

THE JAFFA GATE.

The chief entrance to the city of Jerusalem, as it appears from within the city walls. The open space within the gate is used as a market-place.

JERUSALEM.

“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.”—Ps. cxxxvii. 5.

JERUSALEM is emphatically a mountain city. Situated in the heart of the hill country which extends from the great plain of Esdraelon to the southern extremity of the Promised Land, surrounded on all sides by limestone hills whose surface is broken by countless ravines, and only approached by rough mountain roads, its position is one of great natural strength. This peculiarity in the situation of the Holy City is frequently alluded to in the Bible, and we may infer from the well known words of the Psalmist, “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about

his people," that importance was attached to the hills as a barrier or protection against hostile attack.

The modern city stands, as did the ancient one, on the southern extremity of a gently shelving plateau, not more than one thousand acres in extent, which is bordered by two valleys that bear names familiar to us from childhood: one is the Valley of the Brook Kedron, the other the Valley of Hinnom. These two valleys, at first mere shallow depressions in the ground, take their rise within a few yards of each other, and at an altitude of two thousand six hundred and fifty feet above the sea, in the gentle undulation which at that point parts the waters of the Mediterranean from those of the Jordan Valley. Separating at once, they soon take one of those rapid plunges downward so characteristic of the wild glens of Judaea, and, after encircling the plateau, meet again at Bir Eyub (the Well of Job), six hundred and seventy-two feet below their original starting-point; hence, united as the Wady en Nar, "Valley of Fire," they pass by a deep gorge through the Wilderness of Judaea to the Dead Sea.

The eastern or Kedron valley, after running eastward for a mile and a half, turns sharply to the south and forms at its southern extremity the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The western valley, or Valley of Hinnom, which at its head swells out into a large shallow basin, follows a southerly course for one mile and a quarter, and then turns eastward to Bir Eyub, south of the city.

A third ravine, the Tyropoeon, or Valley of the Cheesemongers, which rises near the head of the plateau between the Kedron and Hinnom valleys, runs southward to join the former at Siloam, and divides the ground on which the city stands into two spurs of unequal size, which terminate in abrupt broken slopes. On Mount Moriah, the eastern and smaller spur, once stood the temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod, and the palace of Solomon; on the western, which is one hundred and twenty feet higher than Moriah, and of greater area, were situated the "upper city" of Josephus, the stately palace of Herod, and the three great towers Hippicus, Phasaelus, and Mariamne. A fourth and smaller ravine, the rugged nature of which was unsuspected a few years ago, rises near the eastern side of the plateau and falls into the Kedron near the well-known Golden Gate. In the bed of this ravine two large reservoirs were constructed; one of these still exists as the Birket Israil, or Pool of Bethesda.

The sides of the valleys of Kedron and Hinnom are now encumbered with rubbish, but they are still sufficiently steep to be difficult of access, and every here and there places are found where the rock has been cut perpendicularly downwards, in cliffs ten to twenty feet high, to give additional security. It was probably in these natural defences, strengthened by art, which protect the city on the south, east, and west, that the Jebusites put their trust when they boasted to King David, "Thou wilt not come in hither; the blind and lame shall drive thee back." The only side upon which the city could be attacked with any chance of success was the north; and here it was defended by walls of such massive strength as

to be capable of offering a determined resistance to the most celebrated armies of the ancient world.

Immediately beyond the Kedron Valley, “before” or to the east of Jerusalem, is the Mount of Olives (see page 8), a long ridge of graceful outline, swelling out ever and again



ENTRANCE TO THE CITADEL.

Showing the rudely constructed wooden bridge across the moat and Turkish sentries on guard.

into rounded knolls which command striking views of the city and the surrounding country. On one of these knolls, opposite Mount Moriah, and two hundred and twenty feet above the Temple Platform, are the Mosque and Church of the Ascension; on another, towards the north, a small ruin marks the spot where, according to tradition, the men of Galilee stood

“gazing up into heaven” (Acts i. 11); and still farther northward is Scopus, the brow of the hill whence Titus and his legions looked down upon the doomed city (see Frontispiece).

