

suppose that this direction, like many other matters contained in the Law, embodied and sanctioned an already well-known and universal practice. Very likely it arose from anxiety lest any blood appearing upon the ground might by any possibility be construed to represent some act of violence, and thus, in the language of Scripture, "cause fury to come up to take vengeance." This, in a land where the law of blood-revenge causing endless sanguinary family feuds is so stringent, may well be no imaginary fear. In any case, it is deeply interesting to mark its observance at the present day. It would seem to be referred to in the strong figurative language of several passages, notably that where Job in the bitterness of his soul cries (Job xvi, 18),

"Earth, cover not thou my blood."

A very striking Scripture in connection with this Eastern usage is that in Ezekiel, where God fortells the judgments coming upon Jerusalem at the hands of the Chaldeans. These judgments are declared to be a retribution for the reckless violence and cruelty that had openly stalked through her streets. "For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the bare rock; she hath not poured it upon the ground to cover it with dust. That it may cause fury to come up to take vengeance, I have set her blood upon the bare rock, that it should not be covered" (Ezekiel xxiv, 7, 8). There is here a force of meaning that might at first sight be overlooked. Jerusalem, as I shall have occasion elsewhere to explain at length, is essentially a rock city. The rock crops up to the surface in every part of it. In ancient times, before the rugged slopes and precipices of limestone and indurated chalk were choked up and covered over, as they are now, by mountains of *débris*, it appeared, as at the fortress of Jebus, with its walls resting on rock scarps in some places fifty feet high. Hence one of its proud titles was "The Tableland Rock."

CITY OF DAVID.

PLYMOUTH, March 24th, 1881.

The Editor, "Quarterly Statement" of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

SIR,—Will you allow me to point out in reference to the question whether the "City of David" was on Ophel, as contended by the Rev. W. F. Birch; that on page 229 of the number for October 1880, Lieutenant Conder maintains, that "these royal sepulchres on Ophel are identical with the "field of burial of the kings" (2 Chron. xxvi, 23), where Uzziah was buried," and are a "*place distinct from the Royal Cemetery in the City of David.*"

Now if the two passages in which account is given of the burial of Uzziah, be compared together, it will be seen that the place where Uzziah was interred, was *in the City of David*. They are as follow:—

2 Kings xv, 7.

"So Azariah (Uzziah) slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers *in the City of David*: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead."

2 Chron. xxvi, 23.

"So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which *belonged to the Kings*; for they said, he is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead."

Two other passages (one of which shows the distinctness of the two places of sepulture) confirm the view that *both* were "*in the City of David.*" They are—

2 *Kings* xvi, 20.

"And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers *in the City of David*: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead."

2 *Chron.* xxviii, 27.

"And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, *even* in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the Kings of Israel; and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead."

In this latter passage the "sepulchres of the Kings of Israel" are evidently equivalent to the "sepulchres of David," whose existence on *Ophel* Mr. Conder says on same page (229, lines 6 and 7), cannot be denied.

It *follows* therefore, I venture to think, that the "City of David" wherein these kings were buried, must have been on *Ophel*.

Yours truly,

H. B. S. W.
