

## **A Description of some Parts of ancient Jerusalem**

This chapter will contain some descriptions of places given by Sister Emmerich on various occasions. They will be followed by a description of the tomb and garden of Joseph of Arimathea, that so we may have no need to interrupt the account of the burial of our Lord.



The first gate which stood on the eastern side of Jerusalem, to the south of the south-east angle of the Temple, was the one leading to the suburb of Ophel. The gate of the sheep was to the north of the north-east angle of the Temple. Between these two gates there was a third, leading to some streets situated to the east of the Temple, and inhabited for the most part by stonemasons and other workmen. The houses in these streets were supported by the foundations of the Temple; and almost all belonged to Nicodemus, who had caused them to be built, and who employed nearly all the workmen living there. Nicodemus had not long before built a beautiful gate as an entrance to these streets, called the Gate of Moriah. It was but just finished, and through it Jesus had entered the town on Palm Sunday. Thus he entered by the new gate of Nicodemus, through which no one had yet passed, and was buried in the new monument of Joseph of Arimathea, in which no one had yet been laid.

This gate was afterwards walled up, and there was a tradition that the Christians were once again to enter the town through it. Even in the present day, a walled-up gate, called by the Turks the Golden Gate, stands on this spot. The road leading to the west from the gate of the sheep passed almost exactly between the north-western side of Mount Sion and Calvary. From this gate to Golgotha the distance was about two miles and a quarter; and from Pilate's palace to Golgotha about two miles.

The fortress Antonia was situated to the north-west of the mountain of the Temple, on a detached rock. A person going towards the west, on leaving Pilate's palace, would have had this fortress to his left. On one of its walls there was a platform commanding the forum, and from which Pilate was

accustomed to make proclamations to the people: he did this, for instance, when he promulgated new laws.

When our Divine Lord was carrying his Cross, in the interior of the town, Mount Calvary was frequently on his right hand. This road, which partly ran in a south-westerly direction, led to a gate made in an inner wall of the town, towards Sion. Beyond this wall, to the left, there was a sort of suburb, containing more gardens than houses; and towards the outer wall of the city stood some magnificent sepulchres with stone entrances. On this side was a house belonging to Lazarus, with beautiful gardens, extending towards that part where the outer western wall of Jerusalem turned to the south. I believe that a little private door, made in the city wall, and through which Jesus and his disciples often passed by permission of Lazarus, led to these gardens. The gate standing at the north-western angle of the town led to Bethsur, which was situated more towards the north than Emmaus and Joppa. The western part of Jerusalem was lower than any other: the land on which it was built first sloped in the direction of the surrounding wall, and then rose again when close to it; and on this declivity there stood gardens and vineyards, behind which wound a wide road, with paths leading to the walls and towers. On the other side, without the wall, the land descended towards the valley, so that the walls surrounding the lower part of the town looked as if built on a raised terrace.

There are gardens and vineyards even in the present day on the outer hill. When Jesus arrived at the end of the Way of the Cross, he had on his left hand that part of the town where there were so many gardens; and it was from thence that Simon of Cyrene was coming when he met the procession. The gate by which Jesus left the town was not entirely facing the west, but rather the south-west. The city wall on the left-hand side, after passing through the gate, ran somewhat in a southerly direction, then turned towards the west, and then again to the south, round Mount Sion. On this side there stood a large tower, like a fortress. The gate by which Jesus left the town was at no great distance from another gate more towards the south, leading down to the valley, and where a road, turning to the left in the direction of Bethlehem, commenced. The road turned to the north towards Mount Calvary shortly after that gate by which Jesus left Jerusalem when bearing his Cross. Mount Calvary was very steep on its eastern side, facing the town, and a gradual descent on the western; and on this side, from which the road to Emmaus was to be seen, there was a field, in which I saw Luke gather several plants when he and Cleophas were going to Emmaus, and met Jesus on the way. Near the walls, to the east and south of Calvary, there

were also gardens, sepulchres, and vineyards. The Cross was buried on the north-east side, at the foot of Mount Calvary.

The garden of Joseph of Arimathea was situated near the gate of Bethlehem, at about a seven minutes' walk from Calvary: it was a very fine garden, with tall trees, banks, and thickets in it, which gave much shade, and was situated on a rising ground extending to the walls of the city. A person coming from the northern side of the valley, and entering the garden, had on his left hand a slight ascent extending as far as the city wall; and on his right, We must here remark that, in the four years during which Sister Emmerich had her visions, she described everything that had happened to the holy places from the earliest times down to our own. More than once she beheld them profaned and laid waste, but always venerated, either publicly or privately. She saw many stones and pieces of rock, which had been silent witnesses of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, placed by St. Helena in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre upon occasion of the foundation of that sacred building. When Sister Emmerich visited it in spirit she was accustomed to venerate the spots where the Cross had stood and the Holy Sepulchre been situated. It must be observed, however, that she used sometimes to see a greater distance between the actual position of the Tomb and the spot where the Cross stood than there is between the chapels which bear their names in the church at Jerusalem. at the end of the garden, a detached rock, where the cave of the sepulchre was situated. The grotto in which it was made looked to the east; and on the south-western and north-western sides of the same rock were two other smaller sepulchres, which were also new, and with depressed fronts. A pathway, beginning on the western side of this rock, ran all round it.

The ground in front of the sepulchre was higher than that of the entrance, and a person wishing to enter the cavern had to descend several steps. The cave was sufficiently large for four men to be able to stand close up to the wall on either side without impeding the movements of the bearers of the body. Opposite the door was a cavity in the rock, in which the tomb was made; it was about two feet above the level of the ground, and fastened to the rock by one side only, like an altar: two persons could stand, one at the head and one at the foot; and there was a place also for a third in front, even if the door of the cavity was closed.

This door was made of some metal, perhaps of brass, and had two folding doors. These doors could be closed by a stone being rolled against them; and

the stone used for this purpose was kept outside the cavern. Immediately after our Lord was placed in the sepulchre it was rolled in front of the door. It was very large, and could not be removed without the united effort of several men. Opposite the entrance of the cavern there stood a stone bench, and by mounting on this a person could climb on to the rock, which was covered with grass, and from whence the city walls, the highest parts of Mount Sion, and some towers could be seen, as well as the gate of Bethlehem and the fountain of Gihon. The rock inside was of a white colour, intersected with red and blue veins.