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## STUDIES IN THE HISTORY AND TOPOGRAPHY OF JERUSALEM.

THE following studies are meant to fill a gap which was left in *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, partly because in that volume there was no room for the adequate treatment of so large a subject; and partly because I desired to examine once more upon the ground some of the topographical problems, and in particular to confirm by the eye the relations of a few of the sites to each other, which (I believe) had been overlooked.<sup>1</sup> I have now had the opportunity to do this, as well as to study afresh the controversies which have raged, and some of which will always rage, over scenes so frequently reduced to ruin, and overgrown with the traditions of three religions. The last decade has also brought to us a number of new data from the Babylonian monuments, and from the excavations of the Palestine Exploration Fund under Mr. Bliss and Mr. Dickie. The attempt may therefore be made to present some fresh studies of the history of Jerusalem, and of the principal problems connected with its name, its topography and its gradual progress, upon a position which inherited hardly a single pledge of fame, to the rank of the most sacred city in the world.

### 1. A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CITY.

The life of even the meanest of towns cannot be written apart from the history of the times through which they have

<sup>1</sup> E.g. the relation between the pools at Siloam and the Western Hill: so important to the question of the date at which the latter was taken into the city.

flourished; while still but a hill-fort, with centuries of obscurity in front of her, Jerusalem held a garrison for the Pharaoh of the day, and corresponded with him in the characters of the Babylonian civilisation.<sup>1</sup>

When such a town suddenly, without omen, augury or natural promise of renown, becomes a capital, her historian is drawn to explore, it may be at a distance from herself, the currents of national life which have surprised her, and the motives of their convergence upon so unexpected a centre. His horizon is the further widened, if the capital, which she has become, be that of a restless nation on the path of great empires: tremulous to all their rumour, and provoking, as Jerusalem did from the days of Sennacherib to those of Hadrian, the interference of their arms. Yet this range of political interest opened to our city only as the reflection of that more sacred fame, which dawned upon her when the one monotheism of the ancient world was identified by its prophets with the inviolableness of her walls;<sup>2</sup> when the ritual of that religion was concentrated upon her shrine;<sup>3</sup> and the One Temple was regarded as equally essential to religion with faith in the One God. Not only did the country shrink in consequence to be the mere fringe of the city,<sup>4</sup> within whose narrow walls a whole nation, conscious of a service to humanity, henceforth experienced the most powerful crises of their career; not only did her sons learn to add to the pride of such a citizenship the idealism and passionate longing which only exile breeds; but among alien and far away races the sparks were kindled of a faith and of an

<sup>1</sup> Letters of Abd-hiba of Jerusalem in the Tell-el-Amarna Tablets.

<sup>2</sup> As e.g. by Isaiah.

<sup>3</sup> By the Deuteronomic legislation, which, whatever its date, was first enforced by Josiah from 621 onwards.

<sup>4</sup> This, which becomes apparent even in Old Testament times, so far as politics are concerned, is most conspicuous, from the writings of Josephus, through the Roman period, when Jerusalem was to Palestine virtually what Paris has been to France.

eagerness for the city almost as jealous as those of her own children. So lofty an influence was exerted by Jerusalem some centuries before the appearance of Christ; yet it was only prophetic of the worship which she drew from all the world as the site of His Cross and of His Grave. Though other great cities of Christendom—Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage and Rome—were by far her superiors in philosophy or spiritual empire, Jerusalem remained the religious centre of the earth—whose frame was even conceived as poised about her rocks—the home of the faith, the goal of the world's most distant pilgrimages, and the original of the Heavenly City, which one day would descend from God among men. By all which memories and beliefs the passions of humanity were let loose upon her. She became as Armageddon. Two almost world-wide religions made her their battle-ground: hurling their farthest kings against her walls and shedding upon her dust the tears and the blood of millions of their people. East and West hotly contended for her, no longer because she was alive—were it only with the death-throes of a stubborn nation—but in devotion to the mere shell of the life that had gone from her. Though still a focus in the diplomacy of empires and the shrine of several forms of faith, her politics were reduced to intrigue and her religion overlaid with superstition, hardly touched for generations by any visible heroism or even romance. Thirty-three centuries of a history, climbing slowly to the Central Fact of all history, and then toppling down upon itself in a ruin, that has almost obliterated the scenes and monuments of the life which made her glorious and Alone in the story of the world!

The bare catalogue of the disasters which have overtaken Jerusalem is enough to paralyse her topographer. Besides the earthquakes which have periodically rocked her foundations,<sup>1</sup> the city has endured nearly twenty sieges and

<sup>1</sup> There was the famous one in Uzziah's day, the tremors of which are visible

storms of the utmost severity,<sup>1</sup> some of which involved a considerable, but others a total destruction of her walls and buildings; almost twenty more blockades, or military occupations, with the wreck or dilapidation of prominent edifices; the frequent alteration of levels by the razing of rocky knolls and the filling of valleys; about eighteen reconstructions, embellishments, and large extensions,<sup>2</sup>

in the prophets, and its memory lasted for four centuries (Zechariah xiv. 5); Josephus (XV. *Ant.* v. 2) describes another which desolated Judæa under Herod, killing 10,000(?) people (cf. Matt. xxvii. 5); while no fewer than four are reported within a tenth of the city's history: viz. A.D. 735, 846, 1016, 1034. Dr. Chaplin (*P.E.F.Q.* 1883, p. 11) reports twelve shocks (apparently not severe) in twenty-two years, 1860-66.

