

**Book II**  
FROM THE MANGER IN BETHLEHEM TO THE BAPTISM IN JORDAN.

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**CHAPTER I.**  
IN JERUSALEM WHEN HEROD REIGNED

IF the dust of ten centuries could have been wiped from the eyelids of those sleepers, and one of them who thronged Jerusalem in the highday of its glory, during the reign of King Solomon, had returned to its streets, he would scarcely have recognised the once familiar city. Then, as now, a Jewish king reigned, who bore undivided rule over the whole land; then, as now, the city was filled with riches and adorned with palaces and architectural monuments; then, as now, Jerusalem was crowded with strangers from all lands. Solomon and Herod were each the last Jewish king over the Land of Promise; Solomon and Herod, each, built the Temple. But with the son of David began, and with the Idumæan ended, 'the kingdom;' or rather, having fulfilled its mission, it gave place to the spiritual world-kingdom of 'David's greater Son.' The sceptre departed from Judah to where the nations were to gather under its sway. And the Temple which Solomon built was the first. In it the Shekhinah dwelt visibly. The Temple which Herod reared was the last. The ruins of its burning, which the torch of the Romans had kindled, were never to be restored. Herod was not the antitype, he was the Barabbas, of David's Royal Son.

In other respects, also, the difference was almost equally great. The four 'companion-like' hills on which the city was built, the deep clefts by which it was surrounded, the Mount of Olives rising in the the east, were the same as a thousand years ago. There, as of old were the Pool of Siloam and the royal gardens - nay, the very wall that had then surrounded the city. And yet all was so altered as to be scarcely recognisable. The ancient Jebusite fort, the City of David, Mount Zion, was now the priests' quarter, Ophel, and the old royal palace and stables had been thrown into the Temple area - now completely levelled - where they formed the magnificent treble colonnade, known as the Royal Porch. Passing through it, and out by the Western Gate of the Temple, we stand on the immense bridge which spans the 'Valley of the Cheesemongers,' or the Tyropoeon, and connects the Eastern with the Western hills of the city. It is perhaps here that we can best mark the outstanding features, and note the changes. On the right, as we look northward, are (on the Eastern hill) Ophel, the Priest-quarter, and the Temple - oh, how wondrously beautiful and enlarged, and rising terrace upon terrace, surrounded by massive walls: a palace, a fortress, a Sanctuary of shining marble and glittering gold. And beyond it frowns the old fortress of Baris, rebuilt by Herod, and named after his patron, Antonia. This is the Hill of Zion. Right below us is the cleft of the Tyropoeon, and here creeps up northwards the 'Lower City' or Acra, in the form of a crescent, widening into an almost square 'suburb.' Across the Tyropoeon - westward, rises the 'Upper City.' If the Lower City and suburb form the business-quarter with its markets bazaars, and streets of trades and guilds, the 'Upper City' is that of palaces. Here, at the other end of the great bridge which connects the Temple with the 'Upper City,' is the palace of the Maccabees; beyond it, the Xystos, or vast

colonnaded enclosure, where popular assemblies are held; then the Palace of Ananias the High-Priest, and nearest to the Temple, 'the Council Chamber' and public Archives. Behind it, westwards, rise, terrace upon terrace, the stately mansions of the Upper City, till, quite in the north-west corner of the old city, we reach the Palace which Herod had built for himself - almost a city and fortress, flanked by three high towers, and enclosing spacious gardens. Beyond it again, and outside the city walls, both of the first and the second, stretches all north of the city the new suburb of Bezetha. Here on every side are gardens and villas; here passes the great northern road; out there must they have laid hold on Simon the Cyrenian, and here must have led the way to the place of the Crucifixion.

