

- Ephraim*. This name (52) may easily have taken the place of *Ephrath*, by the final ת being altered (as I said) into יב.
2. *The Garrison* (1883, p. 101). Samson's last exploit was breaking Philistine pillars. But that Jonathan's first had to do with pillars erected by the Philistines is an idle fancy on the part of Captain Conder. If he is satisfied about the rocking of the *pillar*, what is meant by "Both of them *discovered themselves unto the 'pillar'* (!) of the Philistines?" (1 Sam. xiv, 11.) Should the grammar allow the words in xiv, 15, to be rendered "all the people of the *pillar*," the lexicon certainly will not, since the word *מִצְבָּ*, used seven times in this episode, never means a "pillar." It is an entire mistake to say "it is rendered 'pillar' in other passages of the Old Testament."
 3. *Gath* (1880, p. 216). Captain Conder made a strange mistake when he said that I had "fallen into the same error with Mr. Saunders in supposing the *Gh* or *Ghein* to represent the Hebrew Gimel." Apparently he overlooked the small but important word *if* at the beginning of the sentence.

W. F. B.

THE TOMB OF DAVID IN THE CITY OF DAVID.

If Captain Conder be right (N.B., I do not for a moment believe that he is) in his identification of the Tomb of Nicodemus (so called) with "the monuments of the Kings of Judah (1883, p. 73), including the Tombs of David and Solomon," then this is certainly the grandest discovery yet made at Jerusalem.

Mr. Fergusson in 1878, having four ill-sorted kings to dispose of, made them up into one lot and said ("Temples," p. 56), "These four may have been buried in those sepulchres always known to have existed under the western boundary of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre." Captain Conder, always striking, but sometimes missing the mark, seems to have seized on these tombs for a nobler object, and says in the "Handbook" (p. 342), "It seems quite possible that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre preserves the monument of the nine chief kings of Jerusalem."

This "possible" of 1879, developed into "hope to show" in 1882 (*Quarterly Statement*, 157), and has now in 1883 culminated, "after ten years of study," in a "fact" (!!). Surely error grows apace.

Since 1877 I have believed that the Tomb of David was on Ophel (so called), and as the newly discovered aqueduct clears up the Siloam mystery, I do not hesitate (after groping awhile in the dark) to assert that the tomb is on that hill somewhere between Siloam and the Virgin's Fountain. Since 1878 it has been patent to me that the City of David was solely and

entirely on Ophel so called. Accordingly, I now invite, challenge, and defy anybody, from the river to the ends of the earth, to upset this conclusion.

Yet in self-defence I must demolish Captain Conder's "fact," by showing—

- (1) That his process of reasoning is defective, even *if* the evidence he produces be trustworthy; and
- (2) That this evidence is either not trustworthy, since it is contradictory, or else it is obviously untrue, since it contradicts the Bible.

Captain Conder's case seems to be this :—

1. David was buried in the City of David.
2. The tombs named are the only ancient Jewish sepulchres visible in Jerusalem.
3. These tombs have some peculiarities, and so had the Sepulchre of David, according to Josephus.
4. Therefore it is a *fact* that these sepulchres represent the Tomb of David.

A parallel case will show how inconclusive is an argument like this. For instance :—

1. Goliath was killed by a stone in the Valley of Elah.
2. The only stone now visible to me was once in Wâdy es Sunt.
3. This stone has peculiarities: *e.g.*, it is smooth and was taken to Jerusalem; the stone (1 Sam. xvii) was also smooth, and may have been taken to Jerusalem while still embedded in Goliath's head.
4. Therefore it is a "fact" that the stone before me killed Goliath.

Unfortunately for the interest of my museum the same might be said of many a stone gathered out of the brook, and similarly many a tomb discovered in Jerusalem might be declared to be the Tomb of David. This kind of argument is of no value whatever.

