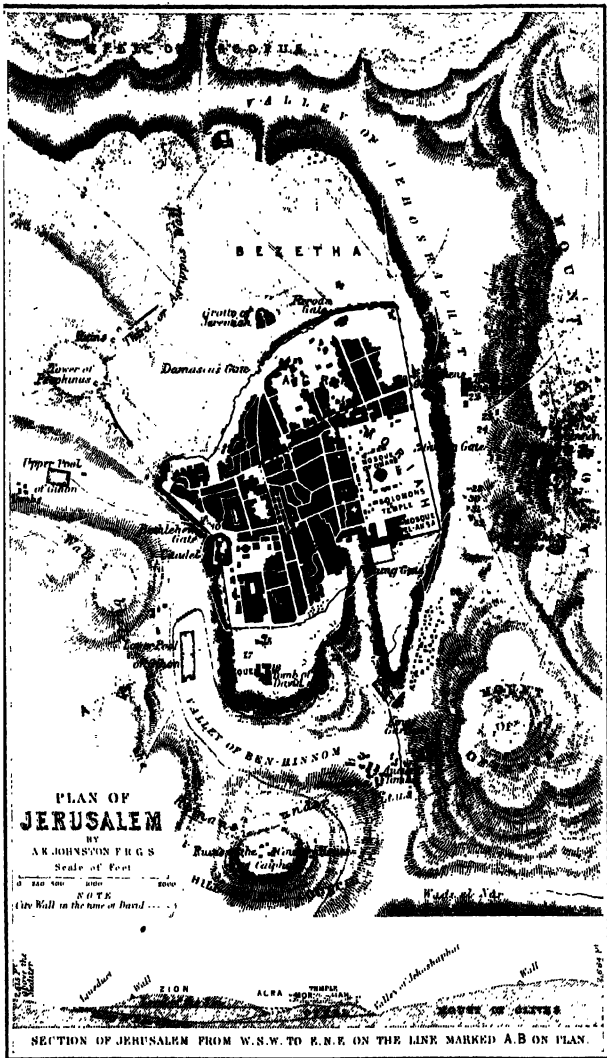


EARLY TRAVELS IN PALESTINE

Edited by Thomas Wright





EARLY TRAVELS
IN
PALESTINE,

COMPRISING THE NARRATIVES OF

ARCULF, WILLIBALD, BERNARD, SÆWULF, SIGURD,
BENJAMIN OF TUDELA, SIR JOHN MAUNDEVILLE,
DE LA BROCQUIÈRE, AND MAUNDRELL.

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

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REFERENCES TO PLAN OF JERUSALEM,

REDUCED FROM A LARGE PLAN, CONSTRUCTED BY SCHULTZ, PRUSSIAN CONSUL
AT JERUSALEM.

1. Chapel of Scourging.
2. Scala Sancta.
3. Pilate's House.
4. Chapel of Crowning with Thorns.
5. Arch of ' *Ecce Homo.*'
6. First place where Simon carried the Cross.
7. Second do. do.
8. Gate of Judgment (*Porta Judiciaria*).
9. House of Urias.
10. Bath of Bathsheba.
11. House of the High Priest Zacharias.
12. „ St. Marcus.
13. „ St. Thomas.
14. „ High Priest Annas.
15. „ „ Caiphas.
16. Room in which the Last Supper was instituted.
17. House of the Virgin Mary.
18. Place where St. Peter wept.
19. House of Sta. Anna.
20. „ the Pharisee Simon.
21. Place where Stephen was stoned.
22. „ Jesus sweated blood.
23. „ the Disciples slept.
24. „ Judas kiss'd Christ.
25. „ Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer.
26. „ „ wept over Jerusalem.
27. „ the Apostles learned the Creed.
28. Judas hanged himself.
29. Tomb of Jehoshaphat.
30. „ Absalom.
31. „ Jacob.
32. „ Zacharias.