Changes that marked the chequered course of Israel's history had come even over the city walls. The first and oldest - that of David and Solomon - ran round the west side of the Upper City, then crossed south to the Pool of Siloam, and ran up east, round Ophel, till it reached the eastern enclosure of the Temple, whence it passed in a straight line to the point from which it had started, forming the northern boundary of the ancient city. But although this wall still existed, there was now a marked addition to it. When the Maccabee Jonathan finally cleared Jerusalem of the Syrian garrison that lay in Fort Acra, he built a wall right 'through the middle of the city,' so as to shut out the foe. This wall probably ran from the western angle of the Temple southwards, to near the pool of Siloam, following the winding course of the Tyropoeon, but on the other side of it, where the declivity of the Upper City merged in the valley. Another monument of the Syrian Wars, of the Maccabees, and of Herod, was the fortress Antonia. Part of it had, probably, been formerly occupied by what was known as Fort Acra, of such unhappy prominence in the wars that preceded and marked the early Maccabean period. It had passed from the Ptolemies to the Syrians, and always formed the central spot round which the fight for the city turned. Judas Maccabee had not been able to take it. Jonathan had laid siege to it, and built the wall, to which reference has just been made, so as to isolate its garrison. It was at last taken by Simon, the brother and successor of Jonathan, and levelled with the ground. Fort Baris, which was constructed by his successor Hyrcanus I., covered a much wider space. It lay on the northwestern angle of the Temple, slightly jutting beyond it in the west, but not covering the whole northern area of the Temple. The rock on which it stood was higher than the Temple, although lower than the hill up which the new suburb Bezetha crept, which, accordingly, was cut off by a deep ditch, for the safety of the fortress. Herod greatly enlarged and strengthened it. Within encircling walls the fort rose to a height of sixty feet, and was flanked by four towers, of which three had a height of seventy, the fourth (S.E.), which jutted into the Temple area, of 105 feet, so as to command the sacred enclosure. A subterranean passage led into the Temple itself, which was also connected with it by colonnades and stairs. Herod had adorned as well as strengthened and enlarged, this fort (now Antonia), and made it a palace, an armed camp, and almost a city.

Hitherto we have only spoken of the first, or old wall, which was fortified by sixty towers. The second wall, which had only fourteen towers, began at some point in the northern wall at the Gate Gennath, whence it ran north, and then east, so as to enclose Acra and the Suburb. It terminated at Fort Antonia. Beyond, and all around this second wall stretched, as already noticed, the new, as yet unenclosed suburb Bezetha, rising towards the north-east. But

these changes were as nothing compared with those within the city itself. First and foremost was the great transformation in the Temple itself, which, from a small building, little larger than an ordinary church, in the time of Solomon, had become that great and glorious House which excited the admiration of the foreigner, and kindled the enthusiasm of every son of Israel. At the time of Christ it had been already forty-six years in building, and workmen were still, and for a long time, engaged on it. But what a heterogeneous crowd thronged its porches and courts! Hellenists; scattered wanderers from the most distant parts of the earth - east, west, north, and south; Galileans, quick of temper and uncouth of Jewish speech; Judæans and Jerusalemites; white-robed Priests and Levites; Temple officials; broad-phyllacteried, wide-fringed Pharisees, and courtly, ironical Sadducees; and, in the outer court, curious Gentiles! Some had come to worship; others to pay vows, or bring offerings, or to seek purification; some to meet friends, and discourse on religious subjects in those colonnaded porches, which ran round the Sanctuary; or else to have their questions answered, or their causes heard and decided, by the smaller Sanhedrin of twenty-three, that sat in the entering of the gate or by the Great Sanhedrin. The latter no longer occupied the Hall of Hewn Stones, Gazith, but met in some chamber attached to those 'shops,' or booths, on the Temple Mount, which belonged to the High-Priestly family of Ananias, and where such profitable trade was driven by those who, in their cupidity and covetousness, were worthy successors of the sons of Eli. In the Court of the Gentiles (or in its porches) sat the official money-changers, who for a fixed discount changed all foreign coins into those of the Sanctuary. Here also was that great mart for sacrificial animals, and all that was requisite for offerings. How the simple, earnest country people, who came to pay vows, or bring offerings for purifying, must have wondered, and felt oppressed in that atmosphere of strangely blended religious rigorism and utter worldliness; and how they must have been taxed, imposed upon, and treated with utmost curtness, nay, rudeness, by those who laughed at their boorishness, and despised them as cursed, ignorant country people, little better than heathens, or, for that matter, than brute beasts. Here also there lay about a crowd of noisy beggars, unsightly from disease, and clamorous for help. And close by passed the luxurious scion of the High-Priestly families; the proud, intensely self-conscious Teacher of the Law, respectfully followed by his disciples; and the quick-witted, subtle Scribe. These were men who, on Sabbaths and feast-days, would come out on the Temple-terrace to teach the people, or condescend to answer their questions; who in the Synagogues would hold their puzzled hearers spell-bound by their traditional lore and subtle argumentation, or tickle the fancy of the entranced multitude, that thronged every available space, by their ingenious frivolities, their marvellous legends, or their clever sayings; but who would, if occasion required, quell an opponent by well-poised questions, or crush him beneath the sheer weight of authority. Yet others were there who, despite the utterly lowering influence which the frivolities of the prevalent religion, and the elaborate trifling of its endless observances, must have exercised on the moral and religious feelings of all - perhaps, because of them - turned aside, and looked back with loving gaze to the spiritual promises of the past, and forward with longing expectancy to the near 'consolation of Israel,' waiting for it in prayerful fellowship, and with bright, heaven-granted gleams of its dawning light amidst the encircling gloom.

