



A third stone, a marble column with a Hebrew inscription, has been excavated near the southern Jewish cemetery, but the inscription proved to be modern.

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HAIFA, November, 1886.

NOTICES OF THE DOME OF THE ROCK AND OF THE CHURCH OF THE SEPULCHRE BY ARAB HISTORIANS PRIOR TO THE FIRST CRUSADE.

TRANSLATED BY GUY LE STRANGE.

"No Mohammedan writer of any sort, anterior to the recovery of the city from the Christians by Saladin, ventures to assert that his countrymen built the Dome of the Rock."¹

The object of the present paper is to show how utterly incorrect is this statement made by the late Mr. Fergusson in support of his theory that the Dome of the Rock (and not the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre) represents the Basilica erected by Constantine.

Whatever may be the arguments based upon the architectural style of the Dome of the Rock, it may be hoped that the passages here to be quoted, once and for all, will show that the historical evidence runs exactly counter to Mr. Fergusson's ingenious theory.

Within less than two centuries of the building of the Dome of the Rock by the Caliph 'Abd al Malik we have an account (Al Yakúbí) detailing the circumstances that led to its erection.

Thirty years later there is a minute description of the building (Ibn al Fakih), showing that the present edifice is almost intact, that of 'Abd al Malik; and a work written by a Spanish traveller of about the same date proves that many of the other buildings occupying the Haram Area were displaced neither during the Crusaders' occupation, nor at the restoration under Saladin.

¹ Article *Jerusalem*, in "Smith's Dictionary of the Bible," vol. i, p. 1030.

Passages from the writings of Mas'ûdi, who lived a century and a half before the first Crusade, prove that in his days the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was, as now, the scene of the so-called miracle of the Holy Fire. The short description of the Holy City by Ibn Haukal *upon*-Istakhri (A.D. 978) closes the series of my present translations, for Mukaddasi's account, written a decade later, has already been published by the "Palestine Pilgrims," and part of the Journal of Nâsiri Khusrau, half a century after him again, is very shortly to appear in a volume of the same series.

PLAN.

References to the Plan of the Haram Area at Jerusalem as it exists at the *present* day :—¹

- A. Bâb al Asbât (Gate of the Tribes).
- B. Bâb Hittah (Gate of Remission).
- C. Bâb Sharaf al Anbiyâ (of the Glory of the Prophets), also called Bâb ad Dawâdariyyah (of the Secretariat); and Bâb al Atm (of the Darkness).
- D. Bâb al Ghawânimah (of the Ghânim family), anciently called the Bâb al Khalil (of Abraham, the Friend).
- E. Bâb 'Alâ ad Dîn al Bustri, also called Bâb an Nathir (of the Inspector), and anciently Bâb Mikâil (of Michael).
- F. Bâb al Hadîd (of Iron).
- G. Bâb al Kattanîn (of the Cotton Merchants).
- H. Bâb al Mutawaddâ (of the place for Ablution), also called Bâb al Matâra (of rain).
- I. Bâb as Silsilah (of the Chain); ancient, the Bâb Dâûd.
- K. Bâb al Maghâribah (of the Mogrebins), also called Bâb Mohammed or An Nabî (of the Prophet).
- L. City Gate, called Bâb al Maghâribah; and by the Franks the Mogrebin, or Dung Gate.
- M. City Gate, called Bâb Sitti Maryam (of Our Lady Mary); also Gate of St. Stephen, or Gate of Jericho.
- N. Bâb al Taubah (of Repentance).
- O. Bâb ar Rahmah (of Mercy). These two form the Golden Gate, long since closed.
- P. Bâb al Burâk, or Al Janâiz (of the Funerals); long since closed.
- Q. Pillar in the Wall marking the place of the Bridge as Sirât.
- R. Jâmi' al Aksâ.
- S. Madrassah al Farsiyyah.
- T. Jâmi' al Maghâribah.
- V. Aksa al Kadîmah (ancient Aksa), also Al Baka'at al Baidâ, said to have been built by the Templars, and used as their armoury.
- V. Kursi Sulaiman (Solomon's Throne).
- W. Makam (Station of) Iliyâs (Elias), or Al Khidr (St. George, the Green One).

¹ Reduced from the Ordnance Survey and added to from M. de Vogüé's "Histoire de Jérusalem."