The ride from Scopus along the crest of Olivet to the Church of the Ascension is one of the greatest interest and beauty: on one side there are ever-changing views of the deep depression of the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea; on the other, every step brings more prominently to view some spot, or it may be some building, which no thoughtful man can look upon without at least a passing emotion.

The view from the Mount of Olives is one which, from its strange beauty and its extraordinary interest, lingers long and lovingly in the memory of those who have seen it. Away to the north is the minaret-crowned height of Neby Samwil, the Mizpeh, perhaps, of Scripture, whence many a weary pilgrim has caught his first glimpse of the long-looked-for Zion. To the east are grey, bare hills, cut up by a thousand ravines, which descend abruptly to the Jordan Valley, and that strange salt sea which occupies the deepest depression of the earth’s surface. The atmosphere is so clear, so transparent, that the placid water seems at times almost within reach, yet it is many miles away, and its surface is no less than three thousand nine hundred feet below the mount. Beyond the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea, a long mountain wall, which is broken here and there by wild gorges through which the waters of Arnon and other streams find their way to the lower depths, extends from Mount Gilead on the north to the Mountains of Moab on the south (see page 9). In the evening, when the sun is low and the blinding glare from the white hills in the foreground is somewhat subdued, the colouring on the distant mountains is exquisite, and the changing light produces a succession of ever-varying tints which it would be impossible to transfer to canvas.

The view towards the west, which should be seen by morning light, embraces the entire city of Jerusalem; every hill and valley and nearly all the important buildings can be recognised at once, and a general impression of their relative positions obtained. Looking down from his vantage ground on Olivet, the spectator is at once struck by the appearance of ruin and decay which the city presents, and especially by the vast accumulation of rubbish within and around it: the deep gorge of the Tyropoeon, which cut through the heart of the town, is now but a slight depression; the wild ravine in which the Pool of Bethesda was cut is filled to overflowing; Kedron’s bed is deeply covered with debris; the precipices which Joab scaled are slopes of earth and stones planted with corn and vegetables; and the Via Dolorosa is forty to fifty feet above the level of the ancient roadway. The extensive cemeteries which hem in the city on almost every side give a mournful aspect to the view, and this effect is heightened by the oppressive silence which broods over the place during the greater portion of the day, and by the sober grey of the dome-roofed houses. How strangely changed from that Jerusalem which the Psalmist once described in loving terms as “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth!” From the Church of the Ascension the ground shelves down to the dry bed of the Kedron and then rises steeply to the summit of Mount Moriah, on which is now situated the

