

where the fatal tower fell upon eighteen and slew them, and near which is the pool where the blind man washed and saw. On our right is the city-wall, visible as far as it leads to the Beautiful gate, now walled up to protect the Mosque of Omar, while all along the wall are rows of Mohammedan graves. Absalom's tomb, so called, which he built to perpetuate a name which he could not leave to a child, was within a stone's throw of where we sat.

Following the path which led by the southern wall of the city, we passed over the ruins of nearly half of the old city, now left without a wall, until reaching Zion gate, when we had about completed the entire circuit. We had obeyed the psalmist's call: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."

Jerusalem, April 3, 1877.

## LETTER XXIX.

## A WEEK IN AND ABOUT JERUSALEM.

IT was not the Jerusalem that Christ visited, where we have been spending the past week, but that which God has cursed. No city was ever so loved, and none ever so punished. "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps." The streets where Jesus walked are now buried forty or fifty feet out of sight. The only way of knowing where the old city walls ran is by sinking deep shafts and following the lines of massive stone many feet under-ground. There is no doubt that the temple-inclosure is now occupied in part by the Mosque of Omar, but every other site is a disputed point. "Where was the House of the Forest of Lebanon? where the judgment-seat of Pilate? where the skull-shaped hill called Golgotha? where even Mount Zion?" Only excavations can answer these questions, and even these are not always conclusive. Verily God has fulfilled his threat, "I will make Jerusalem heaps." At several points we have gone many feet below the present streets of the city to see massive arches and columns, resting upon yet others out of sight. The *débris* of the city, after the desolation of its many sieges and captures, covers the prostrate monuments of its former glory. Now and then we see in the present walls some of those immense stones with the beveled Phenician edge,

showing, as is held, that they date back to the time of Solomon, while most of them are buried under the rubbish. A house cannot be built nor a well dug without coming upon the stones of former dwellings, or the bones of former inhabitants. When God destroyed Jerusalem its destruction was complete. There stands Olivet, the unmistakable oratory of our Lord, and there, too, is the brook Kidron, and the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and joining it, almost at right-angles on the south side of the present city, is the Valley of Hinnom, where once the children were made to pass through the fire to Moloch; but the city itself has been cursed with a great curse, and is destroyed.

The point of all others which we wished to identify was Calvary. It was evidently "without the gate" where Jesus was crucified, and probably not far from his place of death where he was buried. The spot claimed for so many centuries as the place of his crucifixion and burial is now *within* the city walls, and is marked by the Church of the Sepulcher. There have been so many foolish traditions connected with this spot, such as the finding there of the true cross by Helena, the mother of Constantine, and various miraculous cures effected on the site, that scholars have been tempted to look elsewhere. Still the drift of opinion, confirmed by old maps of the city, which leave this spot outside the city walls, and by the additional fact that Hezekiah's Pool, which is quite near, was undoubtedly without the city, seems to favor the theory that Calvary is where the old traditions locate it. Over the spot a large and costly church was built as early as Constantine's day, and by his express order. It has since been several times destroyed by fires, and has been the battle-ground of Christians and Turks for centuries. It stands there to-day, a massive pile covering several acres, and is divided into chapels

claimed by a half dozen sects—Greeks, Latins, Copts, Syrians, Abyssinians, and Armenians. They get along somewhat peaceably when they are *not quarreling*, and Turkish soldiers or guards are usually on hand to keep order.

There really appears to be considerable evidence that this was once Golgotha, although we cannot, of course, depend on the exact spot pointed out as the place of the cross, or the rock now covered with the finest sculptured marble as the sepulcher, not to mention the different spots—such as where the angel stood who rolled away the stone, or where Mary Magdalene first saw Christ after his resurrection, and where many other events connected with his person took place—which they seek to locate here. But still the general location of the place, and especially the existence of a number of rock-hewn tombs quite near this traditional spot, and the fact that no other traditions have located it elsewhere, make it seem probable that Jesus died and was buried outside of the city, and near the north-west corner of the wall. The spot would naturally be well known among the early Christians, and much despised by their enemies, the latter trying to destroy all traces of the events occurring there, while the former would never lose sight of it, and perhaps connect many miraculous events with it. When Hadrian rebuilt the city-wall he included within it the traditional Calvary; and to mock the Christians he built here a temple to Venus. On the conversion of Constantine he ordered this torn down, and a Church of the Resurrection to be built on the spot where Christ was buried and came forth from Joseph's new tomb. This was accordingly done, and, though often destroyed by fire, it has not long been without a successor on the same spot. This is now called the Church of the Sepulcher.

Could we have seen only the rock-hewn sepulcher,

with the marble slabs removed, and the other tombs evidently cut in the solid rock, we might have gone away with a much deeper conviction of the genuineness of the place. But there was also pointed out to us the place where the angel stood on the morning of the resurrection, and where Mary Magdalene was, and the place of division, and the column of flagellation, and the place where the true cross was found, and where Adam died, and the exact center of the world, until the church appears almost like a museum, where the visitor may see almost any thing he desires. So many sects worshiping here, each must have a spot in its chapel that can vie with any other in point of interest, and so invention has been active. One chapel is happily named the Chapel of the Invention of the Cross. But one must, as far as possible, separate the false from the true, and, while he can accept none of these spots with confidence, he may still believe in the general locality as that which witnessed our Lord's death, burial, and resurrection.

Leading to this traditional Calvary is the *Via Dolorosa*, or the way along which Jesus bore his cross. Toward one end, that nearest Gethsemane, is an old arch accepted by all as dating back to the Roman period, and probably marking a Roman triumph, if not connected with an imperial building. This is called *Ecce Homo* arch, as marking the place where Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified, with "Behold the man!" But while this was probably the general location of the judgment-hall, tradition points all along that sorrowful way to different spots where Christ sunk under the weight of the cross, or met his mother, or addressed the women who followed him weeping.

These appear to be the only remaining landmarks in the city itself to indicate where Jesus was. Outside of the present wall, but within the old wall, is

a building pointed out as the place where he ate the passover with his disciples and instituted the Lord's Supper, and where also the disciples were assembled at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The spot is supposed to be where David was buried, a monumental building being erected over his remains, where any one could come without hinderance. If in this building, because public property, the disciples were gathered in an upper room on the day of Pentecost, still the Lord's Supper would appear to have been instituted in a private house. The present building, while not dating back earlier than the Crusades, may still mark the general locality of David's sepulcher, as excavations near there have disclosed what were supposed to be royal tombs. The Mohammedans, who hold the building, show a large sarcophagus which they call David's. No confidence, however, can be placed in these exhibitions, as they are usually the ground of getting backshish. There is, in short, neither within nor without the city, save Olivet and Gethsemane, somewhere near its foot, a single locality where one may feel assured Christ actually stood. This, perhaps, is well and wisely ordained, when one sees the reverence and virtual worship paid even to traditional spots.

More than once since I have been in Jerusalem have I felt grateful that the place of the crucifixion and of the sepulcher could not be positively identified. It is sad enough for the Christian to see what is done on the *traditional* spot of our Lord's death. The past week has been celebrated by the Greek Church here as Easter week, and many pilgrims from a distance have been present to witness the services. In the square in front of the Church of the Sepulcher was celebrated, on Thursday morning, the feet-washing. Olivet was represented by an olive-tree fastened to the wall some fifteen feet from the ground. The Greek patriarch, in his satin gown,