<sup>1</sup> Besides the capture by David, about 1000 B.C., the following are known to history. Plunder of Temple and city by Shishonq of Egypt about 930 (1 Kings xiv. 25 f.; 2 Chron. xii. 2 ff.); overthrow by Jehoash of Israel about 790 (2 Kings xiv. 13 ff.); siege by Sennacherib, 701; surrender to Nebuchadrezzar, 597; his siege and destruction, 587-6; probable sack by the Persians about 350; destruction by Ptolemy Soter, 320 (*καθηρήκει*: Appian *Syr.* 350); destruction by Antiochus Epiphanes, 168; siege and levelling of walls by Antiochus VII. 134; brief and unsuccessful siege by the Nabateans, 63; siege, capture and much destruction by Pompey, 62; sack of temple by Crassus, 54; capture by the Parthians, 40; siege and partial destruction by Herod and Sosius, 37; insurrection and some ruin on the visit of Florus, 65 A.D.; brief and unsuccessful siege by Cestius Gallus, 66; the great siege and destruction by Titus, 70; seizure by the Jews under Bar Cocheba, 131; capture and devastation by Hadrian, 132; capture and plunder by Chosroes the Persian, 614; re-capture by Heraclius, 628; occupation by Omar, 637; capture by Moslem rebels, 842; ruin of Christian buildings, 937; occupation by the Fatimite Dynasty, 969; some destruction by the Khalif Hakim, 1010; occupation by the Seljuk Turks, 1075(?); siege and capture by Afdhal, 1096; siege, capture and massacre by Godfrey, 1099; occupation by Saladin, 1187; destruction of walls, 1219; capture by the Emir of Kerak, 1229, surrender to Frederick II. 1239; capture and sack by the Kharezmians, 1244; plunder by Arabs, 1480; occupation by Turks, 1547; bombardment by Turks, 1825; Egyptian occupation, 1831; re-occupation by Turks, 1841.

<sup>2</sup> Before the exile by David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Uziah and others; after the exile, at first by the few Jews who returned from Babylon to rebuild the Temple, and then in the reconstruction of the walls and other buildings under Nehemiah; after the Persian sack in 350(?); and that by Ptolemy in 320; by the Maccabees after 168, and then more thoroughly by Simon; by Antipater after Pompey (Jos. I. *B.J.* x. 4); by Herod the Great and by Agrippa; by Hadrian from 136 onward; by Constantine (churches), the Empress Eudoxia (walls, churches, etc.), and Justinian (churches and convents); by the Moslems, especially the Khalifs Omar and Maimûn (mosques and walls); by Christians (churches) under the earliest Moslem supremacy, and especially in the

including the imposition of novel systems of architecture, streets, drains and aqueducts athwart the lines of the old ; the addition of new suburbs, and the abandonment of part of the inhabited area to agriculture ; while, of course, over all there gathered the dust and waste of ordinary manufacture and commerce. Even such changes might not have been fatal to the restoration of the ancient topography, had the traditions cut short by them been immediately resumed. But there have also happened two intervals of silence,<sup>1</sup> during which the city lay almost, if not altogether desolate, and her native life was paralysed ; five abrupt passages from one religion to another,<sup>2</sup> which even more disastrously severed the continuity of her story ; more than one outbreak of fanatic superstition creating new and baseless tradition ; as well as the long, careless chatter about the holy sites, which has still further confused or obliterated the genuine memories of the past.

Before we put our hands to this débris and stir the dust of a hundred controversies, it is necessary to take a general view of the position of the city ; of its surroundings and atmosphere ; and of that common life which, under every change of empire and of faith, has throbbled through her streets and gates down to the present day.

Jerusalem lies on the mountain range of Judæa, about 2,400 feet above the sea, and some thirty-five miles from the coast of the Mediterranean. From the latter she is sepa-

eleventh century ; by Crusaders in the twelfth century (churches, convents and hospices) ; by the Moslems again (mosques and many alterations) ; by Solyman the Magnificent (re-building of the walls), 1542 ; and since by Christians, Jews and Moslems, especially in the great alterations and expansions of the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> After Nebuchadrezzar and after Hadrian.