X. Kursi Isâ (Throne of Jesus).

x x x x. Platform of the Rock.

a. Kubbat al Alwah (Dome of the Tablets), or K. al Arwah (D. of the Spirits).

b. The Rock.

c. Kubbat as Silsilah (Dome of the Chain).

d. Kubbat al Mi'râj (D. of the Ascension of Mohammed into Heaven).

e. Kubbat Jibrail (of Gabriel).

f. Kubbat al Khidr (of St. George).

g. Mihrâb Dâûd (Oratory of David).

h. Great Mihrâb of the Aksa Mosque, showing the direction of the Kiblah, Mekka.

i. Mimbar (Pulpit).

k. Ancient Jâmi' (Mosque of) Omar.

l. Mihrâb Zakariyyah, (Prayer-niche of Zachariah).

m. Eastern door of the Mosque.

n. Well of the Leaves.

o. Great central Gate of the Mosque.

p. Mahd 'Isa (Cradle of Jesus).

The earliest account, by an Arab writer, that I have been able to discover of the building of the Dome of the Rock, is the passage referred to above, in Al Yakûbî's History, written about the year 260 A.H., corresponding to 874 A.D. Al Yakûbî was not a contemporary, but lived nearly two centuries after the event; his testimony, however, among a people who pay such attention to the transmission of oral tradition, is in a far higher degree worthy of reliance than would be, say, an account written at the present time, descriptive of the events that took place in the reign of Queen Anne. Al Yakûbî, or, as he is more correctly named, Ibn Wadhîh, is one of the earliest of Moslem writers on history and geography. He was a contemporary of the sons of Hârûn ar Rashîd, and other matters connected with his biography may be found set forth in the Latin preface which the learned Dutchman, M. Houtsma, has prefixed to his excellent edition of the Arabic text of the *Historiæ* (from a *Cambridge* MS. be it noted, for the climate of our Universities is not favourable to the cultivation of Oriental scholarship among native Britons).

In order to make clear to my readers how matters stood at the date of the building of the Dome of the Rock, and what were the political exigencies which induced the Caliph 'Abd al Malik, as the text states, to erect a Dome over the Rock at Jerusalem, I cannot do better than quote a passage from the writings of my friend, the late Professor Palmer, whose words are the more remarkable in their precision when it is remembered that he had not Yakûbî's text before his eyes in writing his account of "the Mohammedan Conquest":—"In 684 A.D., in the reign of

¹ P. 78, chap. iv, of "Jerusalem the City of Herod and Saladin," by W. Besant and E. H. Palmer. 1871.

'Abd el Melik, the ninth successor of Mohammed, and the fifth Caliph of the house of Omawiyah, events happened which once more turned people's attention to the City of David. For eight years the Mussulman Empire had been distracted by factions and party quarrels. The inhabitants of the two holy cities, Mecca and Medīna, had risen against the authority of the legitimate Caliphs, and had proclaimed 'Abd Allah Ibn Zobeir their spiritual and temporal head. Yezid and Mo'awíyeh had in vain attempted to suppress the insurrection; the usurper had contrived to make his authority acknowledged throughout Arabia and the African provinces, and had established the seat of his government at Mecca itself. 'Abd el Melik trembled for his own rule; year after year crowds of pilgrims would visit the Ka'abah, and Ibn Zobeir's religious and political influence would thus become disseminated throughout the whole of Islam. In order to avoid these consequences, and at the same time to weaken his rival's prestige, 'Abd el Melik conceived the plan of diverting men's minds from the Pilgrimage to Mecca, and inducing them to make the Pilgrimage to Jerusalem instead."

What Al Yakúbt says is as follows:—¹

"Then 'Abd al Malik forbade the people of Syria to make the Pilgrimage (to Mekka): and this by reason that 'Abd Allah Ibn az Zubair did seize on them during the time of the Pilgrimage, and did force them to pay him allegiance. Which, 'Abd al Malik having knowledge of, forbade the people to journey forth to Mekka. But the people murmured thereat, saying, "How dost thou forbid us to make the pilgrimage to Allah's House, seeing that the same is a commandment of Allah upon us?" And the Khalif answered them, "Hath not Ibn Shiháb az Zuhri² told you how the Apostle of Allah did say—*Men shall journey to but three Masjids* (Mosques, namely), *Al Masjid Al Harám* (at Mekka), *my Masjid* (at Madīna), and *the Masjid of the Holy City* (which is Jerusalem). So this last is now appointed for you (as a place of worship), in lieu of the Masjid al Harám (of Mekka). And this Rock (the Sakhrah of Jerusalem), of which it is reported that upon it the Apostle of Allah set his foot when he ascended into Heaven, shall be unto you in the place of the Ka'abah."

"So 'Abd al Malik built above the Sakhrah a Dome, and hung it around with curtains of brocade (Dibâj), and he instituted doorkeepers for the same. And the people took the custom of circumambulating the Rock (as Sakhrah of Jerusalem), even as they had paced round the Ka'abah (at Mekka), and the usage continued thus all the days of the dynasty of the Ommeiyads."

The earliest topographical account, by a Moslem, of Jerusalem and the

¹ "Ibn Wadhīh Historiæ," editit M. Th. Houtsma. Brill. Lugd., Batav., 1883, ii, p. 311.