Descending from the Temple into the city, there was more than enlargement, due to the increased population. Altogether, Jerusalem covered, at its greatest, about 300 acres. As of old there were still the same narrow streets in the business quarters; but in close contiguity to bazaars and shops rose stately mansions of wealthy merchants, and palaces of princes. And what a change in the aspect of these streets, in the character of those shops, and, above all, in the appearance of the restless Eastern crowd that surged to and fro! Outside their shops in the streets, or at least in sight of the passers, and within reach of their talk, was the shoemaker hammering his sandals, the tailor plying his needle, the carpenter, or the worker in iron and brass. Those who were less busy, or more enterprising, passed along, wearing some emblem of their trade: the dyer, variously coloured threads; the carpenter, a rule: the writer, a reed behind his ear; the tailor, with a needle prominently stuck in his dress. In the side streets the less attractive occupations of the butcher, the wool-comber, or the flaxspinner were pursued: the elegant workmanship of the goldsmith and jeweller; the various *articles de luxe*, that adorned the houses of the rich; the work of the designer, the moulder, or the artificer in iron or brass. In these streets and lanes everything might be purchased: the production of Palestine, or imported from foreign lands - nay, the rarest articles from the remotest parts. Exquisitely shaped, curiously designed and jewelled cups, rings and other workmanship of precious metals; glass, silks, fine linen, woollen stuffs, purple, and costly hangings; essences, ointments, and perfumes, as precious as gold; articles of food and drink from foreign lands - in short, what India, Persia, Arabia, Media Egypt, Italy, Greece, and even the far-off lands of the Gentiles yielded, might be had in these bazaars.

Ancient Jewish writings enable us to identify no fewer than 118 different articles of import from foreign lands, covering more than even modern luxury has devised. Articles of luxury, especially from abroad, fetched indeed enormous prices; and a lady might spend 36*l.* on a cloak; silk would be paid by its weight in gold; purple wool at 3*l.* 5*s.* the pound, or, if double-dyed, at almost ten times that amount; while the price of the best balsam and nard was most exorbitant. On the other hand, the cost of common living was very low. In the bazaars you might get a complete suit for your slave for eighteen or nineteen shillings, and a tolerable outfit for yourself from 3*l.* to 6*l.* For the same sum you might purchase an ass, an ox, or a cow, and, for little more, a horse. A calf might be had for less than fifteen shillings, a goat for five or six. Sheep were dearer, and fetched from four to fifteen or sixteen shillings, while a lamb might sometimes be had as low as two pence. No wonder living and labour were so cheap. Corn of all kinds, fruit, wine, and oil, cost very little. Meat was about a penny a pound; a man might get himself a small, of course unfurnished, lodging for about sixpence a week. A day labourer was paid about 7½*d.* a day, though skilled labour would fetch a good deal more. Indeed, the great Hillel was popularly supposed to have supported his family on less than twopence a day, while property to the amount of about 6*l.*, or trade with 2*l.* or 3*l.* of goods, was supposed to exclude a person from charity, or a claim on what was left in the corners of fields and the gleaners.

