

The Prince of the House
of David; *or*, Three
Years in the
Holy City

BY

The Rev. Prof. J. H. Ingraham



Revised and Corrected by the Author



NEW YORK
GROSSET & DUNLAP
PUBLISHERS

PREFACE.

THE Letters comprising the present volume were written for the purpose of presenting, perhaps, in a new aspect, and from a new point of view, the advent of the Son of Mary, Christ the Lord, among the people of Judea. It was the editor's hope, in writing them, to tempt the daughters of Israel to read what he wrote, and receive and be convinced by the arguments and proofs of the divinity of Christ as here presented. For the Israelite as well as the Gentile believer this volume appears; and if it may be the means of convincing one son or daughter of Abraham to accept Jesus as Messiah, or convince the infidel Gentile that He is the very Son of the God and Creator of the world, he will have received his reward for the midnight hours, stolen from parochial labors, which he has devoted to this work.

All the scenes of the life of Jesus during the last four years of his stay on earth, as recorded in the Gospel, are here narrated as if by an eye-witness of them.

Adina, the writer, a Jewess, is assumed to

have been a resident of Jerusalem during the last four years of our Saviour's life; and to have written to Alexandria, to her father, numerous letters, describing all events of interest, and especially giving a minute narrative of the wonderful events of the life of Christ, whom she daily saw.

With sacred awe and deep reverence, as conscious of treading on "holy ground," the writer has unfolded, with the four Gospels as his guide, the successive incidents of their marvelous History, such as no four years, before or since, have paralleled.

Jesus was man, as well as God! In this book He is seen, conversed with, eaten with, as a man!

Some of the scenes present Him (as evidently He did pass them) in the hours of domestic intercourse and friendly companionship.

There can be no charge of irreverence where none is intended, and where the writer has trod "with his shoes off his feet," and with the most cautious steps.

The subject is one of infinite delicacy, and the writer believes and trusts that while he has sought to present (in order to attain the end he seeks), the man Christ Jesus, he has not forgotten the "Godhead veiled in the flesh."

J. H. I.

INTRODUCTION.

ADINA, the writer of the following letters, was the only child of Manasseh Benjamin, who, though an Israelite of the tribe of Judah, was a native of the Græco-Romano city of Alexandria. His ancestor was the learned David Esdras Manasseh, one of the Septuaginta (or LXX) appointed by Ptolemy Philadelphus in the year B.C. 277 to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew tongue into Greek. Esdras, with his companions, having accomplished this important work, was invited by the king to remain in Egypt, where he died at an advanced age, holding an office of trust and honor. His descendants for five generations were eminent men, and shared the confidence of the rulers of Egypt, under whom they accumulated riches which were finally inherited by Manasseh Benjamin, a man not unworthy of so eminent an ancestry. He was revered in Alexandria for his integrity, wisdom and rank, as well as for his learning and wealth, and was honored with the friendship of the Roman pro-consul, Rufus Lucius Paulinus. His

love and veneration for the land of his fathers, for the Holy City and Temple of Jehovah, were not lessened by his nativity as an Egyptian Jew, and as he had been in his youth sent to Jerusalem by his father, to be educated in the laws of Moses, so he resolved that his daughter should share the same privileges, be taught as beseemed a Jewish woman, and the inheritress of his name and wealth.

After a tedious journey of seventeen days by the way of Gaza, the lovely Adina at length came in sight of the walls and tower of the city of Zion. The caravan halted upon the ridge, and the Jewish travelers composing it alighted and prostrated themselves in adoration before the city of David, and the mountain of Moriah, made sacred by the footsteps of Abraham. The maiden unveiled and bowed her head with sacred awe. It was her first sight of Jerusalem—the city of her fathers, the birthplace of her parent, of which, from her earliest childhood, she had heard him speak with the profoundest reverence. As she gazed upon it, she thought of Isaac, who had been bound upon an altar on yonder height, now glittering with walls overlaid with marble and gold; of Isaiah, who had been sawn asunder in the gloomy valley at her feet; of David and his glory; of Solomon and his wisdom; of the

