

The Cubbet es Sakrah, El Aksa, Jám'í el Magháribeh, &c., are each called a *Jámi*, but the entire Haram is a *masjid*. This will explain how it is that 'Omar, after visiting the churches of the Anastasis, Sion, &c., was taken to the "Masjid" of Jerusalem, and will account for the statement of Ibn el 'Asa'kir and others, that the Masjid el Aksa measured over 600 cubits in length—that is, the length of the whole Haram area. The name Masjid el Aksa is borrowed from the passage in the Coran (xvii. 1), when allusion is made to the pretended ascent of Mohammed into heaven from the temple of Jerusalem; "Praise be unto Him who transported His servant by night from El Masjid el Harám (*i.e.*, 'the Sacred place of Adoration' at Mecca) to El Masjid el Aksa (*i.e.*, 'the Remote place of Adoration' at Jerusalem), the precincts of which we have blessed," &c. The title *El Aksa*, "the Remote," according to the Mohammedan doctors, is applied to the temple of Jerusalem "either because of its distance from Mecca, or because it is in the centre of the earth."

The title Haram, or "sanctuary," it enjoys in common with those of Mecca, Medina, and Hebron.

(*To be continued.*)

#### DISCOVERY OF A TABLET FROM HEROD'S TEMPLE.\*

"PERMIT me to have recourse again to the publicity of your journal in order to make known, in a few words, an important discovery which I have just made in Jerusalem. It is of one of those tablets which, in the temple reconstructed by Herod, forbade strangers, as Josephus tells us, from passing the sacred enclosure—the prohibition being written in Greek and Latin. The tablet which I have found bears the following inscription in Greek in seven lines:—

ΜΗΘΕΝΑ ΑΛΛΟΓΕΝΗ ΕΙΣΠΟΡΕΥΕΣΘΑΙ ΕΝΤΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟ ΙΕΡΟΝ ΤΡΥ-  
ΦΑΚΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΕΡΙΒΟΛΟΥ ΟΣΔ'ΑΝ ΑΗΘΘΗ ΕΑΤΤΩΙ ΑΙΤΙΟΣ ΕΣΤΑΙ ΔΙΑ  
ΤΟ ΕΞΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΝ.

The characters are monumental in size, and present the appearance which one would expect in an inscription of the period.

The translation is:—

'No stranger is to enter within the balustrade (*τρυφακτος*) round the temple and enclosure. Whoever is caught will be responsible to himself for his death, which will ensue.'

The passage of Josephus to which I have made allusion, is as follows:—

'When you go through these first cloisters unto the second (court of the seven temples), there was a partition (*δρυφακτος*) made of stone all round, whose

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height was three cubits; its construction was very elegant. Upon it stood pillars at equal distances from one another, declaring the laws of purity, some in Greek, and some in Roman letters, that no "foreigner should go within that sanctuary." \*

The connection between this text and our inscription is striking. The expressions and the forms are similar: *μήδενα ἄλλόφυλον* is the exact equivalent of our *μήδενα ἀλλογενῆ*; 'the second *ἱερον*,' says Josephus, 'is surrounded by the *δρύφακτος*.' Our inscription says 'the *τρύφακτος* which is round the *ἱερον*.' The variant *τρύφακτος* is singular, and probably points to one of the faults of pronunciation in use among the Jews speaking Greek at this period. We must observe that Josephus does not speak of the tragic fate which menaced him who might violate the rule; his silence is certainly intentional.

We may boldly affirm that this Greek inscription is not only the most ancient, but also the most interesting, in all its bearings, which Jerusalem has yet produced. I cannot in this simple letter follow out all the questions which it raises; that must be the object of a special *mémoire*. I will confine myself only to remark the principal points which attach to it: the fixing of a certain palæographic scale for Greek inscriptions already discovered, or yet to be discovered in Jerusalem; the form and dimensions of the tablet, which may determine the use of the three cubit balustrade which it surmounted; appearance and workmanship of the stone, permitting us to specify technically the blocks of Herodian work, and to distinguish them from those cut at a previous date; striking confirmations of the exactness of Josephus's descriptions; authentic and contemporaneous definitions of the different parts of the temple; the *τρύφακτος* (sored of the Talmud?), the *ἱερον*, the *περιβόλη*, &c., &c.

The episode in the Acts of the Apostles (xxi. v. 26, *et seq.*), throws on, as well as receives from, this precious inscription great light. Paul, after purification, presents himself in the temple; the people immediately rise against him, because certain Jews of Asia believed that Paul had introduced into the temple a Gentile, Trophimus of Ephesus, and had thus polluted the sacred place. They are about to put him to death when the Tribune commanding at Fort Antonia intervenes and rescues him from the hands of his executioners. The people demand of the Tribune the execution of the culprit, *i.e.*, the 'application of the law.'

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\* Whiston's translation is here given.