² A celebrated Traditionist who was personally acquainted with many of the Prophet's companions. He died in A.H. 124 (A.D. 742), being seventy-two or more years old. His life is given by Ibn Khallikan (de Slane's Translation), vol. ii, p. 581.

Haram Area dates, if I mistake not, from about thirty years later than when Yakûbî wrote his History. Yakûbî himself, it is true, mentions Jerusalem in his geographical work, but gives no description of the city, and it is to the pen of Ibn al Fakîh, who wrote in A.D. 903 (A.H. 290), that we are indebted for the very curious and exact description of the Dome of the Rock which I have translated from the text lately edited by the learned Professor of Arabic at Leyden. Unfortunately Ibn al Fakîh's work has not come down to us in its entirety, but only in the form of an Abridgment by a certain 'Ali Shaizarî. Internal evidence, however, goes to prove that in pruning somewhat rudely the fair proportions of the work of his predecessor, Shaizarî added little or nothing of his own. Hence the work in its present form may still be held to date from the year 290 A.H. ; but for further details of the author, his work, and the Abridgment, I may refer my readers to the Latin preface of the edition, from which I translate the following paragraphs :—¹

"It is said that the length of the Noble Sanctuary at Jerusalem is 1,000 ells, and its width 700 ells. There are (in its buildings) 4,000 beams of wood, 700 pillars (of stone), and 500 brass chains. It is lighted every night by 1,600 lamps (*kandîl*), and it is served by 140 slaves (*khâdim*). The monthly allowance of olive oil is 100 kists,² and yearly they provide 800,000 ells of matting. There are also 15,000 water jars. Within the Noble Sanctuary are 16 arks (*tabût*) for the volumes of the Kurân set apart for public service, and these manuscripts are the admiration of all men. There are four pulpits (*mimbar*) for voluntary preachers, and one set apart for the salaried preacher ; and there are also four tanks for the Ablution. On the various roofs (of the Mosque, and domes), in the place of clay, are used 45,000 sheets of lead. To the right hand of the Mihrâb (or niche towards Mekka in the Aksa Mosque³) is a slab on which, in a circle, is written the name of Mohammed—the blessing of Allah be upon him!—and on a white stone behind the Kiblah (wall, to the south) is the inscription, "In the name of Allah the Merciful, the Compassionate Mohammed is Allah's Apostle. Hamzah⁴ was his helper." Within the Mosque (Area) are three maksûrahs (or railed spaces) for the women, each maksûrah being 70 ells in length. There are within and without (the Sanctuary) in all 50 gates (and doors)."

"In the middle of the Haram Area is a platform, measuring 300 ells in length by 140 ells across, and its height is 9 ells.⁵ It has six flights of stairs leading up to the Dome of the Rock. The Dome rises in the middle of this platform. (Its ground plan) measures 100 ells by 100, its height

¹ "Ibn al Fakîh," edidit de Geoeje ; Lugh. Bat., 1885 ; p. 100.

² Kist (from the Greek *Ξέστης*, and the Roman Sextarius) was equivalent to about a quart and a half of our measure.

³ Plan at H.

⁴ The Prophet's uncle, who fell at the Battle of Ohod.

⁵ *x, x, x, x*, of the Plan. Taking the ell at 1½ feet, this gives 450 feet by 225 feet, which is considerably less than the size of the present platform.

is 70 ells, and its circumference is 360 ells.¹ In the Dome every night they light 300 lamps. It has four gates roofed over; and at each gate are four doors; and over each gate is a portico (*dukkánah*²) of marble. The stone of the rock measures 34 ells by 27 ells; and under it is a cavern in which the people pray. This is capable of containing 62 persons. (The edifice of) the Dome is covered with white marble, and its roof with red gold. In its walls and high in (the drum) are 56 windows (*báb*)³ glazed with glass of various hues; each window measures 6 ells high by 6 spans across. The Dome which was built by 'Abd al Malik Ibn Marwân is supported on 12 piers (*rúk*) and 30 pillars (*'amûd*).⁴ It consists of a dome over a dome (*i.e.*, an inner and an outer), on which are sheets of lead, and sheets of copper gilt. The walls, both within and without, are faced with white marble. To the east of the Dome of the Rock stands the Dome of the Chain. It is supported by 20⁵ marble columns, and its roof is covered with sheets of lead. In front of it (again to the east) is the praying station of Al Khidr (St. George or Elias).⁶ The platform occupies the middle of the Haram Area (*al Masjîd*). In its northern part is the Dome of the Prophet,⁷ and the station of Gabriel; near the Sakrah is the Dome of the Ascension.⁸ Among the gates (of the Haram Area) are Bâb

¹ The figures given are, considering they represent round numbers, fairly exact. Taking the ell (*dhirâ'*) at an average of 18 inches, this gives circumference 540 feet (round the present octagon measures about 528 feet), and height 105 feet (97 feet is the exact measurement up to the pinnacle).