<sup>2</sup> Besides the temporary occupation by Paganism in 168 B.C. ; there were the passage from Judaism to Paganism under Hadrian ; to Christianity under Constantine ; to Islam under Omar ; to Christianity under Godfrey ; to Islam under Saladin.

rated by a plain, which during the greater part of her history was in the hands of an alien and generally hostile race; by low foot-hills; and by the flank and watershed of the range itself. From the west, therefore, we must realise that Jerusalem stood almost completely aloof. The most considerable valley in the mountains on this side of her, after starting from the watershed a little to the north of her walls, drives its deep trench southward, as if to cut her off more rigorously from the maritime plain and the sea. Travellers by the modern road from Jaffa will remember how after this has seemed, by its painful ascent from Bab-el-Wady, to attain the level of the city, it has to wind down the steep sides of the Wady Bêt Hanîna or Kuloniyeh and then wind up again to the watershed. The only pass from the west that can be said to debouch upon Jerusalem is a narrow and easily defended gorge, up which the present railway has been forced, but which can never have been used as a road of approach either by armies or by commercial caravans. Hence nearly all the great advances on Jerusalem have been made, even by Western Powers in command of the plain, from further north: up the Beth-horon road, and so along the backbone of the range, by the one main route near which the city stands.

Nor is Jerusalem perched upon the watershed itself, but lies upon the first narrow plateau to the east of this. As you stand at the Jaffa, or western gate, the watershed is the top of the first slope in front of you, and it shuts out all prospect of the west even from the towers and house-tops. The view to the north is almost as short—hardly farther than to where the head of the hidden Wady Bêt Hanîna—the precise water-parting—comes over into the faint beginnings of the valley of the Kidron, draining south-east to the Dead Sea. Above the course of this valley and between it and the watershed the ground slopes obliquely from the north-west. Just before the city-walls are reached,

it divides into two spurs or promontories running south between the Kidron and the Wady Rabāby and separated from each other by the now shallow glen, once known as the Tyropœon. These spurs form the site of the city. Without going into the details of their configuration, we find enough for our present purpose in observing that the western is the higher of the two, and that running as they do southwards, the dip of them<sup>1</sup> and therefore the whole exposure of the city is to the east. Jerusalem faces the sunrise, which strikes across the Mount of Olives and over the Kidron.

Yet this tilt towards Olivet does not exhaust the eastern bent and disposition of the city.' We have seen that the west and north are entirely shut off. The blockade is carried round the north-east and east by Scopus and Olivet; the south is equally excluded by the ridge between the city and Bethlehem. In fact there is but one gap in the circle of mountains, and this is to the south-east: looking across the desert of Judæa and the gulf of the Dead Sea to the high range of Moab, cut only by the trench of the Arnon and battlemented towards its far southern end by the hill of Kerak. In certain states of the atmosphere, and especially when the evening sun shortens the perspective by intensifying the colour and size of the Moab mountains, the latter appear to heave up towards the city and to present to her the threshold of the Arabian desert immediately above the hills of her own wilderness. Thus, what Josephus says of the tower of Psephinus is true of most of the house-tops of Jerusalem. Their one "full prospect is towards Arabia."<sup>2</sup> The significance of which is obvious. It is as if Providence had bound over the city to eastern interests

<sup>1</sup> According to Conder the dip of the strata is about 10° E.S.E.

<sup>2</sup> Vide V. B.J. iv. 3: ἐπὶ γὰρ ἑβδομήκοντα πῆχεις ὑψηλὸς ὢν Ἄραβίαν τε ἀνίσχοντος ἡλίου παρεῖχεν ἀφορὰν καὶ μέχρῃ θαλάττης τὰ τῆς Ἑβραίων κληρουχίας ἔσχατα.



and eastern sympathies. Hidden from the west and the north, Jerusalem, through all her centuries, has sat facing the austere scenery of the Orient and the horizon of those vast deserts, out of which her people came to her. If the spell of this strikes even the western traveller as he passes a few evenings on her house-tops, he can the better understand why the Greeks were not at home in Jerusalem, and Hellenism, though not forty miles from the Levant, never made her its own; why even Christianity failed to hold her; and why the Mohammedan, as he looks down her one long vista, towards Mecca, feels himself securely planted on her site.

The desert creeps close to the city gates. The bare hills, the blistered rocks and the wild ravines of the Wady of Fire<sup>1</sup> are within a short walk of the gardens of Siloam. From the walls the wilderness of Judæa can be traversed in a day, and beyond it are the barren coast and bitter waters of the Dead Sea. The sirocco sweeps up unhindered; *a dry wind of the high places of the desert towards the daughter of my people, neither to fan nor to cleanse*;<sup>2</sup> gusty, parching and inflammatory, laden with sand when it comes from the south-east, but clear, cold and benumbing when in winter it blows off the eastern or