host of Prophets who had trod its streets or wandered upon its hills. Rapidly her memory brought to her mind the history of the mighty past, of the sieges the city had withstood against the Assyrians, the Persians, the Egyptians, and the nations of the earth; of the carrying away into captivity of her countrymen, of the demolition of its walls and of its Temple; and its rebuilding by Ezra. But most of all she dwelt with holy fear upon the thought that the presence of God, of Jehovah, had dwelt there century after century, visibly, in unbearable Fire, within the inner sanctuary of the Temple; and that there He had spoken with man, as it were, face to face. She thought also of the Ark of the Covenant, of the Tables of Stone, of Aaron's budding rod, and of the brazen serpent which were laid up in the Temple; and her heart beat with emotion such as she had never felt before. Lower, and with more awful veneration, she bent her head in grateful reverence to Him who had so distinguished above all nations her nation, above all cities the city of her fathers and of the Prophets! Then she raised her eyes in pride that she was a Jewess, and looked around proudly upon the noble landscape which, in her imagination, it seemed must be as familiar to the eyes of angels as to men, so closely had heaven connected itself with that chosen spot.

The Arabs, her attendants, had also bowed and kneeled in the presence of the sacred towers; but it was in honor of Abraham and the patriarchs, their ancestors through Ishmael, who they believed lay with Isaac and Jacob in sepulchers upon Mount Zion.

Adina's proud glance around was arrested by the sight of a cohort of soldiers that came galloping up the ridge from the city, with a glittering eagle carried in advance.

"The Romani! The Romani!" cried the guides, and rising from their knees they remounted in haste, and used every exertion to leave the road open to the approaching troop of horse. An Israelitish muleteer, a few rods below in the path, who could not get out of the way soon enough, was overrun and thrown to the ground, and the cavalcade swept onward to the summit of the hill, disregarding him.

The cheek of Adina paled at this sight, but it was not from fear. All her pride died away in her heart; and she forgot the glory of the past, in the sense of the present degradation. In the first exultation of her emotions at fastening her eyes upon Jerusalem, she had forgotten that the land of the Prophets and of kings anointed by God was now a conquered Roman province. But the sight of the Roman cohort brought this

painful reality to her mind, and veiling her face, she was overcome by the deepest sadness.

The troops passed her and her escort like a whirlwind of war, with ringing spurs, jingling bits, clashing shields, and the noise of the tramp of five hundred hoofs. She could no longer gaze upon the city with joy and pride. The words of Jeremiah rose to her lips:

“How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger! Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth? The Lord has cast us off from being a nation, and the name of Israel is remembered no more!”

Tears, free and bountiful, relieved the fullness of her heart, and like a true daughter of Jerusalem, she mourned over the departed glory of her people.

Once more they rode on, winding down around a hill covered with tombs, one of which was pointed out to her by a Jewish rabbi, under whose care she was journeying, as that of the prophet Jeremiah. Leaving this tomb on the left, they crossed a small valley, green and beautiful with groves, fountains and terraces, and thronged with a mixed multitude, both men and women, who seemed to be enjoying a promenade there, outside the city walls; there were also

booths arranged on one side of the shady walk, where merchants from all parts of the earth were selling. The rabbi accounted for this concourse by informing her that they had arrived at Jerusalem on a great feast day. Avoiding this multitude they moved on their way to the right, and ascended a low eminence from which Jerusalem, in another point of view, burst upon them in all the splendor of its still unconquerable magnificence; for with all its vicissitudes of misfortune, in wars, sieges and desolation, the Jerusalem of the Romans was still a majestic metropolis, and, in a great degree, meriting its appellation of the "Queen of the nations."

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Adina, unconsciously reining up her camel.

"Man cannot destroy the city of God," said the rabbi, with haughty confidence. "She will stand forever."

"Point out to me, good Rabbi Ben Israel, the prominent places! What is that frowning castle beyond the Temple which looks so strong and warlike?"

"That is the 'City of David,' the castle of the kings! It protects the Temple and town. David fortified himself in it, and so did the noble Maccabees. It was built by Melchisedec, the first King of Jerusalem, and the friend of our father

Abraham. It is now garrisoned by a thousand Roman soldiers."

The Jewish girl sighed, and then her eyes being attracted by a graceful tower which the sunbeams of the west burnished like gold, she inquired what it was.

"The one with the palm growing by its side and nearly as lofty?" asked the rabbi, who seemed to take pleasure in gratifying the curiosity of his lovely *protégée*.

