

An expression in Hosea (xii, 11) seems to be also well explained by referring it to the dolmen altars. "Their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field." The appropriateness of the simile will strike any one who has seen a field of fallen dolmens and compares it with the heaps of stones collected for clearing the land in any part of Palestine. The great number of the altars at one site seems to be indicated clearly.

The deductions which it seems legitimate to draw from the above passages appear to be.

1st. That Dolmen altars, menhirs, both idolatrous and sepulchral, stone circles and cairns of stone, monumental and sepulchral, are all mentioned in the Old Testament, and probably resembled those which occur in Galilee and beyond Jordan. These monuments form a connecting link between those found in Europe and those of Eastern Asia. They are also similar to monuments discovered by Professor Palmer in the Sinaitic peninsula, and by Palgrave in Arabia, notably with the great cromlech of Darim in the Nejed, the pillar-stones of which are 15 feet high.

2nd. No difference appears to have existed between the monuments used by the Canaanites and those erected by the early patriarchs, by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel. The consecration to a Canaanite deity, and the cruel and obscene character of the worship connected with the Canaanite shrines, was the cause of the destruction of the altars found existing by the Israelites, which were superseded by monuments of very similar character, dedicated on appointed sites to Jehovah; and these were in turn superseded by the Temple and Altar of Jerusalem, before the erection of which the worship in high places, such as Gilgal, Nöb, Gibeon, Bethel, Shiloh, Shechem, and Carmel was lawful, according to the Mishna.

3rd. Some of the monuments thus noticed in the Old Testament may perhaps be recognised as existing at the present time, but in other cases they have entirely disappeared, as notably at Gilgal and Bethel.

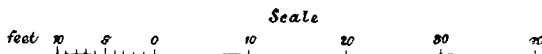
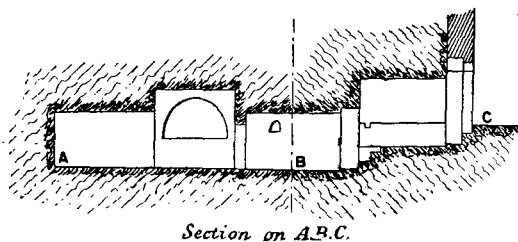
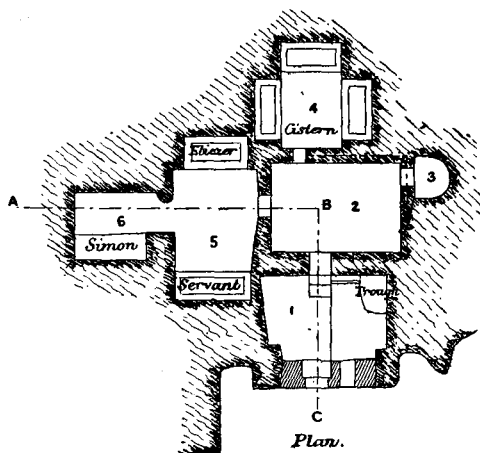
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JEWISH TRADITIONS IN JERUSALEM.

THE ancient nomenclature of Jerusalem, according to the traditions of the Jewish population, which has never been entirely banished from the Holy City, presents many points of great interest. The most important of these—the identification of the hillock in which is the so-called grotto of Jeremiah (a name only as old as the 15th century), with the Beth-has-Sekilah, or "place of stoning," has already been published in "Tent Work in Palestine," and it appears to be a very widely recognised tradition among the German and Mughrabi Jews alike.

On the 21st March, with Lieutenant Mantell, R.E., I visited the tradi-

tional tomb of Simon the Just, of which we have now made a plan. This tomb is in Wâdy el Jôz, east of the Nablus road. It is mentioned in Finn's "Byeways," and the annual visit paid to it by the Jerusalem Jews is there noticed. "Simon the high priest, the son of Onias (Eccles. i, 1), was one of the famous successors of Ezra, and chief of the 'Great Sanhedrin.'" He is said to have gone to Antipatris to meet Alexander the Great (Tal. Bab. Yoma, 69a), and was high priest for forty years. The beautiful story of



TOMB OF SIMON THE JUST.

his last entrance into the Holy of Holies, when the white apparition failed to meet him as usual, is well known. He ranks among the most venerated of Jewish worthies. Curiously enough, Josephus gives the name of Jaddua instead of Simon, as that of the high priest at the time of Alexander's visit to Jerusalem.

The tomb is rock-cut, but a wall has been built in modern times across

the entrance to the porch, and an iron door put up, with a small barred window on one side. This door is kept locked, and the key was brought us by a Spanish Jew through the kindness of Dr. Chaplin.

