

Snuff (*sa'ud*) (سعود) is also sold and indulged in by all classes, especially elderly men and women, who also smoke the *arghileh*.¹ The *tombak*, or Persian tobacco, for the *arghileh* is sold in large yellow-brown leaves, and is crushed and rubbed in an iron sieve in the presence of the buyer. The *tombak* is carried about by *arghileh* smokers, and for five or ten paras the pipes in the coffee-houses are filled and loaned. Cigars of European make, though also sold by tobacconists, have not found much favour with the Arabs, who prefer the small cigarette, *sikâra* (سيكارا). Everyone knows how rich the Arabic language is in the most polite expressions. A smoker may offer his tobacco pouch with the word *deffâdal* (تفضل): "Do me the favour." After making the cigarette, the receiver will say 'âmer (عامر), "may it flourish" (*i.e.*, have always tobacco to offer), whereupon the giver will say *min khîrak* (من خيرك), "from your property, or liberality." The other will again answer, *khîr allah* (خير الله), "God's goods," and so forth. Then he will offer him a light and say *yekhsîk sharha* (يخفيك شرها), "may you be concealed from its (the fire's) evil," and the other replies *walâ takassî harha* (ولا تقاصى حرها), "neither may you tell (know) about its heat."

(To be continued.)

THE SITE OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY AT JERUSALEM, BUILT BY THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN.

By Colonel C. M. WATSON, C.B., C.M.G., R.E.

(Continued from p. 257.)

WE now come to the period when the great Basilica of St. Mary was erected at Jerusalem by the Emperor Justinian in the first half of the sixth century. As I have already remarked, the idea of building this church was not due to the Emperor. It was suggested to him by St. Saba, one of the most renowned ecclesiastics of Palestine, whose name has been preserved in the title of the well-known monastery of Mar Saba, which stands on the road from

¹ See *Quarterly Statement*, p. 70.

Bethlehem to the Dead Sea. In the life of St. Saba, written by Cyril of Scythopolis, we are informed¹ that in an interview which he had with the Emperor Justinian he begged the latter to establish a hospital in the Holy City for the nursing of sick strangers, and to build and adorn the new Church of St. Mary, which had already been commenced by the [Archbishop Elias. The result of this petition to the Emperor is given by Cyril in the following words:—

“Moreover, in accordance with the holy old man’s third request he (*i.e.*, Justinian) founded a hospital in the midst of Jerusalem. It contained at first 100 beds, and he set apart for it a clear annual revenue of 1,850 pieces of gold. Afterwards he ordered that the hospital should contain 200 beds, and added as much more clear and inalienable revenue thereto. He also most zealously fulfilled the old man’s fourth request, and sent to Jerusalem one Theodorus, an engineer, to the end, that he might build the new church of the Holy Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary; and he gave orders to the farmers of the revenue in Palestine to provide money for the building. He gave supreme authority over the matter to the Archbishop Peter, but ordered Barachus, the Bishop of Bacatha, to overlook the work of building. Thus, through much zeal and many hands the new church of the Holy Virgin was in 12 years built and fitted with all due ornament. It is needless to dilate upon the size of this holy temple, its radiant glory, and its costly ornament, seeing that it is present before our eyes, and excels all the ancient spectacles and wonders which man used to admire of old, and of which the Greeks have told us in their histories.”

This interesting account of the building of St. Mary’s Church does not help much as regards fixing its site. The only hint that is given is that the hospital was in the midst of Jerusalem, which would certainly seem to imply that it was inside the city walls.

The next and fullest account of the Church of St. Mary is that given by Procopius, which I have already quoted (*see* p. 250 *sqq.*). I have also shown that although the site cannot be definitely fixed from his description, yet it applies better to Mount Sion than to the Temple area.

In a tract, entitled the “Breviary of Jerusalem,” there is a description of the holy places. The date is not certain, but it must have been written about the time of the Emperor Justinian. In this work the account of the buildings on Mount Sion is as follows²:—

¹ *Palestine Pilgrims’ Texts*, vol. xi. “St. Saba,” p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. The “Breviary,” p. 16.