² In my translation of Mukaddasi (p. 45, line 4) the word (Suffah) rendered *Balustrade* should be *Porch*. Mukaddasi's *suffah* and Ibn al Fakih's *dukkánah* both denote the peristyle built at each of the four gates of the Dome.

³ In the present edifice (judging from the plan in De Vogüé's "Jérusalem") there are 15 windows in the drum under the Dome, and 5 in each of the 8 walls that form the octagon below. This ($5 \times 8 + 16$) makes up exactly 56, the number given.

⁴ In the present edifice, as may be seen in the accompanying Plan, the 12 piers,—4 in the inner circle (by which the Dome is supported), and 8 marking the angles of the octagon, still exist. The arrangement and number of the pillars appear, however, to have been altered. To judge by De Vogüé's plan there are between each of the 4 piers of the inner circle 3 pillars, and between each of the 8 outer piers 2 pillars ($4 \times 3 + 8 \times 2$), making 28 pillars in all, instead of 30 as given by Ibn Fakih. The difference, however, is not very material.

⁵ Plan C. There are (to judge from De Vogüé's plan) only 17 columns in the present edifice, 6 in the inner, and 11 in the outer circle. However, though in the plan he draws 6 columns in the inner circle supporting the Dome, he writes of it in the text as a *pentagon*.

⁶ Plan W.

⁷ Plan X?

⁸ From this it would appear that the Dome of the Prophet was distinct from the Dome of the Ascension. Suyûti, writing in 1470 A.D., did not know which was the Dome of the Prophet, and imagined it to be the Dome of the Chain. In the enumeration which follows of the Gates, the Mihrâbs and other notable places standing near are mentioned along with the gates.

Dâûd,¹ Bâb Hittah,² Bâb an Nabî (of the Prophet),³ Bâb at Taubah (Gate of Repentance),⁴ and there is here the Mihrâb Maryam (Prayer Niche of Mary), Bâb al Wâdi,⁵ Bâb ar Rahmah (Gate of Mercy), with the Mihrâb Zakariyyâ, Abwâb al Asbât⁶ (the Gates of the Tribes), with the Cave of Abraham,⁷ the Mihrâb of Jacob, and Bâb Dâr Umm Khâlid (the Gate of the House of Khalid's Mother). Outside the Haram Area (Al Masjid) at the City Gate to the west, is the Mihrâb Dâûd (David's Prayer-niche).⁸ The place of the tying up of (the steed) Al Burak is in the angle of the southern minaret.⁹ The Spring of Siloam ('Ain Sulwân) lies to the south of the Haram Area. The Mount of Olives overlooks the Haram Area, being separated therefrom by the Wâdy Jahannum. From it (the Mount ?) Jesus was taken up, across it (the Wady ?) will extend the bridge As Sirât,¹⁰ and there too is the Place of Prayer of the Khalif 'Omar, also the tombs of the prophets. Bait Lahm (Bethlehem) lies a farsakh (or league) distant from the Holy City, it is the place where Jesus was born."

"Masjid Ibrahim (Hebron) is about 15 miles away. There are here the tombs of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Sarah. The Prophet (Mohammed's) shoe (na'l) lies to the front (of these)."

My next notice of the buildings in the Noble Sanctuary is taken from the account written by the Spanish Arab, Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, who has left us a curious historical work of very varied contents called "Al Ikd al Farid," *The Necklet of Unique Pearls*. He flourished about the same time as Ibn al Fakîh, and though the exact date of his visit to Jerusalem is not known, the date of his death, A.H. 328 (corresponding to the year 940 A.D.)

¹ The present Bâb as Silsilah, Plan I.

² Plan B.

³ Plan K.

⁴ Plan N.

⁵ Bâb al Wâdi, the Gate of the Valley, must be the Bâb al Janâiz, the Gate of Funerals (Plan P), now walled up, to the south of the Golden Gate. This last is here mentioned under the names of its two halves, the Gate of Mercy (Plan N), and the Gate of Repentance (Plan O).

⁶ Plan A.

I am unable to identify these last two places and the last gate mentioned.

⁸ In later times David's Prayer Niche was shown (as at the present day) at a spot in the south wall of the Haram Area (Plan G). Anciently it was identified with a building in the castle. A generation later the historian Mas'udi writes (Vol. I, p. 109, of the edition published by M. Barbier de Meynard): "David built a House of Worship in Kûr Salâm, which is the Holy City, and it is the same building which exists in our own day, in the year 332 (A.D. 943), and is called the Mihrâb Dâûd. In all the Holy City, at the present time, there is no building higher than it, and from the summit thereof you may see the Stinking Lake (Dead Sea) and the River Jordan."

