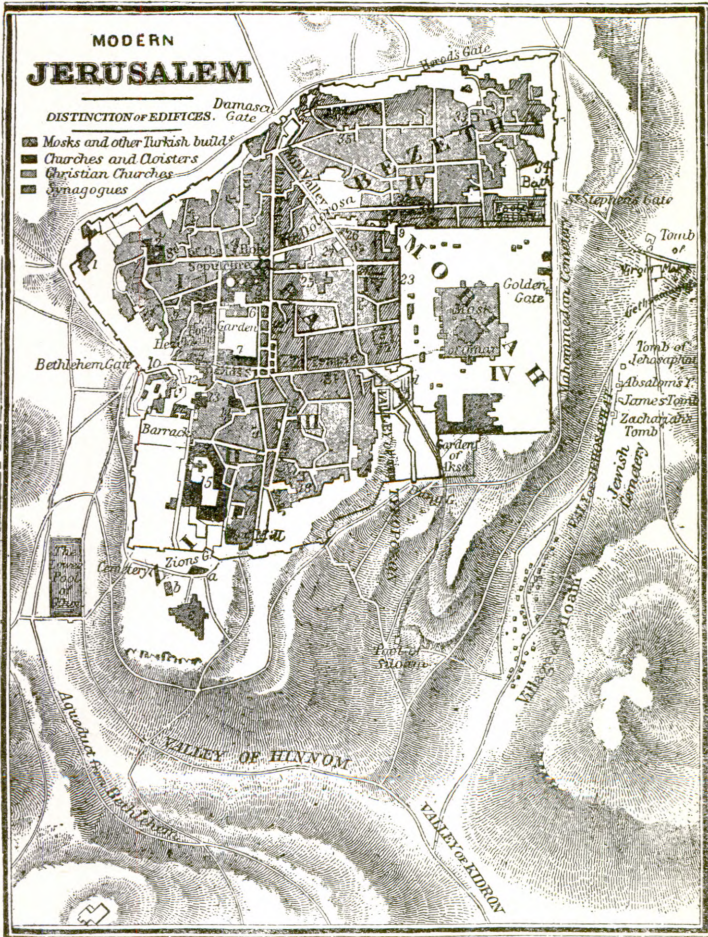
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