"Yes, the same."

"That is David's Tower. Upon it David's watchman stood when he was looking for tidings from Absalom; and the wood you see far to the northeast is the 'wood of Ephraim,' wherein Prince Absalom was slain."

"And what palace is that which the setting sun lights up so brilliantly, as if it were covered with plates of silver?"

"That is the palace of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, who reigns in Jerusalem as a king. But why do you shudder?" he asked, as he beheld her change countenance; but following the direction of her eyes to their right, he beheld, not far distant, a score of crosses bristling upon a small eminence opposite the city gate; and two of the crosses held bodies nailed to them, while a guard of soldiers and a crowd of people stood

near looking on and watching the writhings of the victims. The groans and execrations of one of them distinctly reached the ears of Adina.

"That is the Hill of Calvary, daughter," said the rabbi, with a look of outward indifference. "It is where the Romans execute their malefactors. Two have suffered to-day. It is a cruel punishment, not so mild as stoning to death; but the Romans have little feeling. Let us ride on."

On the left they wound round the wall of a garden that seemed to be open to the public, as in some places the inclosure was thrown down. Several persons were seen within, walking up and down, or reclining under the shade of olive trees.

"That is Solomon's garden, now called Gethsemane," said the rabbi; "it is now like all the royal woods, desolate."

"Yet beautiful in its desolation. How majestically the walls of the Temple rise heavenward, seen from this valley! What noble hill, partly covered with trees, is this behind the garden?"

"Olivet, also a portion of the king's gardens in the days of Israel's glory. The village beyond it is Bethlehem!"

"What, the Bethlehem of Judah, out of which the prophet says shall come a Ruler over Israel?"

"The same; and we look one day to have that

prophecy fulfilled. It cheers us with the assurance that Jerusalem shall not forever be trodden down of the nations, but one day have a king and governor of the royal seed of David."

"And do any of the family of David now exist?" asked Adina, fixing her eyes earnestly upon the bearded face of the rabbi.

"Yes, or the prophecy could not be accomplished. But they are, as far as known, poor and humble; but I have no doubt that in some part of the world, among the nations, exists some of the sacred stock who are reigning princes, as Daniel and Joseph reigned in Persia and Egypt, from whence they shall come as conquerors to rule over Israel."

"How then can they spring from yonder little village of Bethlehem?" asked the maiden.

The rabbi looked a little embarrassed, and was about to make some reply to this difficult question, when their road was blocked up by a flock of sheep, mingled with a drove of cattle, being driven into the city for the altars of sacrifice. It was with some delay they made their way through these obstacles and came to the gate of Damascus. Here they were detained by the Roman guard and made to show their passports, and to pay thirty sesterces for every camel, and half as many for each mule in the caravan.

The scene in the streets was quite bewildering

to Adina, who had been journeying so many days through a desert; but as the dwelling of the relations of her father was near the gate, she was soon in the arms of her friends, who, though they had never seen her before, received her affectionately, as much for her father's sake, who had commended her to their protection, as for her own prepossessing loveliness.

Just entering her seventeenth year, the daughter of the rich Alexandrian was in the prime of female charms. Her hair was an auburn brown, long, and shining like gold; her face oval, and transparently olive in its color, tinted with the least perceptible roseate; her eyes large, and of the most splendid light and glory of expression; her nose straight and finely outlined, and her mouth exquisitely shaped with an expression of heavenly sweetness.

Having been kindly welcomed, and finding every preparation made for her comfort and happiness, she gave a few days to repose, and then, on the return of the caravan, addressed the following letter to her father. This letter was followed by many others, all of which it is our intention to give to the reader, as they are written at a period the most interesting of any other of which history takes record. The first letter is dated, according to the Jewish chronology, three years before the crucifixion of our Savior.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.....	PAGE xiii
-------------------	--------------

LETTER I.

Account of the journey from Alexandria to Jerusalem—Gaza—Joseph's Well—The Dead Sea—Jordan—Emotions on beholding the Holy City—Rabbi Amos—Desecration of the Temple—Sacrifices for sin—A Prophet of God preaching near Jordan..	1
---	---

LETTER II.