⁹ Shown here at the present day. Plan K.

¹⁰ Plan Q.

would show that he is describing the Holy City as it existed during the first half of the tenth century of our era. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih is quoted by Mujir ad Din (in the sixteenth century A.D.) under the name of Al Kurtubi, the Cordovan.

Good MSS. of Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's work are unfortunately lacking, and for my translation I have been obliged to rely on the text printed at Boulak, near Cairo, presumably from an Egyptian MS. which leaves much to be desired in the matter of scholarly editing.

*"Description of the Mosque of the Holy City, and what therein is of Holy Places of the Prophets."*¹

The length of the Haram Area is 784 ells, and its breadth 455 ells, of the ells of the Imâm.² They light the Noble Sanctuary with 1,500 lamps, (kandil); and in its structures have been employed 6,900 beams of wood. Its gates are 50 in number, and there are 684 columns ('Amûd). Within the Sakhrâh (Dome of the Rock) are 30 columns, and the columns which are outside the Sakhrâh (*Khârij as Sakhrâh*) are 18 in number.³ The Dome is covered by means of 3,392 sheets of lead, over which are placed plates of brass, gilded, which number 10,210. The total number of the lamps that light the Sakhrâh is 464, which hang by hooks and chains of copper. The height of the Sakhrâh of the Holy City (in ancient days) when it reached heavenward was 12 miles, and the people of Jericho (to the east)

¹ Vol. iii, p. 366 *et seq.*, of the Cairo edition printed in A.H. 1293.

² If the reading *Imâm* be correct, the Imâm in question is doubtless the Caliph Ali, who inaugurated many novelties besides the standard of the ell. At the present day the Haram Area measures, in round numbers, 1,500 feet by 900; or in ells, 1,000 ells by 600.

Various other Arab writers have given the dimensions, and it may be worth tabulating them for the convenience of reference.

	Length.	Width.
	in ells.	in ells.
Ibn al Fakih (A.D. 903), and Mukaddasî (A.D. 985) ..	1,000	700
Ibn 'Abd Rabbih (A.D. 940)	784	455
Inscription in northern wall of Haram Area, as read by Nasirî Khusrau (A.D. 1047)	750	455
Ditto as read by the author of the "Muthîr al Ghirâm" ..	784	455
Ditto as read by Ali of Herat in A.D. 1200	700	455
Ditto as read by M. C. Ganneau in 1874	{ 784 } or 734	455
By the measurement of the author of the "Muthîr al Ghirâm" (A.D. 1350) Eastern wall	683	} 455
Western wall	650	

³ See note¹, p. 95. It must be observed that *As Sakhrâh* (the Rock) is used to denote both the Dome and the Rock itself; just as *Al Masjid* means the whole Haram Area, and sometimes more particularly the Mosque (or Masjid) Al Aksa in its southern part.

profited by its shadow, as did also those of 'Amwâs (to the west); and there was set over it a red ruby which shone giving light even to the people of the Balkâ, so that those who lived there were able to spin by the light thereof.

In the Noble Sanctuary (Al Masjid) are three Makstrahs (enclosed spaces) for the women,¹ the length of each Makstrah being 80 ells, and its breadth 50. In the Mosque are 600 chains for the suspending of the lamps, each chain being 18 ells in length, also 70 copper sieves² (*ghirbâl*) and 7 cone-shaped stands (*sanaubarât*) for the lamps. Further, 70 complete copies of the Koran and 6 copies of great size, each page of which is made out of a single skin of parchment; these last are placed on desks (*kursi*). (The Noble Sanctuary) contains 10 Mihrâbs, 15 Domes, 24 wells (*jubb*) for water and 4 minarets from whence they make the call to prayer. All the roofs, that is, of the Mosque, the Domes and the Minarets, are covered with gilded plates. Of servants appointed to its service there are,—together with their families, 230 persons,— Mamlûks (slaves), all of whom receive their rations from the Public Treasury. Monthly there is allowed (for the Noble Sanctuary) 700 Kists Ibrahimî, the weight of the kist being a ratl and a half of the large weight.³ The allowance yearly of mats is 8,000 of the same. For the banks of cottou for the wicks of the lamps they allow yearly 12 Dînârs; for lamp glasses 33 Dînârs, and for the payment of the workmen who repair the various roofs in the Noble Sanctuary there is 15 Dinars yearly.

*Of Holy Places of the Prophets in Jerusalem are the following:—*Under the corner of the Masjid is the spot where the Prophet tied up his steed, Al Burâk.⁴ Leading into the Noble Sanctuary are the Bâb Dâûd,⁵ the Bâb Sulaimân, and the Bâb Hittah, which last is intended by Allah when He saith,⁶ “Say ye Hittah” (Forgiveness), and there is no God but Allah; but some men say “Hintah” (Wheat), making a jest thereof, for which may Allah curse them in their impiety!