Next as to the character of the evidence. In the "Handbook" (p. 341) it is said, "From the Talmud we learn that all tombs were outside Jerusalem, except those of the family of David, and that of the prophetess Huldah." From this it might seem that Captain Conder was supported by the authority of the Talmud (whatever that may be) in saying (1880, p. 102), "It (*i.e.*, the Tomb of Nicodemus) is the only undoubted Jewish tomb in Jerusalem." It is added, however (p. 341 *supra*), "Although it was not considered certain whether some 'tomb of the depth' or hidden sepulchre might not exist unknown beneath the surface" (Parah. iii, 2). Captain Conder has further given (1877, p. 134) several passages from the Mishna to the effect that "sepulchres dating from an early period existed within the walls of Jerusalem." One passage is very curious, *viz.*, "All the sepulchres within Jerusalem were transferred outside the walls except those of the family of David and of the prophetess Huldah." This is the passage of the Talmud referred to above, the truth of which seems to depend on some *sepulchres* (!) having been transferred to outside the walls. Josiah transferred ashes from Jerusalem to Bethel; we moved bones from

Bethel to Sidon ; but who, except an American, would transfer a sepulchre ? If the Talmud proves anything, it is that there were other tombs in Jerusalem besides the royal sepulchres. But, if there were others, why must the only one we can now see be of necessity the Tomb of David ?”

Instead of delaying over the peculiarities to which I have already objected (1880, p. 167), it will suffice to show that the tomb claimed as that of David cannot really be such, since it is at least half-a-mile out of its proper place, though it must be admitted that the power which could transfer sepulchres outside the walls could undoubtedly alter their position within.

David was buried in the City of David. Captain Conder claims that the part near the Holy Sepulchre was the City of David because this part, “according to the majority of authorities, is the site of the Akra of Josephus, and Akra, according to LXX, was Millo, and Millo was in the City of David.” I readily admit that the Akra of Josephus was on the site of the City of David. But have we really come to this, that the site of Akra is to be settled, not by argument, but by the votes of a majority ? Surely not.

Josephus identifies his Akra with the Akra of Maccabees, which was the City of David (1 Macc. i, 33). The question then is, where does Josephus put Akra ? I answer, “Solely and entirely on Ophel so called, just where the biblical evidence puts the City of David.”

The evidence that Josephus places Akra, or the Lower City, on A, the hill south of the Temple, and not near B, the Holy Sepulchre, is as follows:—

1. Jerusalem stood on two hills, those of the Upper City and Akra, and was defended where necessary by *three* walls. Akra at B would be defended by *two* only, while Jerusalem would in this case stand on *three* hills, viz., the Upper Hill, A, and B.
2. These two hills had deep valleys on the outside. Akra at B would have no deep valley on the outside.
3. Josephus repeatedly gives the title of Akra, or the Lower City, to A, but never to B, which he describes as “the suburbs.”
4. In 15 “Ant.,” xi, 5, the first-named gate was one near Wilson’s Arch; the one leading to the other city, by a great number of steps into the valley, &c., was one at Robinson’s Arch, while the deep valley along the entire south quarter of the city is the valley south of the Upper City. If it is urged that the gates are here named in *strict local order*, then there is the following crushing reply.
5. In 4 “Wars,” ix, 12, much more must there be local order in the description of the four towers. One of these was at the north-east corner of the temple, another above the Xystus ; the “third” at another corner over against *the Lower City*. This must obviously be the corner near Robinson’s Arch, which was thus over against Akra. To the advocates of “local order” it is left to escape from their own dilemma.
6. In 5 “Wars,” iv, 1, the *third* hill (*i.e.*, the Temple) was parted by a

broad valley from *the upper city*, and not from Acra. This valley was filled up in the line of Wilson's Arch in order to join the *Upper City* to the Temple.

7. Acra is said to be ἀμφίκυρος. This word means *gibbous*, or *with sloping sides*, but not "in the form of a *crescent*," as Captain Conder describes B.

The placing of Acra of Josephus anywhere else than south of the Temple is one of the most remarkable errors to be found in literature.

It has arisen apparently from two *false* statements on his part: (1) that the Acra was originally higher than the Temple. To suit this notion he deliberately altered the *went up* in 1 Macc. vii, 33 into *came down* (!) in "Ant.," 12, x, 5; and (2) that the Acra was levelled by Simon. This exploit is not so much as mentioned in 1 Macc., and is indeed in direct opposition to two passages in that book (xiv, 37; xv, 28, 33-35).

Thus there is not a spark of evidence that Josephus puts Acra at B; all the evidence in the "Wars" puts it at A. Captain Conder has yet to show that the City of David was near the Holy Sepulchre.

