

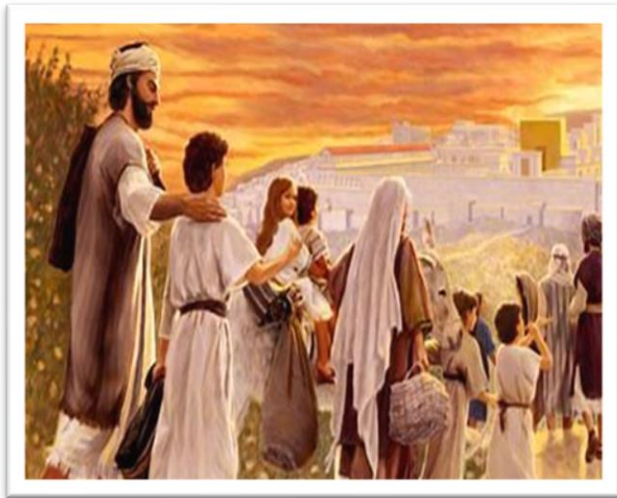
## The Entrance into Jerusalem

I saw the caravan that conducted Mary approaching Jerusalem from the north, and winding toward the east around the outlying gardens and palaces of the city. They crossed the valley of Josaphat and, leaving the road to Bethania on the left, entered the city by the sheep gate leading to the cattle market. There was a pool here in which the sheep were washed. Thence their way turned to the

right and ran between walls to another section of the city. Then they followed a long road through a valley, and at last reached the neighborhood of the fish market at the west side of the city. Here stood the house at which Zachary, when engaged in the service of the Temple, always put up. Out of this inn came men, women, and children with garlands to meet the caravan and to conduct them in ceremony to the house, about a quarter of an hour's distance, at which they were to stop. Zachary was not present, but I saw a very old man there, his father's brother I think; and among those that came out to welcome Mary, were relatives with their children from the country around Hebron and Bethlehem. There was a fine feast prepared for them in the house at which they stopped. The child Mary wore the second festival suit with the little blue mantle.

Zachary called here for them, in order to take them to the feast inn that he had hired for them. This was an inn which could be hired on festival occasions like the present. There were four such inns on the northeast side of the mountain on which stood the Temple. That hired by Zachary was very large. Four halls surrounded a large court, along whose walls were sleeping places and long, low tables. A spacious saloon and a kitchen were also prepared for the guests. On two sides of this feast inn, dwelt some of the servants of the Temple, whose duty it was to see to the animals intended for sacrifice. The court wherein was placed the herd that Joachim had brought as an offering, lay hard by.

A procession was formed when Zachary was about to lead the travelers into the inn hired for the feast. He himself walked first with Joachim and Anne; then came Mary surrounded by four little girls in white, and



followed by the other children and relatives. Their way led to Herod's palace and passed that of the Roman governor, leaving the citadel of Antonia behind; at last they reached a high wall, up which there was a flight of more than fifteen steps. Mary, to the astonishment of all, mounted them without assistance. Her friends wanted to help her, but she refused. Upon their entrance into the inn, their feet were washed. Then they were shown into a large hall in the center of which a lamp was suspended from the ceiling over a large, metal basin of water.

Here they washed their face and hands.

Joachim and Anne then went up with Mary to the dwelling of some of the priests. Here, likewise urged by an interior spirit, the child hurried to mount the steps. The two priests cordially received them into the house. Both had been present at Mary's examination in Nazareth. They called one of the women belonging to the Temple, where she executed all kinds of works common to females, and educated little girls. Her abode was at some distance from the Temple, among the added rooms forming the sleeping apartments of the Temple virgins. Out of these rooms, one could—unseen—look down into the sanctuary. The widow was so enveloped in her mantle that one could see only a little of her face. The priests and the parents delivered the child Mary over to her as her future pupil. She received her gravely, but cordially, while the child was all submission and reverence. She (the widow) accompanied the party to the feast inn, and received a package as the child's dowry.

The following day was taken up with preparations for Joachim's sacrifice and for Mary's entrance into the Temple.

Joachim went early with his offering of cattle to the Temple, in front of which the animals for the sacrifice were selected. Those not chosen were at once led back to the cattle market. Joachim had to lay his hand upon the head of each animal before it was slaughtered and he afterward received some of the flesh and blood of each. There were in this place many pillars, tables, and vessels, where the sacrifices were cut up, divided, and arranged. The scum of the blood was put aside; the fat, the spleen, and the liver separated, and all parts were salted.

The entrails of the lambs were cleaned, filled with something, and again restored to the animal so that it looked like a whole lamb. The feet were bound crosswise. A great portion of the meat was taken to a court in which were some of the Temple virgins. They seemed to have something to do connected with it; perhaps they had to prepare it either for themselves or for the priests. All was carried on with indescribable order. The priests and Levites came and went, two and two;

and during the difficult and multifarious work, all progressed as if by line and level. The pieces prepared for sacrifice lay over till the next day.

In the inn was held a feast, and there was also a repast, at which about one hundred people assisted along with the children, among them twenty-four girls of different ages. Among others, I saw Seraphia, who was called Veronica after the death of Jesus. She was already well-grown, probably from ten to twelve years old. They prepared garlands and wreaths for Mary and her companions, and ornamented for them seven scepter-shaped lamps on whose summit burned a flame. During the feast many priests and Levites went in and out of the inn, taking part also in the repast. When they expressed surprise at the greatness of Joachim's offering, he bade them recall the ignominy he had endured at the Temple when his former offerings were rejected, and the great mercy of God who had heard his supplications, and he asked them whether he should not now express his gratitude according to the extent of his power. I saw the child Mary and the other girls taking a walk in the neighborhood of the house.