<sup>1</sup> Wady-en-Nar, the continuation to the Dead Sea of the Kidron valley.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. iv. 11. "It is when the wind blows from the south-east that it acquires the peculiarities which Europeans usually signify by the term *sirocco*. The more the wind tends to the south the more dull and overcast is the sky, and the more disagreeable to the feelings the state of the atmosphere. The worst kind dries the mucous membrane of the air passages, producing a kind of inflammation resulting in catarrh and sore throat; it induces great lassitude, accelerated pulse, thirst, and sometimes actual fever. It dries and cracks furniture, and parches vegetation, sometimes withering whole fields of young corn. Its force is not usually great, but sometimes severe storms of wind and fine dust are experienced, the hot air burning like a blast from an oven, and the sand cutting the face of the traveller. This kind of air has a peculiar smell, not unlike that of the neighbourhood of a burning brick-kiln. Sometimes the most remarkable whirlwinds are produced. Clouds of sand fly about in all directions, and the gusts of wind are so violent as to blow weak persons from their horses and to overturn baggage animals."—Abridged from Dr. Chaplin's account in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1883, p. 16.

north-eastern desert plateaus. It is difficult to estimate what effect this austere influence has exercised on the temperament of the city; but a more calculable result in her history was produced by the convenience of the desert as a refuge when the native garrisons of Jerusalem could no longer hold out against their besiegers. Not only was the east the most natural direction of flight for David before Absalom, and for Zedekiah<sup>1</sup> when he broke with a few soldiers through the blockade of the Babylonian army; but the desert sheltered both the troops of Judas Maccabæus when Jerusalem was taken by the Seleucids, and those bands of zealots who escaped when Titus stormed the citadel and the sanctuary.

Conversely the life of the desert easily wanders into Jerusalem. There are always some Arabs in her streets. You will see one or two of the few Christians of that race worshipping—like Amos at Bethel—on some high festival about the Holy Sepulchre; and through the environs you will sometimes meet a caravan, with salt, skins, wool or dates from the Dead Sea or Ma'an, or even from Sinai. Except Damascus or Gaza no Syrian town gathers to itself more of the rumour of Peræa, or of Arabia, from the borders of Hauran to Mecca.<sup>2</sup> It was in or somewhere near Jerusalem that an observer wrote the lines:

*I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction:  
The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble,*<sup>3</sup>

—one of the finest expressions in any literature of the passage of evil tidings through the tremulous East. And so, too, it is Jerusalem, fully hidden from nearly every point of view in Western Palestine, which, of all sites in the latter, remains in most frequent evidence to the traveller

<sup>1</sup> David and Zedekiah the first and last kings: 2 Sam. xv. ff., 2 Kings xxv. 4 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Robinson, *B. R.* i. 366. In 1896, when the Turks were at war with the Druzes of Hauran and the Government had stopped the telegraphs, news of the conflicts reached the Jerusalem bazaars within a few days.

<sup>3</sup> Habbakuk iii. 7.

on the east of the Jordan. From Kerak, from Mount Nebo, from the hills above Rabbath Ammon, and, I think also, from the Jebel Osha above es-Salt, the Russian tower on the Mount of Olives is always prominent.

The single trunk route which Jerusalem commands is that along the backbone of the western range, from Hebron to the north. It is one of the least important in Palestine. No passage near the city connects the east and west. The nearest—from the maritime plain by the Beth-horons and past Michmash to Jericho—is almost twelve miles away. Jerusalem, therefore, cannot be regarded as a natural centre of commerce. When she commanded the transit trade of Western Asia, and was in Ezekiel's words *the gate of the peoples*;<sup>1</sup> or when, in the days of her weakness, she excited the jealousy of her enemies lest she should again become strong enough to exact tribute and toll from them,<sup>2</sup> such an influence must have been due, not to the virtues of her site, but to her political rank as the capital of a strong and compact people entrenched upon the paths between Phœnicia and Edom. Nor was Jerusalem ever, so much as Damascus, Hebron or Gaza, a port and market for the nomads, from which they bought their cloth, pottery and weapons; nor, like Antioch or Mecca, had she (except for a very short period) a harbour of her own upon the sea. Even when she swayed the commerce of Palestine and Arabia, her influence was political and financial rather than commercial;<sup>3</sup> the only trade that came to her was due to her comparatively large population, or to her Temple and the multitude of its annual pilgrims. Her industries were also local—soap factories, potteries, weaving, fulling and dyeing—and she exported nothing of her own except to the neighbouring villages.

Another feature of life, conspicuous by its meagreness in

<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel xxvi. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ezra iv. 20 f.

<sup>3</sup> This is especially obvious in Josephus.

the district in which Jerusalem stands, is the water supply. The upper strata of the neighbourhood are of that porous limestone, through which, as in the greater part of Western Palestine, the rain sinks to a considerable depth and living springs are far between. The only point in the environs of the city where the lower, harder rocks throw up water to the surface is in the Kidron Valley immediately under the walls of Ophel; and its supplies, secured for the city even in times of siege by aqueducts beneath the walls, were supplemented through the reservoirs, for which Jerusalem has always been famous, and which were fed from the rain caught upon the multitude of her roofs. These gave the city, when blockaded, an advantage over most of her besiegers, who found no springs in her immediate neighbourhood, and in several cases were ignorant of any even at a distance.<sup>1</sup> To which facts we may attribute the brevity and failure of several blockades,<sup>2</sup> as well as the unwillingness of every great invader to come near to Jerusalem till he had made very sure of his base of supplies in the lower country round about.<sup>3</sup> The city's strength, then, was this: that, while tolerably well watered herself, she lay where her besiegers could find not much food and scarcely any water.<sup>4</sup>