INTRODUCTION.

THE attentive reader of history cannot fail to remark how often, in the confusion of the middle ages, the very movements or principles which seem in themselves most barbarous, or are most strongly tinged with the darkest shades of superstition, have been those which, in the sequel, gave the strongest impulse to the advancing spirit of civilization which has at length changed that dark past into this bright present. It is in the contemplation of this oft-recurring fact, that we trace, more distinctly, perhaps, than in any other, the inscrutable but unerring ways of that higher Providence to whose rule all things are subjected. Few of those duties enjoined by the ancient Romish Church were accompanied with, and seemed to lead to, more abuses and scandals than the pilgrimages to the Holy Land, so natural an attraction to every Christian; few were attended with so much bigotry, and blindness, and uncharitableness, or ended in observances and convictions so grossly superstitious and so degrading to the intelligence of mankind. Yet it was this throwing of people upon the wide and distant scene, on which they were forced into continual intercourse, hostile or friendly, according to the circumstances of the moment, with people of different manners, creed, sentiment, and knowledge, that gradually softened down all prejudices, and paved the way for the entire destruction of that system to which it seemed intended to give support. If the seeds of civilization ever existed in the cloister, they were seeds cast upon the barren rock, and it was not until they were transplanted to another and richer soil, that they began to sprout and give promise of fruit.

Even in this point of view the narrative of those early pilgrimages must possess no ordinary degree of interest, and it gives us no little insight into the history of the march of intellectual improvement to accompany these early travellers in

authentic traditions concerning the localities of the more important events of Gospel history.

We have fortunately one document of a very remarkable character, which has preserved to us the local traditions of the Christians of Syria under the Romans. It was first brought to light by the celebrated French antiquary, Pierre Pithou, who printed it, in 1588, from a manuscript in his own library, under the title of "*Itinerarium a Burdigala Hierusalem usque*;" and it was afterwards inserted in the editions of the "*Antonine Itinerary*," by Schott and Wesseling. The author of this Itinerary was a Christian of Bordeaux, who visited the Holy Land in the year 333*, and it was evidently compiled for the use of his countrymen. This visit took place two years before the consecration of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built by the emperor Constantine and his mother Helena. The compiler of this Itinerary, who is the first traveller to the East who has left us an account of his journey, departed from Bordeaux, then one of the chief cities of Gaul, passed by Arles and other towns, and crossed the Alps into Italy, which country he traversed, passing through Turin, Pavia, Milan, Brescia, Verona, &c., to the then magnificent city of Aquileia; thence he crossed the Julian Alps, and passed through Noricum, Pannonia, Illyria, Dacia, and Thrace, to Constantinople, and thence, after crossing the Bosphorus, he continued his route through Asia Minor to Syria. Hitherto the Itinerary is a mere recapitulation of names and distances, but, after his arrival in Syria, he continually interrupts his bare list of names, to mention some holy site, or other object which attracted his attention. On his arrival at Jerusalem, he gives us a long description of that city and its neighbourhood. From Jerusalem he returns to Constantinople, varying a little his route, and thence he retraces his steps as far as Heraclea in Thrace, where he leaves his former road, passing through Macedonia to Thessalonica, and thence to Italy, where he visited Brundisium, Capua, and Rome, and thence returned to Milan.

* This date is fixed by a statement of the writer of the Itinerary:— "*Item ambulavimus Dalmatio et Dalmaticæi Zenophilo cons. iii. Kal. Jun. a Kalcidonia, et reversi sumus ad Constantinopolim vii. Kalend. Jan. consule suprascripto.*" We know from the historians that Flavius Valerius Dalmatius (brother of the emperor Constantine) and Marcus Aurelius Xenophilus were consuls together in 333.