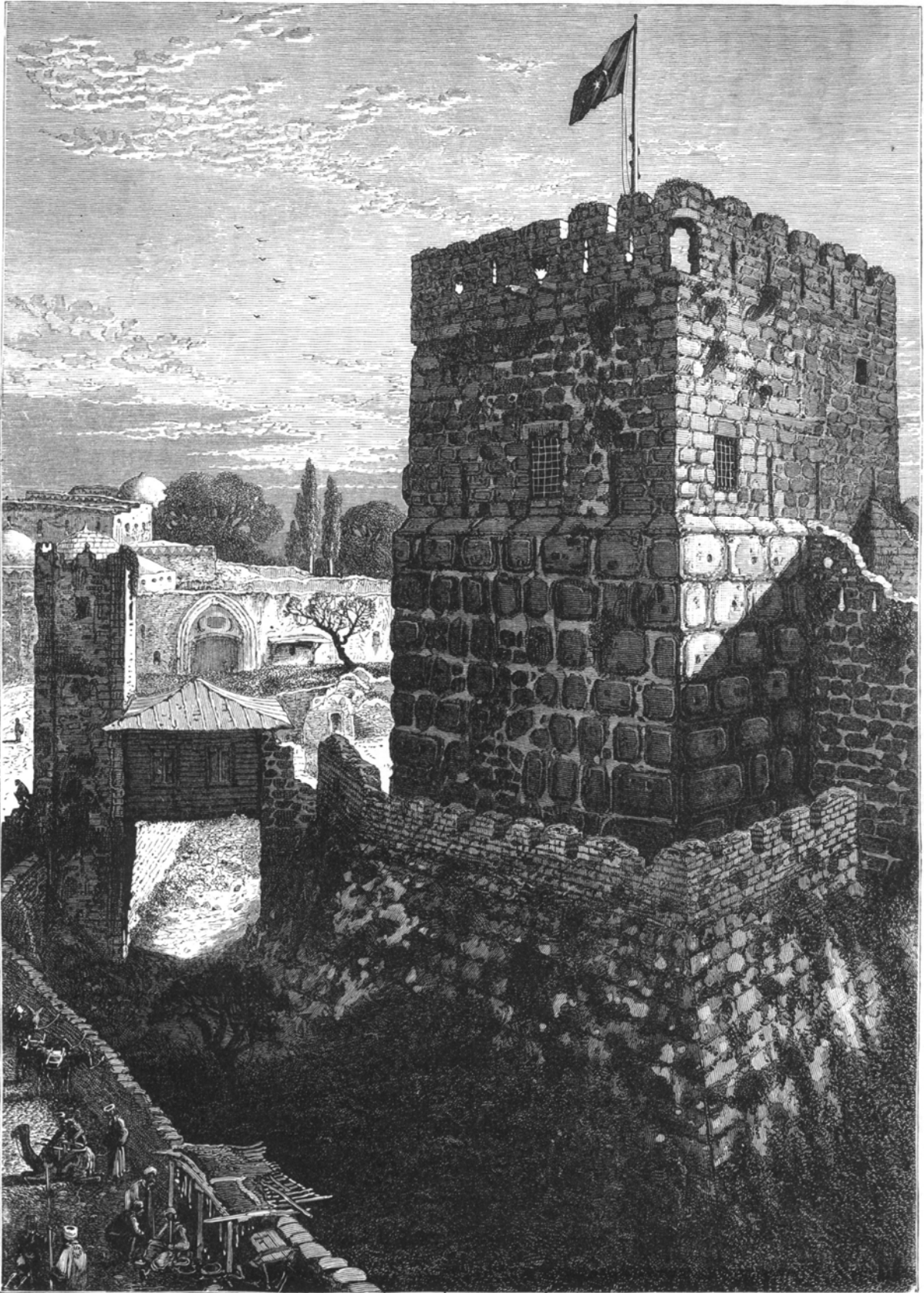


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JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

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THE TOWER OF DAVID.—PHASAEIUS.

Shewing the moat and bridge of the Citadel, and the gardens of the Armenian monastery, beyond the Turkish barracks.

Haram esh Sherif. The surface of the Haram enclosure is studded with cypress and olive, and its sides are surrounded, in part, by the finest mural masonry in the world, capable, even in its decay, of affecting men's minds more strongly than any other building of the ancient world.

At its southern end is the Mosque el Aksa and a pile of buildings formerly used by the Knights Templar. Nearly in the centre is a raised platform paved with stone, from the centre of which rises the well-known "Dome of the Rock" (Kubbet es Sakhra) (see vignette, title-page). Within this sacred enclosure stood the Temple of the Jews, but all traces of it have long since disappeared, and its exact position has for years been one of the most fiercely contested points in Jerusalem topography.

Beyond Mount Moriah and the Valley of the Tyropoeon, which can be plainly distinguished running down from the Damascus Gate, is the western hill now known as Zion. The ancient city extended over the entire hill, but the southern end is now bare. Within the modern walls the ground is thickly covered with houses, except on the west, where there is an open space occupied by gardens. At the north-west corner, where the road from Jaffa enters the town, is the Citadel with its massive towers, and adjoining them on the south are the principal barracks of the Turkish garrison.