The immediate surroundings of Jerusalem are bare and rocky; with some exceptions they can hardly ever have been otherwise. The grey argillaceous soil is shallow, stony, and constantly interrupted by scalps, ledges and knolls of naked limestone. In the sides and bottoms of the wadies green patches are visible; but the only natural

<sup>1</sup> Such as the copious well at 'Ain Kārīm, from which the upper classes in Jerusalem still carry water in times of drought.

<sup>2</sup> Such as those of the Nabateans in 63 B.C., and of Cestius Gallus in 66 A.D.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *H.G.H.L.*, 298 ff. for Vespasian, Titus and Saladin. Thus also may be partly explained the long delay of Richard I. in the Shephelah, and his ultimate abandonment of the advance on Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> The question of the ancient water-supply of Jerusalem, complicated by the number of earthquakes which have visited her, will, I hope, form the subject of a special study later on.

gardens are those fed from the overflow of the one well in the valley of the Kidron. On the north-west of the city, the winter rains render the ground swampy: for example, in the Hallet el Kasabe "the little valley of the reeds," where reeds still grow, and in the Hallet et Tarha. Here and there the environs show fields of grain or vegetables; and one of the northern gates was called Gennath, "the garden."<sup>1</sup> The foliage to-day is nearly altogether that of the olive-trees, scattered at intervals in the stony orchards on the hill-sides, or down the Kidron and the Wady Rababy. The vineyards are few. Within the walls there are less than half a dozen palms, exotic at so high a level, and some other trees in the garden of the Armenian monastery. Whether in ancient times the groves of olive were more numerous, or whether trees of other species ever clothed the surrounding hills, are questions difficult to answer. Olivet has almost lost its title to the name, by the Jewish graveyards and Christian buildings which have recently multiplied on the face opposite the city, and is now excelled in greenery by the western slope towards the watershed. But in ancient times the Mount of Olives would hardly have been called so, had it not stood out in conspicuous contrast to the other hills. One can well believe that its north-western flank, the high basins between it and Scopus and its eastern folds towards Bethany, were once covered with trees; they are still fertile and support a number of orchards.<sup>2</sup> The Jews who returned to Jerusalem after the Exile were bidden *to go up into the mountain and bring wood*<sup>3</sup> for building, but this may not have been in the immediate neighbourhood. Josephus mentions a timber-market;<sup>4</sup> but probably it was for imported beams,

<sup>1</sup> Jos. V. *B.J.* iv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Jerome, in Jerem. vii. 30, mentions groves in Hinnom where olives still flourish.

<sup>3</sup> Haggai i. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *B.J.* II. xix. 4.

and even most of the fuel may have come from a distance. It is striking how seldom any tree appears in the present place-names of the immediate environs.<sup>1</sup> One has to walk several miles before encountering the name of the oak, the plane-tree, the tamarisk or the thorn, and the nearest wood is about three miles down the railway.<sup>2</sup> The latter instances prove that such trees could be grown round Jerusalem;<sup>3</sup> and the bareness of her suburbs during the Arab period may be due to the number of her sieges. We know that Pompey cleared away the trees; and one hundred and thirty-three years later Titus is said to have done so for a distance of ninety stadia from the walls,<sup>4</sup> and in particular to have cut down all the groves and orchards to the north on the line of his main assault.<sup>5</sup> There may, therefore, have been periods in which the hills engirdling the city were much more green than they are to-day; but if this was the case, it has left no reflection in literature. We do not read of woods about Jerusalem; it is *mountains which stand round her*;<sup>6</sup> and, except for Olivet, there is in the neighbouring place-names of the Bible-period no trace of trees.<sup>7</sup>

The climate of Jerusalem is easily described, especially since the details have been reduced to statistics by the scientific observations of the last forty years.<sup>8</sup> As through-

<sup>1</sup> There are the 'Ain el-Lôze, or "Almond-tree well"; Bir ez-zêtûnât, or "cistern of the olive-trees"; Wadi ej-Jôz ("of the nut-tree"), the upper part of the Kidron; W. el mes ("of the nettle-tree?") in the upper part of the W. Rababy; W. Umm el 'Anab (or "mother of grapes") to the north-west of the city; Maghâret el 'Anab; and Karm, "vineyard," occurs twice or thrice. See the name-lists of the Palestine Exploration Fund and "Namenliste, etc., zu Schick's Karte der näheren Umgebung von Jerusalem" by Schick and Benzinger, *Z.D.P.V.* xviii. 149-172.

<sup>2</sup> See "Namenliste, etc., zu Schick's Karte der weiteren Umgebung von Jerusalem," *Z.D.P.V.* xix. 145-221.