Suppose, however, that the City of David was at B. Captain Conder also says the Upper City formed part of the City of David, because Josephus in his "Wars" says David named the Upper City φρούριον. (Here Josephus makes another *wrong* statement, which he afterwards honestly corrects in 7 "Ant.," iii, 1, where he names the citadel of the Jebusites ἄκρα). And further, Captain Conder admits that "the sepulchres of David" (Neh. iii, 16) were on Ophel, but says that we are not to understand that David was buried in this part, but that these were in "the field of the burial of the kings" where Uzziah was buried. It has, however, been twice pointed out (1881, pp. 95, 327) that the Bible states that Uzziah was buried "in the City of David."

Therefore, while Captain Conder is both forced to allow, as the consequence of his own statements, that the City of David took in the three parts, A, B, and the Upper City, and while he maintains that the field of the burial of the kings was in A—*i.e.*, that there were old Jewish tombs in A—he still most inconsistently and strangely (without excavating all over *the three*, or even taking a peep at the tombs in A, whose former existence has been acknowledged) propounds as a *fact* the impossible theory that the Tomb of Nicodemus is the Tomb of David.

Webster states that some *facts* are *false*. Surely this must be one.

The evidence that Zion, the City of David, was solely and entirely on Ophel (so called) seems to me simply irresistible.

In Nehemiah we have (1) David's sepulchres; (2) David's house, and (3, 4) the stairs of the City of David (iii, 15; xii, 37) all placed on Ophel. Those who reject this position either ignore iii, 16, or contradict themselves.

In 2 Chronicles xxxiii, 14, we have (5) the City of David placed on Ophel, because a wall on the west side of Gihon (*i.e.*, Virgin's Fountain) in the valley (*nachal*, *i.e.*, the Kidron ravine) is described as outside the City of David. This would be absurd if the latter did not stand on Ophel.

In 2 Chronicles xxxii, 30, the water from Gihon being carried through the hill to Ain Silwân, is said to be brought straight down to the west side of the City of David; this (6) places the latter on Ophel. The words, however, may perhaps admit of being translated *westwards* to the City of David, as if the Upper City were intended. Since, however, the Valley of Hinnom was on the south side of the Jebusite (*i.e.*, of the Castle of Zion), and this valley has been proved to be that reaching from the Jaffa Gate by Robinson's Arch to Siloam, it is quite impossible for the Upper City to have been the *Castle* or City of David, as the Valley of Hinnom would thus be on its *north* and not on its south side (1882, p. 55).

In Psalm xlvi, 2, as expounded by the Rabbis (whom Lightfoot curiously misunderstands), *Mount Zion* (*i.e.*, the Temple, as in 1 Macc.) is described as on the *north* side of the city of the great king, *i.e.*, the City of David. This passage (7) places it on Ophel. A single direct statement in the Bible would be quite enough to settle the position of the City of David. We have, however, not merely *one* but *seven*, all consistent with one another, and *five* of them applicable only to a position on Ophel so called. Further, 1 Macc. distinctly means by Mount Zion the Temple on the eastern hill, and places Acra, or the City of David, near it, but at a lower elevation, which suits Ophel (so called) exactly; and here alone, as we see, Josephus puts his Acra.

Unfortunately this inaccurate writer has been too implicitly trusted, and due regard has not been paid to one important point, *viz.*, that while in the historical parts of the Bible Zion means only the City of David, it may also mean in other parts either the Temple (*i.e.*, the Mount of Zion of 1 Macc.) or even Jerusalem in general. In deference to Josephus, the City of David has by some been taken to mean Jerusalem as a whole; while the Bible is most precise in its use of these terms, showing thereby that they are not convertible. For instance, more than twenty times it is said of one or another king that he *reigned in Jerusalem*, but was *buried in the City of David*.

Controversy about the position of this famous spot is now as good as dead. The site on Ophel will of course by some be contradicted, but he must be rash indeed who ventures to give his reasons for rejecting it.

As it has long been admitted that four statements in Nehemiah certainly seem to place the City of David on Ophel, no apology appears to be needed for maintaining with the utmost possible confidence that the correct site is that which the Bible itself points out.

Two deeply interesting questions remain—(1) Why was the castle of Zion built on the lowest hill at Jerusalem? and (2) In what precise spot are we to excavate in search of the Sepulchres of David?

W. F. BIRCH.