“Thence you go to a very great basilica on the holy Sion, wherein is the column at which the Lord Jesus was scourged. One may see there the print of His hands as He held it, marked as deep as though the stone were wax. Thence you come to the place of sacrifice, where is the stone with which St. Stephen was stoned. In the midst of this church is the crown of thorns which Jesus received. And there is the lamp (by the light of which) He taught His disciples after He had supped. There is the rod (with which He was scourged) enclosed within a column of silver. Thence you go to the house of Caiaphas, where St. Peter denied; where there is a large church dedicated to St. Peter. Thence you go to the house of Pilate, where he delivered over the Lord to the Jews after He had been scourged; where there is a large basilica, and in it there is a chamber which is where they stripped Him and He was scourged; it is called St. Sophia.”

If there had been a great basilica built or building in the Temple area at the time the “Breviary” was written, it is difficult to understand why it was not mentioned. Whereas, on the other hand, if the basilica of Justinian was on Mount Sion, the explanation is simple.

The next author from whom I shall quote is Antoninus Martyr, who visited Jerusalem about A.D. 570. His story was evidently written from memory and is not quite clear, but it gives much useful information. It is interesting to note how the number of relics shown on Mount Sion was steadily increasing. He wrote as follows¹:—

“Thence we come to the Basilica of the Holy Sion, where are many wonders, amongst which is the corner-stone mentioned in Scripture, which was rejected by the builders. When the Lord Jesus Christ entered that church, which was then the house of St. James, He found that shapeless stone lying in the midst; He lifted it up and placed it upon the corner. You take this stone and lift it in your hands, and place your ear upon the corner itself, and there will be a sound in your ears like the voices of many men. In that very church is the pillar upon which our Lord was scourged, upon which pillar is the following mark: when He embraced it His breath imprinted itself upon the very stone; and His two hands, with both their palms and fingers, are to be seen upon the stone, so that a measure is taken from thence for various

¹ *Palestine Pilgrims' Texts*, vol. ii. “Antoninus Martyr,” p. 18.

weaknesses, and those who wear it round their neck are healed. Upon the pillar itself is the horn with which the kings and David were anointed. There is likewise the crown of thorns with which our Lord was crowned, and the spear which was thrust into His side, and many stones with which Stephen was stoned. There is also a pillar upon which the cross of the blessed Peter, upon which he was crucified at Rome, was placed. There, too, is the chalice of the apostles, with which, after our Lord's resurrection, they used to celebrate mass, and many other relics which I have forgotten. There is a convent of maidens, and there I saw a human skull enclosed in a golden case, adorned with precious stones, which they say is that of the martyr Theodota, from which many drink water for a blessing, and I drank.

“From Sion we came to the Basilica of the Blessed Mary, where there is a large congregation of monks, and where are also hospices (for strangers, both) for men and women. There I was received as a pilgrim; there were countless tables, and more than 3,000 beds for sick persons. We prayed in the Prætorium, where the Lord was tried, which is now the Basilica of St. Sophia. In front of the ruins of the Temple of Solomon, under the street, water runs down to the fountain of Siloam. Near the porch of Solomon, in the church itself, is the seat upon which Pilate sat when he tried our Lord. There, also, is a square stone, which used to stand in the midst of the Prætorium, upon which the accused was placed during his trial, that he might be heard and seen by all the people. Upon it our Lord was placed when He was tried by Pilate, and there the marks of his feet still remain.”

There can, I think, be little doubt that the Church of St. Mary, here described, with the hospice and hospital, was the basilica built by Justinian. It will be observed that the church is mentioned in connection with the Prætorium and Church of St. Sophia, which, as I have already pointed out, were most probably on Mount Sion. The remark as to the water flowing down to Siloam reads as if it were made by an observer, looking from Mount Sion across the valley to the site of the old Temple. If, on the contrary, Antoninus had been describing a church close to the Temple, he would have worded the description differently.