From the Jaffa Gate on the west, a street, following apparently the direction of a small lateral branch of the Tyropoeon Valley, runs eastward, along the northern side of the Zion of today, to the Haram esh Sherif. North of this line stretches the Christian quarter of the town, rising gradually to the north-west till it reaches the corner of the modern wall at Goliath's Castle (Kalat Julud), a ruined castle, supposed by some writers to be the tower Psephinus mentioned by Josephus. Nearly in the centre of this quarter lies the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Without the walls towards the north-west is the great Russian establishment, consulate, cathedral, and hospice, which, like some great fortress or barrack, overshadows and completely dominates the Holy City. In the same direction are the less pretentious buildings of the German orphanage for girls, and the Syrian orphanage for boys, as well as the church of the native Protestant community.

Jerusalem is entirely surrounded by a massive wall built by Sultan Suleiman in A.D. 1542. It is provided with numerous flanking towers, and protected on the north by a ditch partly cut in the rock. The form of the city is that of an irregular quadrangle, and the total extent of the walls is about two and a half miles. There are ten gates in the walls, five of which are open and five closed. Of the former, the Jaffa Gate is on the west, the Damascus Gate on the north, St. Stephen's Gate on the east, and the Zion and Dung Gates on the south; of the latter, the Gate of Flowers or of Herod is on the north, the Golden Gate on the east, and the Single, Double, and Triple Gates on the south. From the Jaffa Gate the street of David runs eastward to the "Gate of the Chain," the principal entrance to the Haram esh Sherif. From the Damascus Gate one street traverses the city from north to south, passing near the eastern end of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and through the bazaars to the

vicinity of the Zion Gate, whilst another, named "El Wad," or Valley Street, follows, except where it has to cross the causeway, the general direction of the Tyropoeon Valley to the Dung Gate. From St. Stephen's Gate a street runs past the Pool of Bethesda to the Valley Street, and from the Zion Gate a street leads in an almost direct line to an open space in front of the Jaffa Gate. The principal streets divide Jerusalem, approximately, into four quarters, of which the north-east, including Bezetha and the Upper Tyropoeon Valley, is occupied by Moslems; the north-west and south-west, or Zion and the western hills, by Christians; and the south-east, comprising the eastern slope of Zion and the Lower Tyropoeon, by Jews.

The Jaffa Gate, or Gate of Hebron (Bab el Khalil), is the principal entrance to the city, and its immediate neighbourhood is generally enlivened by a throng of passers-by, and by the groups of muleteers, packers, and idlers who spend a large portion of their time lounging about the cafes without the gate (see page 1).

South of the Jaffa Gate is the Citadel, and beyond it are the barracks and the extensive gardens of the Armenian monastery (see page 5). This portion of the western hill was covered in part, or perhaps entirely, by Herod's Palace, with its gardens, and by the three towers which adjoined it on the north. Josephus has left us a glowing account of the royal palace, which "was entirely surrounded by a wall thirty cubits high, with decorated towers at equal intervals, and contained enormous banqueting halls, besides numerous chambers richly adorned." The towers were built of blocks of white stone of great size, "so exactly joined together that each tower appeared to be one mass of rock;" and they played a prominent part during the memorable siege by the Romans. These towers were left standing by Titus when he destroyed the city, to protect the legion left to garrison the place and prevent any insurrectionary movements on the part of the Jews.

Any remains which may now exist of Herod's Palace are buried beneath a mass of rubbish more than thirty feet deep; but two at least of the towers, Phasaelus and Hippicus, can be recognised in the works of the modern Citadel. The Citadel, remodelled in the fourteenth century, and again repaired in the sixteenth century, consists of five square towers and other buildings, surrounded by a ditch (see page 3). It has a commanding position, and before the introduction of fire-arms must have been of great strength. Even now the solid masonry of the lower portion would resist for some time any artillery that could be brought against it.

The Tower of David (see page 5) appears to be the oldest portion of the Citadel, and its dimensions and mode of construction agree well with those of the tower Phasaelus as described by Josephus. The substructure consists of a solid masonry escarp, rising from the bottom of the ditch at an angle of about forty-five degrees, with a pathway, or *chemin des rondes*, round the top. Above this the tower rises in a solid mass for a height of twenty-nine feet, and then comes the superstructure. The escarp retains to some extent its original appearance, but time and hard treatment have worn away much of the finer work, and the repairs have been executed in the usual slovenly manner of the Turks. The old work, where it can be