

the absent and invisible on the earth, may all be present, may all be making theirs the fruit of this sacrifice in which our Lord is 'always living to make intercession for us', in which he is himself the priest. I do not know if I am right in such a feeling. I cannot emphasize too strongly my realization of two things—my own ignorance and the splendour of that new vitality in the Church which is bound to bring with it feverish argument as well as growth in understanding.

'Faith seeks understanding' and the eager questing of today is a sign that Catholics are no longer, as Newman complained in the nineteenth century, living on the intellect of a former age. But the process of re-awakening, re-focussing the mind is a difficult and perhaps a dangerous one. With our eyes unaccustomed to the light, the immense flood of information, historical, scriptural, theological, may dazzle our mental vision. And I have read enough history to know that if one side of a doctrine has been under-emphasized, the reassertion of the forgotten element may lead to unbalance in the opposite direction. From this we shall be saved, not by the archaeologist or the faddist, but by those men who, like Fr Davis, remind us both of the pastoral side of liturgical development and its growth, not as something isolated but as part of the Church's many-sided development.

The Person and the Place—III: Daniel of Chernigov¹

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For Daniel, a pilgrim from Kiev, the journey to Jerusalem began with a cruise among the islands that was in itself full of interest. At Petala, for instance, there were the asphalt deposits on the water that were piously believed to be an oil distilled from the bodies of drowned martyrs. Gallipoli, Abydos, Crete, and Tenedos in sight of Troy, all had something to offer. On Mytilene there was a shrine to St George, and on Chios another to St Isidore. Ephesus was full of recollections of St John and the seven sleepers, and at Cyprus of the twenty bishoprics, the pilgrims climbed the mountain where Helena had had a shrine built

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for the holy cross. Daniel makes no mention of the time the journey took, such a question having no importance for him whatsoever. But he does keep a note of the distances he covers. By the time they reached Jaffa, for instance, they had covered a distance of sixteen hundred *versts* from Constantinople.

Daniel is always the conscientious statistician (on every point bar only the unimportant one of time), because he is writing a chronicle for the benefit of others who will never get such a chance as his. They will use his account, and benefit from it, as from something holy, therefore they must be thoroughly informed. Daniel's is a privileged mission on behalf of all the Christians of Russia, particularly the princes and boyars, besides being the fulfilling experience of his own life. Jerusalem is clearly the centre of his world.

It was a bishop of Jerusalem, St Cyril, who spoke to his catechumens about our Lord stretching out his hands on the cross so that he might gather and embrace all the ends of the earth. And this, Cyril explained, was not his own idea. The prophet Daniel spoke of God as king before all time, achieving salvation in the midst of the earth. Now, in a domed building that covered the spot known as the earth's navel, the pilgrims were shown the mosaic of Christ inscribed with the words: 'The sole of my foot measures the sky, and the palm of my hand the earth'. The Church of the Resurrection stood nearby, and it was but a step from there to Golgotha, where they saw the round excavation, about a foot wide and a foot deep, where the cross had stood. Under this spot, it was believed, lay Adam's head, and when the rocks opened at the crucifixion, the blood and water from the wounds of Christ had run down to wash that head that belonged to the head of all mankind. So besides venerating Golgotha, they must pay a visit to the chapel beneath, called Calvary, the shrine of Adam's head.

The earth's navel, Golgotha-Calvary, and above all the Church of the Resurrection, were the grouped witnesses to salvation in the midst of the earth. In the great round church, where in Daniel's day twelve monolithic columns symbolized the twelve apostles, the altar piece depicted the raising of Adam from the grave, and was surmounted by a mosaic of Christ ascending. The roof was open to the sky, and beneath this open vault was the Sepulchre, a small cave in the rock, 'so small that you can only get in on your knees'. The pilgrims went in to venerate the sacred stone, which could still be touched in three places left uncovered by the marble overlay. Five great lamps always burned there, the smoke of which escaped through a lantern of Frankish work,

with three latticed windows. Before the sepulchre one could see the stone where the angel sat, when he asked the three Marys why they sought the living among the dead.

Daniel makes it clear from the beginning of his chronicle that his pilgrimage is not only to the centre of the world; it is also a journey to the very centre of time. The altar where Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son had stood nearby the place where Christ was crucified. Here it was that Helena found the cross in after years, together with the crown, the nails, the sponge and the lance. And since this was the place where she had her church built, it must have been through this door that Mary of Egypt tried to come when she wished to kiss the true cross, but the Holy Spirit would not let her in until she had done penance at the image of our Lady, after which she left to lead the rest of her life in the holiness of the Jordan desert. Here too was the *Spoudia* of our Lady, the place of her hastening, where she ran to her son and asked him, in the words of the Good Friday triodion, 'where are you going my son, my child? Is there another wedding feast at Cana . . . ?' For Daniel, much moved at this 'still point of the turning world', all time disappears into eternity, and sequence no longer signifies. Here the mysteries are contemplated in their perpetual actuality, the moment of Abraham and the moment of Mary the Egyptian made one in the eternal moment of redemption. The just men of the Old Testament and the saints of the early church all come together and are found in the same place, at the same time quite outside of time.