Not long after Antoninus Martyr visited the holy places a bad time came for Jerusalem. In A.D. 614 Chosroes, the King of Persia, invaded Syria and captured Jerusalem, massacring a great

number of the inhabitants. In the Annals of Eutychius the event is described as follows¹:—

“Now when he (*i.e.*, Chosroes) came to Jerusalem, first of all he destroyed the Church of Gethsemane and also the Church of Helena, both of which remain in ruins to this day. He also destroyed the Churches of Constantine, that of Golgotha and of the Holy Sepulchre; he set Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre on fire, and destroyed the greater part of the city as well, while the Persians and Jews together slew innumerable Christians. These are the corpses which lie in the place at Jerusalem called Mamela. After the Persians had burned, wasted, and slain, they went away, leading captive Zacharias, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, together with many others.”

In this account there is no mention made of the Churches of St. Mary and of Sion, so that it is not possible to say how far they were destroyed by Chosroes.

The churches round the Holy Sepulchre were restored by the Abbot Modestus, who was made Patriarch by the Emperor Heraclius when he visited Jerusalem after defeating the Persians. In A.D. 636 Heraclius in his turn was overcome by the Mohamedans, who conquered Syria. In A.D. 637 Jerusalem capitulated to the Caliph Omar, who treated the Christians with leniency and left them their churches, while taking for the Mohamedans the site of the Temple and surrounding area. In the account of the taking of Jerusalem by Eutychius² there is no trace of there being a church in the vicinity of the Temple, and it is difficult to understand why no mention should have been made of the Church of St. Mary if it had been, as generally supposed, on the south side of the Haram area.

The first account by a Christian pilgrim after the taking of Jerusalem by the Mohamedans is that of Bishop Arculfus, who visited the Holy Land about A.D. 670, and after his return dictated an account of his recollections. At that time the Dome of the Rock had not yet been built on the site of the Temple, and the information he gives as to the Temple area is as follows³:—

“But in that renowned place, where once the Temple had been magnificently constructed, placed in the neighbourhood of the wall

¹ *Palestine Pilgrims' Texts*, vol. xi. “Eutychius,” p. 36.

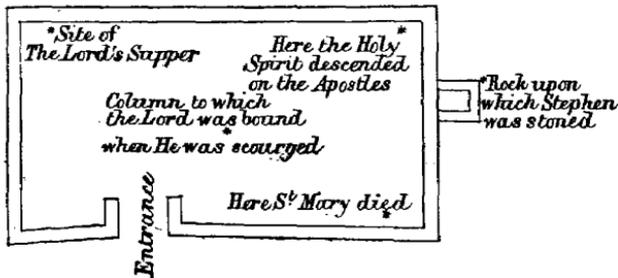
² *Ibid.*, vol. xi. “Eutychius,” p. 66.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. iii. “Arculfus,” p. 4.

from the east, the Saracens now frequent a four-sided house of prayer, which they have built rudely, constructing it by raising boards and great beams on some remains of ruins; this house can, it is said, hold 3,000 men at once."

Now, if the Church of St. Mary had been in the vicinity, it seems likely that the Saracens would have used it, and not built a temporary wooden mosque, as it is most improbable that the church so magnificently built by Justinian could have been reduced to "some remains of ruins" during the very short stay of the Persians in Jerusalem. The ruins are more likely to have been some remains of the royal cloister of Herod's Temple. Arculfus gives a short account of Mount Sion in the following words¹:—

"Mention was made of Mount Sion a little above, and here a short and succinct notice must be inserted of a great basilica constructed here, a drawing of which is given below.



"Here is shown the rock upon which Stephen, being stoned without the city, fell asleep. Beyond the great church described above, which embraces within its walls such holy places, there stands another memorable rock, on the west side of that on which, as is said, St. Stephen was stoned. This apostolical church was built of stone on a level surface on the higher ground of Mount Sion."