The façade is carefully white-washed ; within is the antechamber, $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the present surface of the outer ground. A small cistern is cut in the rock bench to the right, and a channel leads thence, round the walls of the next inmost chamber (No. 2), to a hole in the wall communicating with another chamber (No. 4), which was originally a tomb, with three loculi under arcosolia, but is now used as a cistern with a depth of some 3 feet of water. There is no spring, but the surface-water from the rocks is collected in this manner. The second chamber (No. 2) has a single grave on the east (No. 3), and an entrance on the west to the fourth chamber (No. 5) : the level is $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the antechamber. The fourth chamber has two loculi, that on the north being the supposed tomb of Eliezer, son of Simon the Just, that on the south the grave of his servant. A small wooden table stood in this chamber. On the west a door leads to the furthest chamber (No. 6), where is the grave of Simon himself on the south side. It is apparently only a bench built up of small rough stones ; but these may cover a real rock-cut sarcophagus. A large vessel of oil was placed on it, in which floated many lighted wicks. I noticed a great many small stones piled in the loculus of Eliezer, probably memorials of visits to the shrine, like the *Meshâhed* of the Moslem peasantry.

The Jews next took us some 200 yards eastwards to a quarry facing northwards. This they assured us was the school and synagogue where Simon the Just used to teach and pray. The tradition has, however, probably little or no value.

The tradition of Simon's tomb is at least three and a-half centuries old, but there is, so far as I know, no mention of it in mediæval Jewish travels before the year 1537 A.D., when it is noticed in the *Zichus ha Aboth*.

The monument of Helena, Queen of Adiabene, commonly called the "Tombs of the Kings," is known to the Jews as *Kalba Shebua*,* "the gorged dog." The tradition is that a very rich man lived here, who used to feed all the dogs in Jerusalem. This worthy is mentioned in the *Talmud* (*Tal. Bab. Gittin, 56a*), as having wished to provide Jerusalem with wine, vinegar, and oil during the last siege (*Neubauer's Geog. Tal., p. 137*). I believe that M. de Saulcy mentions this tradition, which I have heard independently from a Spanish Jew. De Saulcy also discovered the Sarcophagus of the "Princess Sara," mentioned by M. Clermont Ganneau as possibly representing that of Queen Helena ; and remains of the stelæ, which, according to Pausanias, stood above Helena's tomb, have been excavated some years since at this same site.

The well known "Tomb of the Judges" is called by the Jews "Tomb of the Seventy," who appear to have been members of the Great Sanhedrin. The tomb is generally supposed to belong to the Hasmonean period,

* *Kalba Shebua* seems to have been a mythical character. R. Akiba, who died 135 A.D., is said to have married his daughter (*Tal. Jer Ketuboth, 63a*).

which would perhaps allow of its having been the sepulchre of members of the Sanhedrin. The Judges mentioned in the Bible were buried each in the territory of his own tribe. The tradition connecting this tomb with the Sanhedrin, is mentioned as early as 1537 A.D.

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JEWISH SUPERSTITIONS.

It is well known that superstitions not based on the law of Moses are very firmly credited by the more ignorant of the Polish and other Ashkenazi Jews. Some of these, which are common among the Jerusalem Jews, may be noted, including the nail-parings, the blessing of the moon, the subterranean journey to the valley of Jehoshaphat, the Hand of Might, the Tashlich, etc. A volume of very curious information might be composed on Syrian superstitions, and I hope to collect some scattered notes on the subject, and to indicate the construction with older sources of superstition, when circumstances permit.

The English superstitions regarding the days on which it is lucky or unlucky to pare one's nails seem to be of Jewish origin. The very order in which the nails should be cut is detailed in the Cabbala, and the Friday is prescribed, but Thursday forbidden in order that the nails themselves may not break the Sabbath law by beginning to grow on the Sabbath. The parings are to be burnt or concealed, not thrown on the ground, as, if they chanced to be stepped over by a woman, it might bring her mischance. The Jewesses are careful to hide the nail-parings in cracks of the house walls, but it is said that they sometimes put them into puddings intended to be eaten by their husbands, in order to increase the affection of the latter. They put hair from their heads into puddings for the same reason. The Talmud notices the harm which may be done by leaving nail-parings on the ground (*Tal. Bab. Moed Katan, 18a*).

The blessing of the moon is a curious custom very much reminding the observer of moon worship. According to the Cabbala, it is only to take place when the moon is at least seven days old, and must be observed once a month in the open air. The worshipper about to sanctify the new moon is to stand, with one foot on the other, to give one glance at the moon, and then to bless in the name of the Holy One, of His Shekinah, and of the Hidden One (a Cabbalistic Trinity). The form of prayer commences "Blessed be thy Former, blessed be thy Maker, blessed be thy Possessor, blessed be thy Creator." After meditation the worshipper is to skip three times, pronouncing the words "Fear and dread shall fall upon them, by the greatness of thy arm they shall be as still as a stone," repeated thrice, and thrice backwards; next he pronounces loudly, "David, the King of Israel, liveth and existeth," and then salutes his neighbour.