This Jerusalem is so much, so completely the figure of the one above, that it is no wonder to Daniel that he finds the city roughly cruciform in shape, and that, even though it is waterless, it has the most abundant harvests. One measure will yield thirty and fiftyfold, so that there can be no doubt that God's blessing is on the place. With this Russian pilgrim we are far from the anti-Semitic disapproval of St Louis. Here, everywhere he goes, Daniel is overcome by wonder and love. His itinerary is strewn with convents and hermitages. He observes how even the dead are preserved in the balsamic air of the valley of Josaphat. And all the time, at every turn, the Old Testament and the New confront him simultaneously. The old Holy of Holies, the place of Jacob's ladder, Solomon's house, the tower of David (with Uriah's house just over the way, as one would expect), the place where Judas lived (still so cursed that no one dare live there), Jeremiah's ditch, the home of Joachim and Anna, now a great church, Solomon's portico, Probatia . . . Daniel misses nothing.

We find him at the feast of Epiphany on the Jordan, recalling how the ford into Arabia, where he stands, is the place where the ark rested when the Israelites passed over. Then came Eliseus, crossing dryshod thanks to Elias' mantle, then our Lord, who was so welcomed by the baptismal river that it rushed up to meet him, while the sea of Sodom shrank back four *versts* from sheer terror. *Quid est tibi mare quod fugisti, et tu Jordanis quia conversus es retrorsum?* Finally, Daniel's favourite, St Mary of Egypt, now on the last stage of her journey, crosses the ford to receive communion from St Zosima, returning this same way to die in the desert. Daniel can see it all, through his own deep familiarity with the bible, the liturgy and the lives of the saints. Remembering, too, that Moses saw the promised land from Phasga, he realizes that it was not, after all, such a very great privation to have no part in its possession. Was it not enough that Moses should see this river, from Phasga, as a place beyond place, in a time outside of time, at which all men justified would find their way to eternity?

Daniel found himself really at home on the banks of the Jordan. By now, feeling perhaps a slight twinge of homesickness, he was comparing the Jordan with the river Snov, back home in Chernigov. 'It has the same look about it, the same width and depth and violence. Trees like the willows of the Ukraine, although they are not really willows, grow alongside it'. There were hard, woody bushes, almost exactly like the *kizil*. There were boars and panthers too, lurking among the rushes, but these did not stop him taking many a pleasant stroll along the banks, feeling comfortably at home.

Finally he had the great joy of seeing heaven's blessing come down on the waters. According to the eastern tradition, our Lord was baptized at midnight. Therefore great throngs of people gathered on the banks by night, singing and holding candles. 'A cross is immersed in the water, and the Holy Spirit comes down in a way that only worthy eyes can see, which means that the pure in heart feel an infinite joy. They sing the hymn that begins "The Lord, receiving baptism in Jordan" . . . and then they all dive in'. He could have added 'Just as we do in Russia'.

Daniel ventured as far afield as he could without risking too much from the Saracens and the lions, and thus was able to identify the oak of Mambre, and the double cave at Hebron where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried. He visited the convent of St Chariton with its relics of the minor prophets, and 'a pretty little chapel dedicated to Habacuc'. Good fortune thereafter provided him with the best possible

escort for a more ambitious journey, as King Baldwin of Jerusalem was making a foray towards Damascus. Daniel would have loved to go as far as Lebanon, 'white capped in the distance, where the white incense comes from', but he and his guide contented themselves with Galilee, where they ate many excellent carp and liked to think of our Lord having often done the same. At Tabor they were received by the Latin monks at the Church of the Transfiguration in so friendly a fashion that Daniel was sufficiently impressed to comment on the welcome given them. Obviously such welcomes, for eastern visitors, were not a matter of routine! The abbot and his monks asked Daniel's blessing, and all wept with great contrition at the hallowed spot. Not only was the apparition of Moses and Elias commemorated in two churches flanking the Transfiguration Church, but there was also a cavern chapel dedicated to Melchisedech who made his offering there of bread and wine, 'which was taken up to heaven'. The guide, on this tour, incidentally, was an old monk of St Sabbas who had lived thirty years in Galilee, 'He showed me the holy places', Daniel adds, 'according to the holy books'. The bible was their Baedeker.