In another MS. of Arculfus this paragraph reads as follows:—

"After this the sainted Arculfus writes of that place where the Lord supped with His disciples, and where the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles on the holy day of Pentecost, where he says that a great church has been constructed on the top of Mount Sion, which is called the Apostles' Church. There is also seen

¹ *Palestine Pilgrims' Texts*, vol. iii. "Arculfus," p. 20.

the column where the Lord was scourged, and there is also shown there the rock on which St. Stephen was stoned; to the west there is another church where the Lord was tried in the Prætorium of Pilate."

This is a very important account, as it confirms the idea that the traditional site of the Prætorium was on Sion, and thus adds to the probability that Antoninus Martyr meant to describe the great Church of St. Mary as being on Sion; and it also gives the reason for a church in honour of St. Mary being built on Sion, as being the traditional place of her death. This is confirmed by Bishop Willibald, who made the pilgrimage about A.D. 754, as he says¹:—

"Holy Mary departed out of the world in that place in the midst of Jerusalem which is called holy Sion." The same statement is repeated by other pilgrims.²

This is not the place to recapitulate the history of Jerusalem; suffice it to say that after suffering various tribulations it was captured by the Crusaders in A.D. 1099, and remained in the power of the Christians until A.D. 1187. The accounts of pilgrims giving descriptions of the holy places naturally become very numerous, and it would be impossible to quote all of them. During the Christian occupation the whole of the Temple area was occupied by the Knights Templars, the Dome of the Rock being called the "Temple of the Lord," and the Mosque of Aksa the "Temple of Solomon." The latter building was occupied as the residence of the Templars. In the accounts of the pilgrims are full descriptions of those buildings, but I have not been able to trace in any of them a tradition that formerly a great church, such as that of St. Mary, stood within the Temple area.³ If it had ever been there, it is hard to understand how the fact of its existence should have been so completely lost. On the other hand some of the pilgrims state that there *was* a Church of St. Mary on Mount Sion. Take, for example, Theoderich, who wrote about A.D. 1172. In writing of Sion his words are as follow⁴:—

"The Mount Sion, which stands to the southwards, being for the most part without the city walls, contains the church dedicated to

¹ *Palestine Pilgrims' Texts*, vol. iii. "St. Willibald."

² *Ibid.*, vol. iii. "Bernard the Wise," p. 8.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. xi. "Anonymous Pilgrim No. 1," p. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. v. "Theoderich," p. 36.

our Lady, St. Mary, which is well fortified with walls, towers, and battlements against the assaults of the infidels, wherein regular monks serve God under an abbot. When you enter it you will find in the middle apse, on the left hand, the holy place whereat our Lord Jesus Christ received the soul of His beloved Mother, our blessed Lady, Mary, and raised it to heaven. This work is square below, and above round, supporting a dome. By about thirty steps on the right hand one mounts into an upper chamber, which is situated in the extremity of the apse. Here may be seen the table at which our Lord supped with His disciples, and, after the departure of the traitor, gave to those disciples His mystical body and blood. In this same upper chamber, at a distance of more than 30 feet to the southward of that place, there stands an altar on the place where the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles. From hence one descends by as many steps as one ascended, and sees in the chapel beneath the upper chamber the stone basin, built into the wall, wherein the Saviour washed the feet of the apostles in that place; where close by, on the right hand, there stands an altar in the place where Thomas felt the Lord's side after His resurrection, which for this cause is called the Altar of the Finger."

Theoderich then follows the steps of the Lord to the Brook Cedron, to Gethsemane, and back to Sion, when he proceeds with the description of the latter place:—

"After they had mocked Him all night, they brought Him in the morning before Pilate, His judge. After he had asked Him many questions, Pilate caused Him to be brought to the judgment hall in the place which is called the way of a judgment seat, in the place which is called the Pavement, which place is situated in front of the Church of St. Mary, on Mount Sion, in a high place near the city wall. Here is a holy chapel dedicated to our Lord Jesus Christ, wherein stands a great part of the column round which the Lord was bound by Pilate, and ordered to be scourged, after He had been condemned by him to be crucified."