Although this Itinerary has come down to us as a solitary narrative, we learn from the writings of some of the Greek fathers, that pilgrimages to the Holy Land had already, at that period, become so frequent as to lead to many abuses; and the early saints' lives have been the means of preserving to us brief notices of some of the adventures of the pilgrims, which are obscured by the incredible miracles with which those narratives abound. St. Porphyry, a Greek ecclesiastic of the end of the fourth century, after living five years as a hermit in the Thebaid of Egypt, went with his disciple Marcus to Jerusalem, visited the holy places, settled there, and finally became bishop of Gaza. St. Eusebius of Cremona, and his friend St. Jerome, embarked at Porto, in Italy, in June 385, in company with a great number of other pilgrims, and in the midst of tempests passed the Ionian Sea and the Cyclades to Cyprus, where they were received by St. Epiphanius. They went thence to Antioch, where they were welcomed by St. Paulinus, who was bishop of that city, and from thence they proceeded to Jerusalem. After passing some time in the holy city, and visiting the surrounding country, they went to Egypt, to visit the hermits of the Thebaid, and then returning, they took up their abode at Bethlehem, where they founded a monastery. Nearly at the same time, St. Paula, with her daughter, left Rome for Syria, and landed at Sidon, where she visited the tower of Elijah. At Cæsarea she saw the house of the centurion Cornelius, which was changed into a church, and the house of St. Philip, with the chambers of his four daughters. Near Jerusalem she beheld the tomb of Helena, queen of Adiabene. The governor of Palestine, who was acquainted with the family of St. Paula, prepared to receive her in Jerusalem with due honours, but she preferred taking up her abode in a small cell, and she hastened to visit all the holy objects with which she was now surrounded. She went first to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, where she prostrated herself before the true cross, and entered the sepulchre itself, after having kissed the stone which the angels had taken from the entrance. On Mount Sion, she was shown the column to which Christ was bound when scourged, and which then sustained the gallery of a church. She saw also the spot where the Holy Ghost had descended on the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. She thence went to Bethlehem, visiting on the way the sepulchre of

hospital destined for poor pilgrims; he then went into Mesopotamia, and returned by sea to Italy, his native country.

Soon after this period, the circumstances of the pilgrims who arrived in the Holy Land were entirely changed, in consequence of the conquests of the Saracens, who, under Omar, obtained possession of Jerusalem in 637, by a capitulation, however, which allowed them the use of their churches on payment of a tribute, but forbade them to build new ones. This interdiction could not be in itself a great grievance, for the whole of Palestine must have been literally covered with churches when it passed under the Mohammedan yoke. The conquerors soon saw that greater advantages would be reaped by preserving the holy places, and encouraging pilgrimage, than by destroying them; many of them, indeed their own creed taught them, were to be considered as objects of reverence; and thus for two or three centuries the Christians of the west continued to flock to the Holy Sepulchre as numerous as before, subject, perhaps, to not much greater taxation at the holy places than in former times, but exposed on their way to more or less insult and oppression, according to the political or local circumstances of the moment.

Not many years after it had thus fallen under the power of the Arabs, the Holy Land was visited by a French bishop named ARCULF, whose narrative stands at the head of the present volume. The French antiquaries have not been able to discover of what see Arculf was bishop, or when he lived; and all that is known of him is the statement of Adamnan, who wrote down his narrative, that on his return from the east he was carried by contrary winds to the shores of Britain, and that he was received at Iona. We learn from Bede*, that Adamnan visited the court of the Northumbrian king Aldfrid, and that he then presented to the king his book on the Holy Places, which he had taken down from the dictation of bishop Arculf. The visit to king Aldfrid is generally placed in 703, but by an apparent misunderstanding of the words of Bede, and it is probable that it occurred at least as early as 701†. The pilgrimage of Arculf must thus have taken place in the latter part of the seventh century. In relating a miracle concerning the *sudarium* or napkin taken from the head of our Saviour (which has not been

* Bede, Hist. Eccl. v. 15.

† See my *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, Anglo-Saxon period, p. 202.