Rabbi Ben Israel's return—Happiness with Rabbi Amos—Rebecca—Mary—View from the Residence—Scene from the Housetop at morning—The Sacrifice and Temple-worship at sunrise—Evening Sacrifice and Worship—Idol-worship at the Roman castle near the Temple—Prophecies fulfilled—Under a cloud—The Messenger foretold by Malachi—Elijah the Prophet—Rabbi Amos acknowledges the corruption of the Priests—Decay of Reverence—A young man, who has heard the new Prophet, near Jericho.....	8
---	---

LETTER III.

Presentation of the First Fruits—Tower of Antonia—Insult from a Roman Soldier—Protection afforded by a youthful Roman Centurion—Pageant of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate—The new Prophet, as described by John, the Cousin of Mary—He gives a full account of his journey to the Jordan—Arrival at Jericho.....	19
--	----

LETTER IV.

Death of Rabbi Israel—Extract from her Father's letter concerning the new Prophet—Continuation of John's account of his visit to Jordan, to see the new Prophet—The Twelve Stones of the Jordan—Description of the Prophet—His Sermon—"Art thou not Elias?"—"Messiah?"—Generation of Vipers—Woe to the Priests—"The Lord our Righteousness"—One Thousand baptized—Joseph of Arimathea—A second Sermon at evening.....	30
---	----

LETTER V.

Baptism of Two Hundred more—Blessing in the Name of the Lamb of God—Joseph of Arimathea—Conversation with the Prophet—He sings the Evening Hymn of the Temple—Hymn	
--	--

	PAGE
of Praise—Conversation with the Prophet concerning Messiah —His Death—His Kingdom not of this World—The Prophet retires to the Desert—Appearance of Lazarus—His explana- tions of the Prophecies—Taught by his Friend—Description of this Friend—Jesus, the Nazarene—Conflict of mind—Study- ing the Prophets.....	45

LETTER VI.

Ben Israel—Answer to her Father's Letter against this "novelty" —Extract from his Letter—Reply—Indignation against the Prophet among the Priests and Levites—Messengers are sent to invite him to Jerusalem—His Answer—He is accused of Sedition—The Messengers declare their Conversion and Bap- tism—They are arrested—Conversations and Discussions at the House of Rabbi Amos—Stephen—The Prophet performs no Miracles—Rabbi Amos going to Gilgal—Adina and Mary going with him—They expect to see the Prophet—The Roman Centurion reading the Scriptures—He would like to hear the Prophet—Barabbas, the Robber—The Escort—John gone to look after his ships in Galilee.....	64
--	----

LETTER VII.

The Messiah has come!—Account of the visit to Jordan—Adina, Mary and John go with Rabbi Amos—Escorted by the Roman Centurion—Barabbas—Two Gibeonite Servants—Glimpse of Caiaphas—Turtle Doves and young Pigeons—Blind Bartimeus and his Lamb—The Sheep Gate—Emilius—Roman Soldiers— Bethesda—The Moving of the Waters—Absalom's Pillar— Joined by the Escort.....	79
---	----

LETTER VIII.

Continuation of the Account—Edomite Robbers—View from Bethany—Conversation with the Centurion—Hope of his Con- version—Repose at the house of Rabbi Abel—Attractions of the Family—Lazarus, Martha, Mary—Embroidery for the Temple—Copies of the Law and the Psalms—Present for the wife of Pilate—"I. N."—Jesus of Nazareth—Lazarus accom- panies them—Gamaliel—Saul—Arrival at Jericho—Gilgal— Barabbas—Going to Bethabara.....	91
--	----

LETTER IX.

The way to Bethabara—Matthew, the Publican—Judas Iscariot— The Tower of Elijah—Vast Multitude—Description of the Prophet—His Sermon—"Behold the Lamb of God!"—The Baptism of Christ—The Dove—The Voice from Heaven— Jesus disappears.....	104
---	-----

LETTER X.

Adina believes in the Christ—The voice of the Dove—John and Lazarus follow Jesus—The excited Multitude disperse—Rabbi	
--	--

CONTENTS.

vii

	PAGE
Amos converses with the Prophet—John and Lazarus overtake Jesus in the Wilderness—He sends them back from following Him—Mystery.....	116

LETTER XI.