Also there are the Bâb Muhammad⁷ (the Gate of the Prophet); and Bâb at Taubah (the Gate of Repentance); where Allah vouchsafed repentance to David.

¹ Much the same is stated by Ibn al Fakîh. I am not at all sure whether “Al Masjid” here refers to the Aksa Mosque or the whole Haram Area. It would seem difficult to accommodate three railed-in spaces, each measuring 120 feet by 75 feet, *within* the Aksa building, though what follows would seem to imply that this is what is meant.

² What these were for I know not.

³ What the Kist of Ibrahim exactly denotes I am unable to state. The Syrian Ratl weighed about 6 lbs.; for the Arabs, like the Romans, estimated their measures of capacity by the weight of oil or wine. The Dînâr mentioned a few lines later may be taken roughly as worth 10s. English.

⁴ Plan at K.

⁵ Gate of David, now called Bâb as Silsilah, Gate of the Chain. Plan I.

⁶ Kurân, II, 55.

⁷ Plan K.

And the Bâb ar Rahmah (Gate of Mercy), of which Allah has made mention in His Book, saying,¹ "A gate within which is Mercy, while without the same is Punishment," alluding to the Wâdy Jahannum which lies on the east of the Holy City.

And the Abwâb al Asbât (the Gates of the Tribes),² the tribes being the Tribes of the Children of Israel,—and the Gates are six in number.

Also the Bâb al Walîd, the Bâb al Hâshimî, the Bâb al Khidr³ (Elias or St. George), and the Bâb as Sakinah (the Gate of the Shechina).⁴

In the Noble Sanctuary further are the Mihrâb of Mary (mother of Jesus) the daughter of 'Amrân, whither the Angels were wont to bring to her the fruits of winter during the summer time, and summer fruits in the winter time.

Also the Mihrâb of Zakariyya (father of the Baptist),⁵ where the Angels gave him the good news (of the birth) of John, at a time when he was standing praying therein. Also the Mihrâb Ya'kûb (Jacob) and the Kursî Sulaiman (Throne of Solomon)⁶ where he used to pray to Allah; and the Minaret of Abraham, the Friend of The Merciful, whither he was wont to retire for worship. There are likewise here the Dome of the Apostle (Muhammad), from whence he made his ascent into Heaven; the Dome over the spot where the Apostle prayed with the (former) Prophets; also the Dome where, during the times of the Children of Israel, there hung down the Chain that gave judgment (of truth or lying) between them.⁷ Further the Praying place of Jibrâil (Gabriel) and the Praying place of Al Khidr (Elias).⁸

Now when thou enterest the Sakhrâh (Dome of the Rock) make thy prayer in the three corners thereof; and also pray on the Slab which rivals the Rock itself in glory, for it lies over a gate of the gates of Paradise.

The birth-place of Jesus, the son of Mary, is (at Bethlehem) about three miles distant from the Noble Sanctuary; Abraham's Mosque (which is Hebron), wherein is his tomb, is 18 miles from the Holy City. The (Mâlikite) Mihrâb of this Mosque lies on the western side.

Among the Excellent Sights of the Holy City are these. The place of the Bridge As Sirât⁹ is in the Holy City, and from Jahannum (Hell)—may Allah keep us therefrom!—it will reach even unto the Holy City.

On the day of Resurrection Paradise will be brought as a bride to the Holy City, and the Ka'abah also shall come along with her, so that they

¹ Kurân, LVII, 13.

² Plan A.

³ These three gates I cannot identify; they are also mentioned by Mukaddasî.

⁴ Plan I.

⁵ Plan l.

⁶ Plan V.

⁷ The Dome of the Chain. Plan c.

⁸ Plan e and W.

⁹ Plan Q.

shall cry "All hail to those who come as pilgrims ! and all hail to her to whom pilgrimage is made !" And the Black Stone shall be brought, in bridal procession, to the Holy City, and the Black Stone on that day shall be greater in size than the Hill of Abu Kubais.¹

Among the Excellencies of the Holy City are that Allah did take up His Prophet into Heaven from the Holy City, as likewise Jesus, the son of Mary. And verily at some time the Antichrist shall conquer Christ in all and every part of the earth, excepting only in the Holy City. And Allah has forbidden Gog and Magog ever to enter the Holy City.

Lastly, that all the Saints and Holy Men of God are from the Holy City, and Adam and Moses and Joseph, and the great company of the Prophets of the Children of Israel all left by testament the command that they should be buried in the Holy City.