<sup>3</sup> The height above the sea is too great for the sycamore.

<sup>4</sup> Jos. VI. *B.J.* i. 1; viii. 1.

<sup>5</sup> V. *B.J.* iii. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. cxv. 2.

<sup>7</sup> The derivation of Bethphage is quite uncertain.

<sup>8</sup> The observer to whom we owe most of these is Dr. Chaplin, whose vivid paper,

out Syria the year is divided into two seasons, a rainy winter and a dry summer, but at so high an elevation the extremes are greater and the changes more capricious than in the rest of Palestine. With an annual rainfall about that of London,<sup>1</sup> the city receives this within seven months of the year—a quarter of it in January alone<sup>2</sup>—and through the other five, May to October, is without more than a few showers. July is absolutely rainless; June, August and September practically so. The drought is softened by heavy dews and by dense mists, which trail away swiftly in face of the sunrise. The temperature, with a mean of 62°,<sup>3</sup> has also its extremes. Not only is winter colder than on the plains, but the summer heat mounts higher and is more trying. In fifteen years there was an average of thirty-eight days on which the thermometer was above 90°—on twenty-eight occasions from 100° to 108°; and an average of fifty-five nights on which it fell under 40°, with 107 descents to or below freezing-point.<sup>4</sup> Ice is therefore formed but does

“Observations on the Climate of Jerusalem,” *P.E.F.Q.*, 1883, pp. 8 ff.), accompanied by numerous tables giving the result of observations between 1860–1 and 1881–2 ought to be studied by all who wish to understand the climate not of Jerusalem only, but of all Palestine, (cp. O. Kersten, *Z.D.P.V.* xiv. 93 ff.). See also Glaisher “On the Fall of Rain at Jerusalem in the thirty-two years from 1861 to 1892,” *P.E.F.Q.* 1894, 39 ff.; in subsequent volumes the same author’s collection of observations since 1892; and “Die Niederschlagsverhältnisse Palästinas in alter u. neuer Zeit,” by H. Hilderscheid, in *Z.D.P.V.* xxv. (1902) i. ff. Both Chaplin and Hilderscheid (the latter more fully) present the Biblical data along with the modern statistics. The longest observations, those of Dr. Chaplin and Mr. J. Gamel, were taken “in a garden within the city about 2,500 ft. above the sea.” They differ curiously from another series taken in a garden a little lower, in the American colony to the south-west; and from the series of a third station to the north-west of the city. See Hilderscheid’s comparative statements, *op. cit.* pp. 20 ff.

<sup>1</sup> 25·23 inches on an average of thirty years, 1861–1890; Glaisher, *P.E.F.Q.* 1894, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> December, February and March are the next most rainy months in that order. The rains begin to fall either in October or November, the latter rains in the end of March, but lessening through April.

<sup>3</sup> Fahrenheit.

<sup>4</sup> Glaisher, *P.E.F.Q.* 1898, p. 183 ff. In Sarona near Jaffa the number of days in which the mercury rose above 90° in ten years varied annually from 14 to 39

not last through the day. Snow has fallen in fourteen seasons out of thirty-two; for the most part in small quantity and soon melted; but there are sometimes snowstorms, and then the drifts will lie in the hollows of the hills for two or three weeks.<sup>1</sup> After both snow and rain the clayey soil will be muddy for days, but the porous limestone prevents the formation of swamps;<sup>2</sup> and although the air may continue damp it is raw and not malarious. Rain and snow have been known to last for thirteen or fourteen days in succession, but usually the winter rains fall for one or two days at a time, and these are followed by one or more of fine weather, "some of the most enjoyable that the climate of Palestine affords."<sup>3</sup>

When the winter east wind comes, it is clear and dry, but sometimes benumbing. The sirocco, or south-east wind, with its distressing heat and dull atmosphere of sand,<sup>4</sup> blows at frequent intervals in April, May and October. The daily breeze from the sea during summer<sup>5</sup> does not always reach Jerusalem, and when it does has often been robbed of its refreshing qualities:<sup>6</sup> the reason of the excess of the summer heats over those of the coast. The summer dusts are thick: at that height easily stirred and irritating. The long drought, exhausting many of the reservoirs, and the sultry nights, robbed of moisture by the failure of the west wind, are more dangerous to health than the rainy season. From May till October "the climatic

(average 23·6); the nights in which it fell below 40° varied from 2 to 15 (average 6·5) *P.E.F.Q.* 1891, pp. 165, 170. Chaplin (*P.E.F.Q.* 1898, p. 184) reports for Jerusalem once 112° and (*id.*, 1883, Tab. xiv.) once 25·9° (in January).

<sup>1</sup> Chaplin, p. 11. In December 1879 the fall of snow was 17 inches; on March 14, 1880, it was 5 inches; and I remember the consequent mud and cold when I reached Jerusalem in the end of the month.