To these many like details might be added. Sufficient has been said to show the two ends of society: the exceeding dearness of luxuries, and the corresponding cheapness of necessities. Such extremes would meet especially at Jerusalem. Its population, computed at from 200,000 to 250,000, was enormously swelled by travellers, and by pilgrims during the great festivals. The

great Palace was the residence of King and Court, with all their following and luxury; in Antonia lay afterwards the Roman garrison. The Temple called thousands of priests, many of them with their families, to Jerusalem; while the learned Academies were filled with hundreds, though it may have been mostly poor, scholars and students. In Jerusalem must have been many of the large warehouses for the near commercial harbour of Joppa; and thence, as from the industrial centres of busy Galilee, would the pedlar go forth to carry his wares over the land. More especially would the markets of Jerusalem, held, however, in bazaars and streets rather than in squares, be thronged with noisy sellers and bargaining buyers. Thither would Galilee send not only its manufactures, but its provisions: fish (fresh or salted), fruit known for its lusciousness, oil, grape-syrup, and wine. There were special inspectors for these markets - the *Agardemis* or *Agronimos* - who tested weights and measures, and officially stamped them, tried the soundness of food or drink, and occasionally fixed or lowered the market-prices, enforcing their decision, if need were, even with the stick. Not only was there an upper and a lower market in Jerusalem, but we read of at least seven special markets: those for cattle, wool, iron-ware, clothes, wood, bread, and fruit and vegetables. The original market-days were Monday and Tuesday, afterwards Friday. The large fairs (*Yeridin*) were naturally confined to the centres of import and export - the borders of Egypt (Gaza), the ancient Phoenician maritime towns (Tyre and Acco), and the Emporium across the Jordan (Botnah). Besides, every caravansary, or khan (*qatlis*, *atlis*, κατ'λυσις), was a sort of mart, where goods were unloaded, and especially *cattle set out* for sale, and purchases made. But in Jerusalem one may suppose the sellers to have been every day in the market; and the magazines, in which greengrocery and all kinds of meat were sold (the *Beth haShevaqim*), must have been always open. Besides, there were the many shops (*Chanuyoth*) either fronting the streets, or in courtyards, or else movable wooden booths in the streets. Strangely enough, occasionally Jewish women were employed in selling. Business was also done in the restaurants and wineshops, of which there were many; where you might be served with some dish: fresh or salted fish, fried locusts, a mess of vegetables, a dish of soup, pastry, sweetmeats, or a piece of a fruit-cake, to be washed down with Judæan or Galilean wine, Idumæan vinegar, or foreign beer.

If from these busy scenes we turn to the more aristocratic quarters of the Upper City, we still see the same narrow streets, but tenanted by another class. First, we pass the High-Priest's palace on the slope of the hill, with a lower story under the principal apartments, and a porch in front. Here, on the night of the Betrayal, Peter was 'beneath in the Palace.' Next, we come to Xystos, and then pause for a moment at the Palace of the Maccabees. It lies higher up the hill, and westward from the Xytos. From its halls you can look into the city, and even into the Temple. We know not which of the Maccabees had built this palace. But it was occupied, not by the actually reigning prince, who always resided in the fortress (Baris, afterwards Antonia), but by some other member of the family. From them it passed into the possession of Herod. There Herod Antipas was when, on that terrible Passover, Pilate sent Jesus from the old palace of Herod to be examined by the Ruler of Galilee. If these buildings pointed to the difference between the past and present, two structures of Herod's were, perhaps, more eloquent than any words in their accusations of the Idumæan. One of these, at least, would come in sight in passing along the slopes of the Upper City. The Maccabean rule had been preceded by that of

corrupt High-Priests, who had prostituted their office to the vilest purposes. One of them, who had changed his Jewish name of Joshua into Jason, had gone so far, in his attempts to Grecianise the people, as to build a Hippodrome and Gymnasium for heathen games. We infer, it stood where the Western hill sloped into the Tyropoeon, to the south-west of the Temple. It was probably this which Herod afterwards enlarged and beautified, and turned into a theatre. No expense was spared on the great games held there. The theatre itself was magnificently adorned with gold, silver, precious stones, and trophies of arms and records of the victories of Augustus. But to the Jews this essentially heathen place, over against their Temple, was cause of deep indignation and plots. Besides this theatre, Herod also built an immense Amphitheatre, which we must locate somewhere in the north-west, and outside the second city wall.