Return to Gilgal—John Lazarus, Gamaliel, Saul and others—Discussion on the Prophecies concerning the Messiah—"Visage marred"—"No form nor comeliness"—Sorcery at the Baptism of Jesus—"Thou art my Son"—Born in Bethlehem—Of the seed of David—Miracles?—Difference of Opinion—Return to Jericho—The Beautiful Mary of Magdala—Waiting for Jesus.....	124
---	-----

LETTER XII.

Adina's Father refuses to believe—Meeting of all the Prophecies—Nothing seen of Jesus for five weeks—John tells them of his finding Jesus in the Desert—He is worn down by fasting and sorrow—Jesus returns—John follows Him as His disciple—Hymn of Praise—Pilate's Message to Caiaphas—The answer—Development of Power.....	134
---	-----

LETTER XIII.

"A Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief"—A Miracle—The Carpenter's tools—Andrew, Simon, Philip, Nathaniel, James and John—The Mother of Jesus—Cana—Elizabeth—The Water turned into Wine—Thirty Priests studying the Prophecies.....	144
--	-----

LETTER XIV.

Fame of Jesus increases—He is attended by thousands—Cures and Miracles—The Lame Man restored—John's account of His Miracles—He Casts out Devils—They confess Him—Visit of the Magi—The Murder of the Innocents—Escape of Jesus—Summary of evidence proving that Jesus is the Christ.....	155
--	-----

LETTER XV.

Imprisonment and Death of John the Baptist—Jesus is told of it—The Miracle of the Five Loaves and Two Fishes—Envoy of the Priests—Miracles by the aid of Beelzebub—John the Baptist was Elias—Six other Disciples chosen—Jesus no ambitious leader—Refuses to be made a King.....	165
---	-----

LETTER XVI.

Uproar among the People—Rabbi Amos professes himself a believer—Messiah a Man, not an Angel—Is He not also God?—Nicodemus—Jesus fatigued—His power not for His own relief—Benjamin, the lost Brother, returns—He had been healed by Jesus, after being a lunatic seven years—How the cure was wrought—Triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.....	175
--	-----

LETTER XVII.

	PAGE
Tumult at the entry of Jesus on the morning of the Passover— Shouting—Jesus purges the Temple of the Money-changers— The Scourge of Small Cords—He is questioned by the High- Priest—He is rejected—Another Miracle.....	187

LETTER XVIII.

Recovery of Adina's Father from sickness—She combats his ob- jections—"Out of Egypt have I called my Son"—"Galilee of the Gentiles"—Jesus comes to the house, with a great Multitude—Æmilius, the Centurion—Description of Jesus— He is charged with sedition—Æmilius refuses—Jesus enters the house of Rabbi Amos—Adina greets Him—A wound upon His temples—Elias asks for a Miracle—A man with the palsy let down in a blanket—He is healed.....	199
---	-----

LETTER XIX.

Divisions on account of Jesus—Nicodemus visits Him by night— The new Birth of Water and the Spirit—Throne on Calvary— Jesus forgives Sins, with a Miracle of Healing—Jesus departs for Galilee—He declines the Roman escort—Four Lepers healed—Æmilius is converted—Other proofs in behalf of Jesus.....	211
---	-----

LETTER XX.

Adina's illness—Sojourn in Nain—Two Disciples of Jesus arrive at the house—They announce the coming of Jesus—They are driven from the town—Ruth—A letter for Sarah from Samuel —He has been wrecked, and kindly received at the house of Adina's father, in Alexandria—Samuel arrives—He is seized with a malignant fever—Dies—Preparations for Burial—A Letter from Gadara.....	222
--	-----

LETTER XXI.

Grief of Ruth—Great procession accompanying the Dead—The Dead is raised to life by Jesus—Mary relates the account of it—Samuel's remembrance of his state during Death—Jesus abides in the house—Two Weddings at hand.....	233
---	-----

LETTER XXII.

Morning at Jerusalem—Æmilius becomes a Proselyte—Account of the ceremony of his reception as such in the Temple—Jesus appears in the Temple—His Sermon—His Assassination at- tempted, and foiled—He is saluted as King—Tumult—Pilate makes obeisance to Him—He disappears—The Tribute-money —Æmilius needs one step more.....	244
--	-----