<sup>2</sup> With the transient exceptions mentioned above, pp. 11, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Chaplin, *op. cit.* p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> *H.G.H.L.*, p. 520.

<sup>6</sup> Chaplin p. 15. The west wind has been observed 55 times in a year. The prevailing wind at Jerusalem is the north-west, blowing from 100 to 150 days in the year.



diseases of the country, such as ophthalmia, fevers and dysentery, are most prevalent."<sup>1</sup>

On the whole, then, the climate of Jerusalem is temperate, strenuous, and healthy; but with rigours both of cold and heat. Except during the sirocco and some dusty summer days, the atmosphere is clear and stimulating. There is no mirage in the air, nor any glamour, except when, sometimes at evening, the glowing Moab hills loom upon the city, or when the orange moon rises from behind them, and by her beams you feel, but cannot fathom, the awful gulf of the Dead Sea. But these touches of natural magic are evanescent, and the prevailing impression is of a bare landscape beneath a plain atmosphere, in which there is no temptation to illusion nor any suggestion of mystery. This is no doubt part of the reason why the visitor is so often disappointed by an atmosphere which he expected to fascinate him. Let him reflect that this very plainness is significant. He must bring the spell with him out of the history; and his appreciation of it will only be enhanced by the discovery that Nature has lent almost nothing to its original creation.

In such surroundings and such an atmosphere, Jerusalem sits upon her two promontories in the attitude already described: facing the Mount of Olives and looking obliquely through the one gap of her encircling hills towards the desert and the long high edge of Moab. The ravines which encompass the promontories—the valley of the Kidron and the Wady Rabāby—determine the extreme limits of the town on the east, the south, and the west. They enclose a space, roughly speaking, of about half a mile square. It will be our duty to inquire how much of this was occupied by houses or girdled by walls at successive stages of the history; questions which are the subject of much dispute. But for our present purpose—which is to

<sup>1</sup> Chaplin, p. 20.

recall some image of the Essential City—the same which through so many centuries has grown and adorned herself, and been trampled and suffered ruin—it is sufficient to take (as much as we can) of the present town and its most prominent features. Virtually upon her ancient seat Jerusalem still sits and at much the same slope; rising, that is, from the edge of the Kidron all the way up the same easy ascent to the constant line of her western wall. Only her skirts do not extend, as they did in ancient times, over the southern ends and declivities of the two promontories; but these lie bare and open, even the ruins of their walls being buried out of sight. Along with the mouth of the Tyropœon, that opens between them, the inferior parts of these declivities formed the lowest portion of the ancient city, from which stairs and steep lanes led to the Temple terrace over the Kidron. This terrace is now the lowest stretch of the city; it remains what it always was, a large court with a sanctuary, and at its north-east corner there are barracks and a tower on the site of what was once a citadel.<sup>1</sup> To the north the ground, after a depression representing an ancient fosse is passed, rises somewhat quickly and is covered with houses: once a suburb, but now within the walls. To the west of the sanctuary-platform the houses, also thickly clustering, dip for a little—above the once deeper depression of the Tyropœon, the line of which is still visible across the city from north to south—and then the roofs slowly but steadily rise till they culminate in the tower of Herod and the present citadel by the Jaffa gate.

Looking down upon this sloping city, either from one of its own towers or from the Mount of Olives, we are struck by the crowding of its houses. Except round the sanctuary, and for almost imperceptible intervals at the gates and a few other sites, there are no open spaces or

<sup>1</sup> Antonia of the Roman period.

even open lines; for there are no streets or squares, but only close and sombre lanes, climbing steeply from the Temple Court to the west, or, at right angles to these, dipping more gently from north to south.<sup>1</sup> And so it must nearly<sup>2</sup> always have been. *Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.*<sup>3</sup> The locusts, besiegers, and death are pictured by the Prophets as entering the windows and houses directly from the walls.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the Old Testament we read of 'streets' very seldom, and then probably not in the proper sense of the name, which is "broad places," but under a poetic licence.<sup>5</sup> Even in Isaiah's time it is only on the housetops,<sup>6</sup> or on the walls,<sup>7</sup> that we see the whole population gathered for a purpose that is not religious. Josephus frequently mentions the "narrow streets," and the fighting from the house-tops.<sup>8</sup> Through these lanes, ever close, steep and sombre as they are to-day, there beat the daily stir of the city's common life: the passage of her buzzing crowds, rumour and the exchange of news, the carriage of goods, trading and the smaller industries, the search for slaves and criminals, the bridal processions, the funerals, the tide of worshippers to the Temple, and occasionally the march of armed men. And through them also raged, as Josephus describes, the fighting, the sacking, the slaughter: all the fine-drawn pangs and anguish of the days of the city's overthrow.

But above these narrow arteries, through which her hot blood raced, Jerusalem, to the outside world, showed clean

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lam. iv. 1: *the top of every street.*

<sup>2</sup> The early Christian Jerusalem showed a line of columned street, from the present Damascus gate southwards.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxxii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Joel ii. 9; Jer. ix. 21 [20].