If we compare this description of the Church of St. Mary in the year A.D. 1172 with the accounts given by Arculfus in A.D. 670, and by Antoninus Martyr in A.D. 570, it can hardly be doubted that it is the same, or, at all events, a restoration of the same, church, which can thus be traced back to the time of the Emperor Justinian.

After the expulsion of the Christians from Jerusalem, the Church of St. Mary on Mount Sion appears to have fallen into decay.

Ludolph von Suchem, who wrote about A.D. 1350, says¹ :—

“Upon this Mount Sion, or in this city of David, there once was built an exceeding fair monastery called the Convent of St. Mary on Mount Sion. Within this monastery were enclosed all the following holy places.”

He then enumerates the various holy places which have already been described as in and near the Church of St. Mary. In the following century Felix Fabri visited the Holy Land in A.D. 1480–1483, and has left a very full and interesting account of his travels. He lived for a considerable time with the monks on Mount Sion and gives a clear account of the ruined condition of the church.² He says :—

“The church is not large, because it is only a part of the Church of Sion. In the old time, when the Christians bore rule in the land, there was a great church on that spot, which the Saracens have destroyed as far as the apse or chapel which joined the choir of the church on the right hand side. This part is now the choir and church of the brethren. The ruins of the old choir and church are still plainly to be seen.”

And in another place he says :—

“In this place we stood for a good while, and mourned over the ruins, and looked round us with sorrow at the scattered stones of the sanctuary. Here once stood an exceeding great church whereof there is nothing left save the part which once joined that great church on the right-hand side, which part at the present day is the choir and church of the brethren as I said before ; the head of the choir also remains, with its east window, and with its half-broken vault which threatens to fall in. On the inside of the church there is a way up some stairs from the place where the Holy Spirit was sent down to the top of that piece of broken vault. I went up these stairs and found above the broken vault a pavement of polished marble of divers colours, wherefore I suppose that there was once another church up above, on the top of the church and choir. Thus the Church of Sion must have had three consecrated stories, that is to say, the crypt beneath the earth, the

¹ *Palestine Pilgrims' Texts*, vol. xii. “Ludolph von Suchem,” p. 101.

² *Ibid.*, vol. vii. “Felix Fabri,” p. 287.

church built upon the earth, and another decorated chamber above the church. In the old choir, the high altar still stands, but it is a ruin."

In A.D. 1517 Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Turks, and in A.D. 1547 the Mohamedans took possession of the Christian buildings on Mount Sion, and since that time access to them has been difficult. It would be interesting to make a thorough examination of the place in order to see what remains of the great church still exist, and it would also be desirable to excavate the ground to the east and search for the ancient foundations. I do not know, however, if this would be possible, as the buildings are surrounded by cemeteries.

To sum up, the conclusions at which I have arrived are as follow :—

- (1) It seems improbable that the Basilica of St. Mary, built by Justinian, was in the vicinity of the Temple, or that there was any Christian church in the Haram area prior to the occupation of Jerusalem by the Crusaders in A.D. 1099.
- (2) It is probable that the basilica of Justinian was constructed on Mount Sion on or near the site of the existing buildings, usually known as the Cenaculum and Tomb of David.

THE LEVELLING OF THE AKRA.

By Rev. W. F. BIRCH.

SIMON'S expulsion of the enemy from the Akra (1 Macc. xiii, 50) developed in the fertile brain of Josephus into the herculean labour of a three years' demolition of fort, hill, and all.

Jahn long ago observed that the expressions in Maccabees are entirely at variance with the story of Josephus, adding that it probably originated in a mistake.

This "cock and bull" has brought a cycle of mischief upon Jerusalem research, but it is only fair, by putting a finger on the initial error, to show that the mistake of the Jewish historian was more his misfortune than fault.

Josephus in his day (*Quarterly Statement*, 1886, p. 26) certainly found that the term Akra was assigned to the sloping ridge (now called ed-Dhahr, *i.e.*, back) south of the temple, with no visible