The labours of the French Orientalist, M. Barbier de Meynard, and the patronage of the *Société Asiatique*, have made the most amusing of Arab chronicles, the "Meadows of Gold" of Mas'ûdi, accessible to all. In nine octavo volumes of moderate size we have on every page the text, and below it the French translation, so that all who run may read. Mas'ûdi penned his "Meadows of Gold" in the year 943 after Christ (A.H. 332), and though he has given no detailed description of Jerusalem, or the Temple Area, there are some incidental notices of the buildings here, which are of capital importance in our investigations. In the following extract we have, if I mistake not, the earliest reference by an Arab author to the Church of the Resurrection, or Holy Sepulchre, where the Muslim by a designed corruption of the word Kayâmah (*Anastasis*) called the Kanisâh al Kumâmah, "the Church of the Sweepings," or "Dunghill." The well-known imposture which is called the Miracle of the Holy Fire, is first noticed by the Christian Pilgrim, Bernard the Wise, in A.D. 867. Mas'ûdi's testimony, therefore, some eighty years later, that the miracle took place in the *Church of the Holy Sepulchre* of the Christians, a well-known place, quite distinct from the Dome of the Rock (which last Mr. Fergusson would have us believe was, at that period, known as the *Holy Sepulchre*), seems to me to overturn the foundations of the theory that Constantine's Basilica is the Dome of the Rock. Mas'ûdi was sceptical as to the miraculous origin of the Fire ; his account is as follows :—²

"On the 5th day of the (Syrian) month Tishrîn I (October) is the festival of the Kanisah al Kumâmah (Church of the Sepulchre) at Jerusalem. The Christians assemble for this festival from out all lands. For on it the Fire from Heaven doth descend among them, so that they kindle therefrom the candles. The Muslims also are wont to assemble in great crowds to see the sight of the festival. It is the custom also at this time to pluck olive leaves. The Christians hold many legends there anent ; but the Fire is produced by a clever artifice, which is kept a great secret."

¹ Overhanging Mekka on the west.

² Mas'ûdi, iii, p. 405.

Another passage from the same work is curious as showing what were the Churches in the hands of the Christians in Jerusalem, in A.D. 943, and also what were according to Muslim traditions the buildings, afterwards the Aksa Mosque and the Church of the Resurrection, in ancient Jewish days. After relating the history of the reign of Solomon, Mas'ûdi concludes his chapter with the following paragraph :—¹

“ It was Solomon who first built the Holy House, which same is now the Aksa Mosque—may Allah bless its precincts! When he had completed the building thereof, he set about building a house for his own use ; this last is the place that in our own day is called the Kanîsah al Kumâmah (the Church of the Resurrection); it is the largest Church in Jerusalem belonging to the Christians. They have also in the Holy City other greatly honoured churches besides this one, as for example the Kanîsah Sihyûn (the Church of Sion), of which David has made mention (in the Psalms); and the Church known as the Jismâniyyah.² This last, they say, encloses the tomb of David.”

From the latter half of the tenth century after Christ, and onwards to the date of the taking of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, the descriptions of the Holy City by Arab authors become more numerous, and fuller in detail. I propose to translate the short notice left us by the Geographer Ibn Haukal (A.D. 978 = A.H. 367). This personage re-edited and somewhat enlarged the work of his predecessor, Istakhri (A.D. 951 = A.H. 340), who had written a work to elucidate the charts or maps of the countries of Islâm (unfortunately no longer extant) of one Balkhî, drawn in the year 309 A.H., corresponding to 921 of our era. Ibn Haukal furnishes not an uncommon example of the method employed in the East for the writing of books. To save yourself the trouble of original composition you take an earlier author, annotate and add commentary to his work, and bring out the plagiarism under your own name. It is as though, instead of editing Boswell, Mr. Croker had given us the “Life of Johnson” as his own work, suppressing all mention of the original author.

Thanks to the researches of the learned Dutch orientalist, M. de Goeje, Ibn Haukal and Istakhri and Balkhî are all now set in their proper places, and we have the two first edited in Arabic separately (although Ibn Haukal includes for the most part, and is a repetition merely, with augmentations, of Istakhri), in the “Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum,” Vols. I and II.

The description of Jerusalem is as follows :—³

“ The Holy City is nearly as large as Al Ramlah (the capital of the

¹ Mas'ûdi, i, p. 111.

² Jismâniyyah is the Arabic corruption of the name Gethsemane. The original name has the meaning of *Garden of the Olive-press*, while Jismâniyyah in Arabic has the signification of “*the Incarnation*,” and commemorates a different incident in our Lord's history.