<sup>5</sup> Lam. ii. 11, 12; iv. 18; Jer. ix. 21 [20]: 'rēhōbōth.'

<sup>6</sup> xxii. 1: *What ailest thou that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops!*

<sup>7</sup> xxxvii. 11.

<sup>8</sup> *B.J.*, e.g., I. xviii. 2; II. xv. 5; V. viii. 1 (*bis*); VI. viii. 5: *οι στενωποι.*

and fair: a high-walled white city; steep and compact, but with one level space, where since the time of Solomon her Temple rose, free and apart from other buildings.

This is as much of the ancient city as we dare reconstruct by light of day from her present condition. For the strong eastern sun aggravates the nakedness of those slopes to the south which were once covered with houses and girdled with walls; emphasizes the modern buildings, and the fashions of modern life that everywhere obtrude; and flattens still further the shallow ravines, which, before they were choked with the débris of so many sieges, lifted the city high and gallant above their precipitous sides. He who would raise again the Essential City must wait for night, when Jerusalem hides her decay, throws off every modern intrusion, feels her valleys deepen about her, and rising to her proper outline, resumes something of her ancient spell. At night, too, or in the early morning, the humblest and most permanent habits of her life may be observed, unconfused by the western energies which are so quickly transforming and disguising her.

It was a night in June, when from a housetop I saw her thus. There was a black sky with extremely brilliant stars; the city, not yet fallen asleep, sparkled with tiny lights. I could scarcely discern the surrounding hills. Moab was invisible. After an hour a paleness drew up in the south-east, the sky gradually lightened to a deep blue, the stars shone silver, and a blood-red gibbous moon crept suddenly above the edge of Moab, and looked over into the Dead Sea. The sleeping city was now dark, lying in huddled folds of black, save where, through a wider gap, one palm and the dome of the Ashkenazim synagogue stood out against the pearly mist of the Moab hills. But as the moon fully struck her, Jerusalem seemed to turn in her sleep, and in something of her ancient outline to lift herself, grey and ghostly, to the light. I descended, and issuing by the Jaffa gate, saw

her in another aspect: the western wall erect and grim against the sky, while its shadow deepened the valley below. The wall is Turkish, and only a few centuries old, but even so must the ramparts and the towers of Herod have looked to the night-guards in the Roman trenches. A caravan of camels came up from the Hebron road; the riders in white abbas swaying over the necks of their beasts, that with long strides paced noiselessly upon the thick dust. They stopped outside the gate, the camels were made to kneel, the bales were loosened from their backs, and stacked upon the ground; the men lay down beside them, and in a few minutes were asleep. No wind stirred and, except for spasms of barking from the street dogs, answered now and then from a far-away village, scarcely a sound broke the silence for hours. The moonshine at last turned the wall and touched the muddy water at the lower end of the great reservoir beyond. A pair of jackals stole down to drink but fled before the yelp of the dogs. I returned to the housetop. The sky had grown blue in the lower west, and above that from purple to pink. Swifts began to fly past the houses: more and more till the air was thick with them. A bugle rang out from the citadel, and was answered up the town from Antonia; challenge and answer were several times repeated. In the hollow between Scopus and the Mount of Olives the sky grew red. Two camels entered the Jaffa gate laden with lemons, and knelt groaning upon the pavement; the netting broke and the lemons spilt into the shadow. A fruit-seller set out his wares on a basket. A black woman, some porters and a few sleepy soldiers crossed the open space inside the gate. In the eastern sky the crimson had spread to pink, which was followed by a deep yellow, and the first beams of the sun broke across Olivet. The Latin clock struck five. A detachment of soldiers were threading their way up from Antonia, invisible but bugling loudly. They broke on the street near

the castle, and, forming fours, passed over to the drawbridge. The lower city, the sanctuary and its court, caught the sunshine, and life grew busy. Lines of camels laden with charcoal stalked through the gate; followed by donkeys with wood for fuel. A man swept the street, and a boy put the refuse in a bag on a donkey's back. The barber and the knife-grinder took up their posts on the pavement. A small flock of sheep, peasants with eggs and cucumbers, and (since it was a summer of more than usual drought) a line of water-carriers from 'Ain Kārim entered together in a small crowd. There was a shuffling of many feet on the pavements, and in the bazaars the merchants were opening their booths.

So Jerusalem must have looked by night to Herod when his dreams drove him to the housetop. So Solomon's caravans may have come up in the moonlight from Elath and from Jaffa. So the sick king must have heard the swifts chirping past his window. So, in the Roman occupation, the bugles rang out from the tower and were answered from Antonia. And, so through all the centuries, the dawn broke upon Jerusalem, and the hewers of wood and drawers of water, the peasants with their vegetables, the sheep for the temple sacrifices, and all the unchanging currents of the city's common life, passed with the sunrise through the gates, and stirred the gloom of the narrow lanes with the business of another day.

GEORGE ADAM SMITH.