Daniel returned, 'by the grace of God, never having felt once tired, or ill, and without having been attacked'. In fact he felt better in health than ever. 'What can I give in return for such gifts?' he prayed with tears, 'for such sights that I never hoped to see?' But the most wonderful thing of all was yet to come, and with this his chronicle is complete. 'Finally, I, unworthy Daniel, beheld with my own eyes how the holy fire comes down on our Lord's sepulchre at Easter'. This, he says, has often been incorrectly described as the Holy Spirit coming down in the form of a dove, or as lightning striking the lamps. But no—'God's grace comes down invisibly and lights the lamps'. He tells us how, on Good Friday after vespers, all the lights in Jerusalem are put out. Lamps are washed and replenished, and the sepulchre is sealed. At seven in the morning on Good Friday, Daniel went to Baldwin, who was pleasant and approachable, not at all proud ('and, of course, he knew me already') to ask if he might be allowed to put a lamp in the sepulchre on behalf of the people of Russia. The prince kindly had Daniel introduced to the guardian of the keys, and no time was lost in buying the finest lamp in the market, and filling it with the purest oil. That evening, he found the guardian alone in the chapel, took off his sandals and went into the sepulchre, 'placing the lamp with my own sinful hands, at the place where our Lord's feet once lay'. The lamp of the Greeks was already in place at the head of the slab, and the lamp

from the monks of St Sabbas stood at the place where our Lord's breast had been. 'I put down my lamp and bowed to the ground. I kissed the ground and wept. I left with a feeling of deepest joy, and went back to my cell'.

On Saturday morning, between eleven and midday, the people assembled before the Church of the Resurrection. Daniel was included in Baldwin's retinue, and was given a place where he could see directly onto the three sealed doors of the Sepulchre. Vespers were sung in Greek and Latin, the prophecies were read, and finally the canticle *Domino cantabo*. Nothing had happened in the Sepulchre until then, but at that moment Daniel noticed a little cloud that stopped over the open dome. Rain fell on the Sepulchre, and suddenly light blazed out. A bishop, accompanied by four deacons, took Baldwin's candle and lit it from the burning lamps, and the monks lit theirs from Baldwin's and passed the light on. It was different from ordinary fire, burning with a reddish glow. All the people were singing and shouting *Kyrie eleison*, and everyone was mad with joy. It all seemed incredible . . . 'but God and the Holy Sepulchre are my witnesses that all this is true, also my brethren who were with me, from Novgorod and from Kiev, Sedeslav Ivankovitch, Goroslav Mihailovitch, and the two brothers Kashkitcha'.

On Easter Sunday morning, all the monks went to the Sepulchre singing matins, their procession headed by a cross, while the antiphon was intoned . . . 'immortal as Thou art, thou didst deign to enter the tomb'. Daniel can find no words to describe all this Easter joy. Three days after Easter Sunday he went back to the Sepulchre to take his lamp away. He took the opportunity of measuring the Sepulchre, a thing he could not have done if there were people about. The guardian of the keys asked his blessing, and seeing his devotion to the holy place, he lifted up the marble cover and gave Daniel a tiny piece of the Sepulchre stone, begging him not to breathe a word to a soul. Daniel bowed low again, and went out, full of joy, 'rich with the gifts of divine grace', carrying in his hand his very own token of the Holy Sepulchre, the place of Resurrection, 'inestimable treasure that bears holiness in it'.

He says little about his return journey. They went back via the deserted village of Emmaus, then from Lydda they continued to Jaffa. They passed by Carmel, Tyre, and Sidon, Kalimeros, Satalia, Chelidonia, Myra, Patara. Finally, they came once more to Constantinople, and were well on the way to Kiev. 'I wrote', Daniel concludes, 'the

names of the Russian princes in the monastery of St Sabbas—Michael Sviatopolk, Prince Boris, Prince Gleb, and Prince David . . . and all the names of the princes and boyars of Russia I left at the Holy Sepulchre. I said fifty masses for the living, and forty for the dead, in the holy places. All will be blessed who read this, for blessed it is to believe without having seen'. He reminds us how Abraham's faith was blessed with the gift of this very promised land that Daniel now shares with his readers. To believe, he comments, is itself a good work. 'Peace be with you forever'.

The Book of Lamentations¹

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The Lamentations of Jeremiah is a book with which the old *Tenebrae* Office for Holy Week gave many people at least a nodding acquaintance. Not infrequently, however, the much admired musical settings tended to detract from the attention given to the words themselves, a fact noticed by Mendelssohn, who remarked that the most powerful music was usually expended on the mere rubrics, the *alephs beths* and *incipits*. That Lamentations does repay, both for theological and for literary content, a careful study, will I hope emerge from this article. But before we speak of content, we should say a word or two about the structure and authorship of the book.

The book consists of five poems, corresponding to its five chapters, of which the first four are abecedarian in structure (which is to say that each stanza begins with a fresh letter of the Hebrew alphabet and each line of the stanza begins with the same letter as the first line), and are written in the usual Hebrew metre for laments and elegies, known as *Qinah*: the characteristics of this metrical form are that the first half of each line contains three 'significant words' or 'substantial ideas', and the second half-line contains only two. The 'limping' effect of this

¹This article is not intended as an original contribution to the study of the book of Lamentations. I am concerned merely to collate and synthesize the discoveries and opinions of reputable scholars about a book which deserves to be known much better than it now is.