³ Vol. II, Ibn Haukal, p. 111, corresponding to the section in vol. I, p. 57, of Istakhri.

province of Filastîn). It is a city perched high on the hills, and you have to go up to it from all sides. There is here a Mosque, a greater than which does not exist in all Islâm. The main building (which is the Akxa Mosque) occupies the south-western angle of the Mosque (Area, or Noble Sanctuary), and covers about half the breath of the same.¹ The remainder of the Haram Area is left free, and is nowhere built over, except in the part around the Rock. At this place there has been raised a stone (terrace) like a platform, of great unhewn blocks, in the centre of which, covering the Rock, is a magnificent Dome. The Rock itself is about breast high above the ground, its length and breadth being about equal, that is to say, some ten ells and odd, by the same across. You may descend into its interior by steps as though going down to a cellar (*sardâb*), through a door measuring some five ells by ten. The interior is neither square nor round, and is above a man's stature in height.

"In all Jerusalem there is no running water, excepting what comes from springs, that can be used to irrigate the fields, and yet it is the most fertile portion of Filastîn.

"In the City² is the Mihrâb of the Prophet David, a tall edifice built of stone, which, by measurement and calculation, I should say reached a height of fifty ells, and was thirty ells in the breadth. On its summit is an erection like a cell (*hujrah*), which is the Mihrâb mentioned by Allah—may he be exalted! (in the words of the Kuran,³ 'Hath the Story of the two pleaders reached thee, when they mounted the walls of David's Mihrâb?') When you come up to the Holy City from Ar Ramlah this is the first building that catches the eye, and you see it above the other houses of the town. In the Noble Sanctuary, too, are many other venerated Mihrâbs dedicated to other of the celebrated prophets."

Of far greater importance, however, than the short notice of Ibn Haukal—Istakhri, are the two very complete descriptions left by the Arab geographer, Mukaddasî (A.D. 985) and the Persian traveller, Nasiri-Khusrau (A.D. 1046) who wrote, respectively, a century, and half a century before the first Crusade. The account left us by the first of these, Mukaddasî, I have already translated for the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, and that given by the Persian will, I believe, very shortly appear in English dress, published under the same auspices. I need, therefore, only refer my readers to the rapidly increasing numbers of the "Pilgrims" for all details; but an incidental notice in Mukaddasî, seems to me sufficiently important to justify my quoting the passage from my translation. I conclude these notes with this passage which proves beyond a doubt that

¹ See *R* and *U* of the Plan.

² Ibn Haukal says, "In the Haram Area (Al Masjid)," but this is an oversight, or an addition by a later hand.

³ Chapter XXXVIII, 20.

⁴ P. 22 of my translation; p. 159 of the Text edited by M. de Goeje.

the Arabs of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries of our era had before their eyes both the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Dome of the Rock, two perfectly distinct buildings, one Christian, one Muslim, totally distinct in position, in plan, and in purpose.

After giving a long description of the great Omeyyad Mosque at Damascus, Mukaddasi has the following remarks:—

"Now one day I said, speaking to my father's brother, "O my Uncle, verily it was not well of the Khalif Al Walid to expend so much of the wealth of the Muslims on the Mosque at Damascus. Had he expended the same on making roads, or for Caravanserais, or in the restoration of the Fortresses, it would have been more fitting and more excellent of him." But my uncle said to me in answer, "O, my little son, you have not understanding! Verily Al Walid was right, and he was prompted to do a worthy work. For he beheld Syria to be a country that had long been occupied by the Christians, and he noted herein the beautiful churches still belonging to them, so enchantingly fair, and renowned for their splendour; even as are the Kumamah (the Church of the Holy Sepulchre) and the Churches by Lydda and Edessa. So he sought to build for the Muslims a Mosque that should prevent their regarding these, and that should be unique and a wonder to the world. And in like manner is it not evident how the Khalif 'Abd al Malik, noting the greatness of the Dome of the Kumamah and its magnificence, was moved lest it should dazzle the minds of the Muslims, and hence erected, above the Rock, the Dome which now is seen there?"

NOTES FROM THE *QUARTERLY STATEMENTS*, 1886-7.

October, 1886.

Page 170. Holes in dolmens and menhirs also are well known to archæologists. There is a known case where good faith has been sworn by joining hands through the hole in a menhir. Cup hollows also occur surrounded by circular trenches cut on flat rocks on hill-tops. These might contain rain-water, dew, or libations such as were commonly poured on rocks, as mentioned in the Old Testament. The account in the Zendavesta of the ceremony of purifying after contact with a dead body suggests an explanation of these hollows and circles. The man to be purified, we there read, used to pass from circle to circle and was sprinkled with water and *gomez* (the sacred Persian mixture) from the holes. The holes and the circles round them were made for the purpose according to measurements detailed in the Vendidad.

Page 173. The capital found at Ascalon is evidently Byzantine. Brickwork like that at Ascalon occurs in the Byzantine walls at Constantinople about Justinian's time. I found similar brickwork also in the ruins of Kadesh, near Tell Neby Mendeh.