All this was Jerusalem above ground. But there was an under ground Jerusalem also, which burrowed everywhere under the city - under the Upper City, under the Temple, beyond the city walls. Its extent may be gathered from the circumstance that, after the capture of the city, besides the living who had sought shelter there, no fewer than 2,000 dead bodies were found in those subterranean streets.

Close by the tracks of heathenism in Jerusalem, and in sharp contrast, was what gave to Jerusalem its intensely Jewish character. It was not only the Temple, nor the festive pilgrims to its feasts and services. But there were hundreds of Synagogues, some for different nationalities - such as the Alexandrians, or the Cyrenians; some for, or perhaps founded by, certain trade-guilds. If possible, the Jewish schools were even more numerous than the Synagogues. Then there were the many Rabbinic Academies; and, besides, you might also see in Jerusalem that mysterious sect, the Essenes, of which the members were easily recognized by their white dress. Essenes, Pharisees, stranger Jews of all hues, and of many dresses and languages! One could have imagined himself almost in another world, a sort of enchanted land, in this Jewish metropolis, and metropolis of Judaism. When the silver trumpets of the Priests woke the city to prayer, or the strain of Levite music swept over it, or the smoke of the sacrifices hung like another Shekinah over the Temple, against the green background of Olivet; or when in every street, court, and housetop rose the booths at the Feast of Tabernacles, and at night the sheen of the Temple illumination threw long fantastic Shadows over the city; or when, at the Passover, tens of thousands crowded up the Mount with their Paschal lambs, and hundreds of thousands sat down to the Paschal supper - it would be almost difficult to believe, that heathenism was so near, that the Roman was virtually, and would soon be really, master of the land, or that a Herod occupied the Jewish throne.

Yet there he was; in the pride of his power, and the reckless cruelty of his ever-watchful tyranny. Everywhere was his mark. Temples to the gods and to Cæsar, magnificent, and magnificently adorned, outside Palestine and in its non-Jewish cities; towns rebuilt or built: *Sebaste* for the ancient Samaria, the splendid city and harbour of *Cæsarea* in the west, *Antipatris* (after his father) in the north, *Kypros* and *Phasaelis* (after his mother and brother), and *Agrippeion*; unconquerable fortresses, such as *Essebonitis* and *Machoerus* in Peræa, *Alexandreion*, *Herodeion*, *Hyrkania*, and *Masada* in Judæa - proclaimed his name and sway. But in Jerusalem it seemed as if he had gathered up all his strength. The theatre and amphitheatre spoke of his Grecianism; Antonia was the representative fortress; for his religion he had built

that glorious Temple, and for his residence the noblest of palaces, at the north-western angle of the Upper City, close by where Milo had been in the days of David. It seems almost incredible, that a Herod should have reared the Temple, and yet we can understand his motives. Jewish tradition had it, that a Rabbi (Baba ben Buta) had advised him in this manner to conciliate the people, or else thereby to expiate the slaughter of so many Rabbis. Probably a desire to gain popularity, and supersition, may alike have contributed, as also the wish to gratify his love for splendour and building. At the same time, he may have wished to show himself a better Jew than that rabble of Pharisees and Rabbis, who perpetually would cast it in his teeth, that he was an Idumæan. Whatever his origin, he was a true king of the Jews - as great, nay greater, than Solomon himself. Certainly, neither labour nor money had been spared on the Temple. A thousand vehicles carried up the stone; 10,000 workmen, under the guidance of 1,000 priests, wrought all the costly material gathered into that house, of which Jewish tradition could say, 'He that has not seen the temple of Herod, has never known what beauty is.' And yet Israel despised and abhorred the builder! Nor could his apparent work for the God of Israel have deceived the most credulous. In youth he had browbeaten the venerable Sanhedrin, and threatened the city with slaughter and destruction; again and again had he murdered her venerable sages; he had shed like water the blood of her Asmonean princes, and of every one who dared to be free; had stifled every national aspiration in the groans of the torture, and quenched it in the gore of his victims. Not once, nor twice, but six times did he change the High-Priesthood, to bestow it at last on one who bears no good name in Jewish theology, a foreigner in Judæa, an Alexandrian. And yet the power of that Idumæan was but of yesterday, and of mushroom growth!